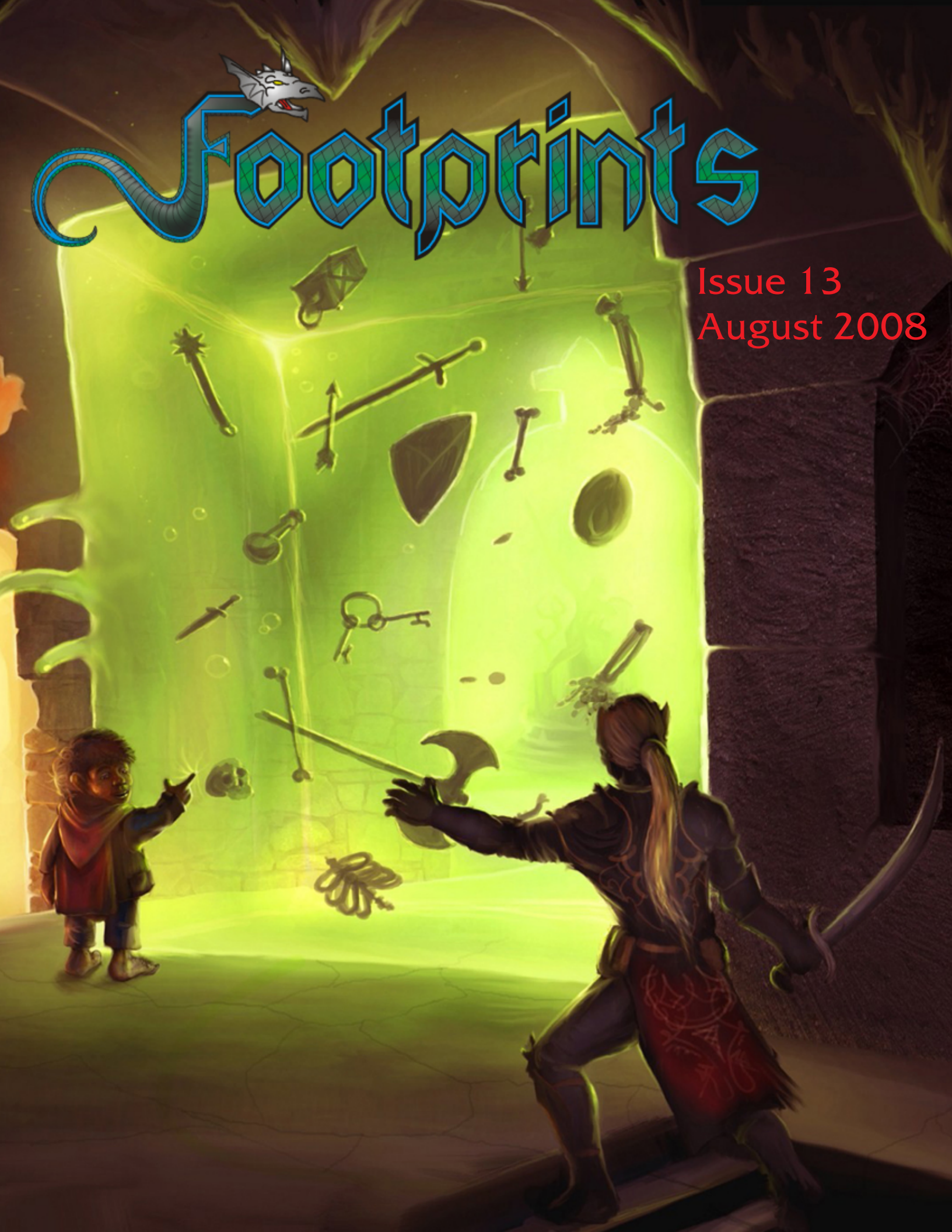




# Footprints

Issue 13  
August 2008



## Contents

% in Lair .....	1
The Hounigan: A New NPC Class by Jason Blair .....	2
The Enchantment by Richard Miller .....	13
Tower of the Elephant by Thulsa .....	14
Alien Versus ... Druid? by Thomas Worthington .....	24
New Mosters: Kzaddich and Tsalakian by John Turcotte .....	29
Vampire Lords .....	32

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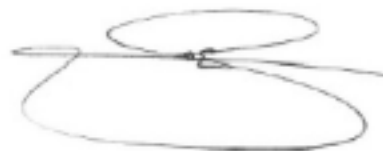
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# % in Lair

Welcome to lucky Issue 13 of Footprints! We have a veritable smorgasbord of gaming material for you. We have the excellent "Tower of the Elephant" scenario, allowing your players to tread in the steps of none other than Conan himself. We further have a dastardly new NPC Class: the Houngan to bedevil your PCs. Also included are articles on druids, vampires and a pair of bizarre new monsters certain to confound even jaded players.

This issue's cover, "Dungeon Encounters of the Strange Kind," was done by Raymond E. Gaustadnes. You can find more of his excellent work at [www.digitalartwork.no](http://www.digitalartwork.no). Best of all, his works are available as prints at [www.shockbolt.deviantart.com/prints](http://www.shockbolt.deviantart.com/prints). Please check out his portfolio.

As always, I extend my thanks to our contributors and readers. A fan-driven 'zine such as this would not exist without you. Please keep submitting your material. Let's keep our Dungeons & Dragons alive and in print. Game on!



# THE HOUNGAN

## A New NPC Class

By Jason Blair

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** I want to acknowledge the various authors of the Witch NPC class (*Dragon* 114) and Len Lakofka's Death Master (*Best of Dragon* vol. 4), from which I incorporated some ideas and altered some spells.

The houngan (or mambo if female) is the invariably evil priestly ruler of the Voodoo religious tradition. They are the preservers of rituals and the conduits between the living and the dead, as shown by their common practice of painting their faces like skulls during rituals. Their spells are somewhat less healing-oriented than those of typical clerics, with particular affinities towards serpents, lightning, and the undead. Much of their magic is accomplished through elaborate rituals, involving sacrifice, manic dancing, and wild chanting.

The houngan is a sub-class of the cleric, although rather than being beholden to a particular deity, the houngan honors and worships a variety of demigods and lesser spirits known as loa. Hougans can be of any Evil alignment.

In order to become a houngan, one must possess the following ability scores: Intelligence 13, Wisdom 15, Dexterity 13, and Constitution 13. Hougans have no prime requisites, so they receive no earned bonus to experience. Only humans, half-elves, and half-orcs (limited to level 7) can become hougans, and multi-classing is not possible.

Hougans have 8-sided hit dice and receive 1 hit die per level up to and including level 11; thereafter they gain 2 hit points per level. Hougans receive

constitution bonuses and save as clerics, and attack as clerics as well.

All hougans start with three weapon proficiencies, two of which must be the club and saber (scimitar). They receive an additional proficiency every four levels beyond the first. Allowable weapons include: bo stick, club, dagger, dart, jo stick, lasso, quarterstaff, scimitar, sling, and spear. They are limited to leather armor and wooden shields. They may use any magic item usable by clerics. Both oil and poison are freely used by hougans.

Hougans gain new spells by appealing to the loa, in the same manner as clerics pray to their deities. They also receive bonus spells according to wisdom, just as clerics do. Because of the lack of direct connection to one particular deity, and due to the capricious nature of the loa, there is always at least a 5% chance of spell failure, regardless of the houngan's wisdom.

### Followers and Apprentices

Once a houngan reaches 9th level (Houngan), he may erect a place of worship and begin to attract followers. Initial followers are:

10–40 zero-level serviteurs (see below)

2–8 level 1 fighters

1–2 level 1 houngan apprentices



Each additional level adds another 10–40 serviteurs.

### Special Abilities

All houngan are able to turn (control) undead as a cleric of equal level, and will gleefully employ such undead in their own pursuits. Undead will not attack a houngan unless they fail a saving throw of 8 (this does not apply should the houngan initiate combat or attempt to turn and fail).

Houngans have a special affinity with serpents—they deal with these creatures as though the first level druid spell **animal friendship** spell were in effect. Magical serpentlike creatures (such as dragons or coatl) are not included.

Other abilities are gained at higher levels:

**Create Minor Ason (2nd level):** This is the houngan's magic rattle, generally made from a calabash gourd filled with bits of exotic bones. Fashioning the ason requires 400 gp worth of materials and two full days of creation and ritual. The end result is a **club +1** (target must also save versus breath weapon or receive 1-4 hit points of electrical damage on a successful hit). If the **ason** is shaken and the command word given, all undead within 100 yards will come to the houngan at full speed. Unaffiliated undead called by a **minor ason** can be turned into servitude with a +2 bonus. Any characters of good alignment who attempt to pick up the ason take 1-8 points of electrical damage (no save).

**Speak with Undead (3rd):** Usable at will. This does not create a compulsion to obey and will not operate on mindless undead.

**Create Minor Gris-Gris (4th):** This is a small cloth bag containing herbs, oils, bones,

hair, lodestones, coins, and so on, woven together with dark magic. It is created with 200 gp of materials and three days of ritual. Carried as a talisman, it confers **protection from good** and +1 on saving throws to the houngan. A successful **dispel magic** cast on it renders the **gris-gris** inoperable for a full day. This fetish does not operate for anyone other than the houngan; if a good character attempts to open it, the bag springs open and sprays the contents of the bag onto the opener (save versus poison or take 20 points of damage).

**Create Voodoo Doll (6th):** The infamous **voodoo doll** allows the houngan a special link to a victim, enabling multiple levels of misery and mischief. The actual creation of the doll (made of clay, wood, or straw) takes 12 uninterrupted hours of ritual, 3000 gp worth of gems (consumed in the process), and requires that something sympathetic to the target (hair, a treasured heirloom, etc.) be incorporated into the doll. Possession of the doll automatically enables the houngan to know the general vicinity of the character in question. Using the doll, the houngan can do various things to the target, but only two effects may be attempted per day; doing too much to the doll at once destroys the sympathetic connection, rendering the doll useless. The target may save versus spells to avoid each effect, but the various effects are cumulative if not successfully saved against.

The effects usable by the houngan, and the level required:

- **Cause Pain (level 6):** Sticking pins in the doll, causes the victim to be -1 to hit per pin while the pin is in place. Multiple pins are cumulative.
- **ESP (level 7):** The houngan makes an incision into the scalp of the doll, enabling him to read the surface

thoughts of the target (see ESP, MU-2). Duration is 1 round per level of houngan.

- Message (level 7): Writing on a slip of paper that is stuck into the doll's mouth enables the houngan to use the victim's mouth to voice a message of his choosing.
- Deafness (level 8): Mutilating the doll's ear causes **deafness** (as the illusionist spell of the same name).
- Silence (level 8): Stuffing the doll's mouth causes **silence** (though only the victim is affected). This save is made at +2.
- Blindness (level 9): Covering the doll's eyes renders the victim blind. See the reverse of **cure blindness**.
- Seeing (level 9): This enables the houngan to see exactly what the target sees. Duration is 1 round per level of the houngan. This save is made at -2.
- Charm (level 10): This acts as the equivalent of **charm person**. Note that if the charm fails, the doll is useless thereafter. This save is made at -2.
- Weakness (level 10): Stretching the doll's arms and legs results in a loss of either 1 point of Strength or 1 point of Dexterity (houngan's choice).
- Illness (level 11): Caused by slowly tearing off pieces of the doll, this is the ultimate in suffering. Each day this is in effect, the victim loses 4 hit points. The loss is permanent and cannot be cured.

The houngan can only possess one **voodoo doll** at a time, and only damage

to the doll caused by the houngan has any effect on the victim. Only the death of the houngan or the destruction of the **voodoo doll** will return the victim to normal.

**Speak with Dead (7th)**: Usable once per day. The houngan accomplishes this via nailing a poppet scrawled with questions to a withered tree to act as a messenger to the netherworld. The answers return within an hour, also scrawled on the poppet.

**Create Major Gris-Gris (8th)**: This is an expansion of the houngan's **minor gris-gris**; another 2,000 gp of materials and another week of ritual fills the cloth bag with even more nether energy. It confers **protection from good**, +2 on saving throws, and **fire resistance** (as the ring) on the houngan. This fetish does not operate for anyone other than the houngan; if a good character attempts to open it, the bag opens and sprays its contents of the bag onto the opener (save versus poison at -1 or take 50 points of damage).

**Create Major Ason (9th)**: A more powerful version of the **minor ason**, this fearsome rattle requires 6,000 gp in materials and a full week of intense ritual. The end result here is a **club +3** (target must save vs. breath weapon on a successful hit or receive 1-8 hit points of electrical damage and be stunned 2 rounds), often in the shape of a skull festooned with brightly colored feathers and radiating nether magic. If shaken with a command word, all undead within 300 yards will come to the houngan at full speed. Unaffiliated undead called by a **major ason** can be turned into servitude with a +5 bonus. Any characters of good alignment who attempt to pick up the **ason** take 2-16 points of electrical damage (no save).

Houngans Table 1

Experience Points	Exp. Level	8-Sided HD	Spell-Level							Level Title	Special Ability Gained
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
0–2,500	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pere Savane	
2,501–5,000	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hounsì	Create Minor Ason
5,001–10,000	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	Death Rattler	Speak w/ Undead
10,001–25,000	4	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	Hoodoo	Create Minor Gris-Gris
25,001–45,000	5	5	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	Naganga	
45,001–65,000	6	6	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	Mojo	Create Voodoo Doll
65,001–95,000	7	7	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	Major Mojo	Speak w/ Dead
95,001–145,000	8	8	3	3	3	2	-	-	-	Badagris	Create Major Gris-Gris
145,001–260,000	9	9	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	Houngan (Mambo)	Create Major Ason
260,001–400,000	10	10	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	Papa	
400,001–800,000	11	11	5	4	4	3	2	1	-	Haute Houngan	
800,001–1,200,000	12	11+2	6	5	4	4	2	2	-	Haute Houngan , 12	
1,200,001–1,600,000	13	11+4	6	6	5	4	3	2	-	Haute Houngan , 13	
1,600,001–2,000,000	14	11+6	6	6	6	4	4	2	-	Etc.	
2,000,001–2,400,000	15	11+8	7	7	6	5	4	2	1		
2,400,001–2,800,000	16	11+10	7	7	7	5	4	3	1		
2,800,001–3,200,000	17	11+12	8	8	7	6	4	3	2		
3,200,001–3,600,000	18	11+14	8	8	8	6	5	4	2		
400,000 experience points per level after 18th	19	11+16	9	9	8	7	5	4	2		

## SPELL LIST

### Level One

1. Animate skeletons (new spell)
2. Command (C-1)
3. Detect good/evil (C-1)
4. Detect invisibility (MU-2)
5. Detect magic (C-1)
6. Light/Darkness (C-1)
7. Predict weather (D-1)
8. Purify/Putridify food and drink (C-1)
9. Protection from good/evil (C-1)
10. Remove/Cause fear (C-1)
11. Resist lightning (new spell)
12. Ritual (new spell)
13. Shocking grasp (MU-1)
14. Slow poison (C-1)

### Level Two

1. Animate zombies (new spell)
2. Augury (C-2)
3. Clairaudience (MU-3)
4. Clairvoyance (MU-3)
5. Cure/Cause light wounds (C-1)
6. Evil eye (new spell)
7. Hold person (C-2)
8. Levitate (MU-2)
9. Obscurement (D-2)
10. Resist cold (C-1)
11. Resist fire (C-1)
12. Shield (MU-1)
13. Snake summoning I (new spell)
14. Speak with snakes (new spell)

### Level Three

1. Animate animal skeletons (new spell)
2. Call lightning (D-3)
3. Continual light/darkness (C-3)
4. Cure/Cause disease (C-3)
5. Death armor (new spell)
6. Dispel magic (C-3)
7. Neutralize poison (C-4)
8. Nightmare (new spell)
9. Protection from lightning (D-4)
10. Remove curse (C-3)
11. Remove paralysis (C-3)
12. Snake summoning II (new spell)

### Level Four

1. Animate juju zombies (new spell)
2. Divination (C-4)
3. Evard's black tentacles (MU-4)
4. Fear (MU-4)
5. Invisibility (MU-2)
6. Lightning shield (new spell)
7. Mirror image (MU-2)
8. Protection from cold (new spell)
9. Protection from fire (D-3)
10. Shock (new spell)
11. Snake summoning III (new spell)
12. Wall of bones (new spell)

### Level Five

1. Cure/Cause serious wounds (C-4)
2. Cloud of pestilence (new spell)
3. Fly (MU-3)
4. Gaseous form (new spell)
5. Instant animate dead (new spell)
6. Insect plague (C-5)
7. Plane shift (C-5)
8. Slow (MU-3)
9. Telekinesis (MU-5)
10. Tongues (C-4)
11. True seeing (C-5)
12. Word of recall (C-6)

### Level Six

1. Animate object (C-6)
2. Blade barrier (C-6)
3. Cure/Cause critical wounds (C-5)
4. Conjure lightning quasi-elemental (new spell)
5. Death spell (MU-6)
6. Dispel evil/good (C-5)
7. Power word, stun (MU-7)
8. Ray of weakness (new spell)
9. Wards of defense (new spell)
10. Torment (MU-7)

### Level Seven

1. Banishment (MU-7)
2. Confusion (D-7)
3. Control weather (C-7)
4. Energy drain (MU-9)
5. Finger of death (D-7)
6. Gate (C-7)
7. Lichdom (new spell)
8. Power word, blind (MU-8)
9. Regenerate (C-7)
10. Withering (new spell)



## SPELL EXPLANATIONS

**Duplication:** Certain spells are duplicates of existing spells. These spells are noted by the presence of a letter-number symbol, designating class and level. These spells are identical (effects, verbal and somatic components, casting time, etc.) apart from differences noted in the text. All duplicated spells that are reversible in their original forms are also reversible as houngan spells.

**Material components:** All new spells have verbal and somatic components. Material components (if any) will be noted in the text. Any spells that normally require mistletoe (generally all Druid spells) use ground bone dust when cast by a houngan.

### LEVEL ONE:

**1. Animate skeletons:** Range 1", Duration Permanent, Area of Effect Special, Casting Time 1 turn. This spell creates lowly skeletons from the bones of dead humans or demi-humans; these skeletons will be completely loyal to the houngan who created them. The houngan can animate 1 skeleton for each level of experience. Unlike the skeletons created by **animate dead** (C-3), these skeletons cannot be destroyed via **dispel magic**. The material component for this spell is a salve costing 20 gp per skeleton to be animated, and requiring preparation time of 15 minutes per skeleton.

**11. Resist lightning:** This spell is identical in all respects to **resist cold** (C-1), except offering protection from electricity. It affords +3 to saving throws and halves damage sustained against electrical attacks.

**12. Ritual:** Range Special, Duration Varies, Area of Effect Special, Casting Time Special. Ritual has a number of applications,

depending on the level of the houngan; the length and difficulty of the elaborate rituals enables the houngan to cast some spells that would otherwise be impossible. Every ritual has a 5% chance of failure.

Level 1: *Empowerment:* A relatively simple ritual requiring the sacrifice of only a single goat and 3 turns of dancing and chanting. Upon completion, the houngan and anyone in attendance receives the benefit of a **bless** spell for one hour. Undead are excluded from this benefit.

Level 3: *Initiate serviteurs:* This ceremony grants the serviteurs the power to be possessed by minor loa (see serviteurs in the appendix). Many small animals are sacrificed as the potential serviteurs maniacally dance for hours to drumbeats until they are possessed one after the other by loa. Those deemed unworthy by the loa are also possessed but are forced to dance themselves to death.

Level 5: *Ordination:* This ritual enables a willing and capable candidate to become a level 1 houngan. The candidate undergoes a series of magical emotional and physical torments for a period of one hour, which are orchestrated by the houngan. If the loa are pleased at the candidate's response, he is granted his first hit die and the ability to memorize spells. If the loa are not pleased, the candidate is slowly immolated into ashes.

Level 6: *Fog:* Upon completion of this half-hour ceremony, thick fog pours out of the shrine and blankets the surrounding area in a

one-mile radius. The effects are identical to a **wall of fog** (I-1). The fog lasts for two hours and has a slightly swampy smell to it.

Level 7: *Mental invigoration*: This ceremony lasts one hour and costs 400 gp in materials sacrificed to the loa. Upon completion, the houngan can memorize one extra first, second, and third level spell for that day.

Level 8: *Teleport*: By means of this ritual, the houngan can mimic the effects of **teleport** (MU-5). This ceremony requires a full half hour of chanting and either the horn of a ki-rin or the paw of a blink dog. The chances of failure are the same as the MU spell.

Level 9: *Desecrate ground*: This enables the houngan to establish a place of worship. The shrine generally consists of a small inscribed altar decorated with bottles of rum, bone fetishes, feathers, and various other items and curios. In the center of the shrine stands a pole that is used to communicate and channel dark energies. Total cost of the structures must be at least 12,000 gp. The ceremony consists of twelve hours of dancing, singing, and continual animal sacrifices. Clerical spells cast by Good clerics are saved against with a +1 modifier, and undead are turned as though the cleric were two levels lower while on desecrated ground. The entire shrine will radiate intense evil.

Level 11: *Hand of Glory*: The centerpiece of this elaborate summoning ritual is the **Hand of Glory**, the actual hand of a murderer that has been magically altered and

encrusted with gems (no less than 10,000 gp in value). First, a protective circle must be drawn around the altar, then **protection from evil** is cast. Two uninterrupted hours of chanting and dancing are followed by the sacrifice of a human or demi-human. Upon completion of the sacrifice, the **Hand** acts as a **gate**, summoning a daemon, demon, or devil. The houngan receives the services of the summoned creature for a period of 1 day. Opening a *gate* using a Hand of Glory ages the houngan 1 year.

Note: Interruption of the houngan in any ritual before its completion spoils the spell completely. Given the manic and raucous nature of these rituals, it is highly unlikely that mere noise will suffice.

## LEVEL TWO:

**1. Animate zombies**: Range 1", Duration Permanent, Area of Effect Special, Casting Time 1 turn. This spell creates zombies from the bones or corpses of dead humans or demi-humans; these zombies will be completely loyal to the houngan who created them. The houngan can animate 1 zombie for each level of experience. Unlike the zombies created by **animate dead** (C-3), these zombies cannot be destroyed via **dispel magic**. The material component for this spell is a salve costing 30 gp per zombie to be animated and requiring preparation time of 30 minutes per zombie.

**6. Evil eye**: Range 12", Duration Special, Area of Effect 1 to 3 creatures, Casting Time 1 segment. Upon uttering the command word, the houngan's eyes glow a

hellish purple. He can then direct his gaze upon up to three creatures. The effects depend upon the houngan's level:

- Level 3: *Stunning glare*: The gaze causes the targets to be paralyzed for 1-8 rounds unless a save versus spells is made.
- Level 5: *Charm*: The targets are charmed (**charm person**, MU-1) for 4 rounds unless a saving throw versus spells is made at +1.
- Level 7: *Heat metal*: As the druid spell of the same name (D-2).
- Level 9: *Horror*: This effect causes the targets to flee wildly in fear for 12 rounds (like the 4th level magic-user spell **fear**) unless a save versus spells is made at -1.
- Level 11: *False death*: With this gaze, the target falls into a catatonic slumber identical to **feign death** (MU-3) for 4 turns unless a save versus spells is made at -3.

The houngan can choose any effect he is of proper level to cast and can use different effects on different targets. If only two targets are selected, each makes his saving throw at -1 in addition to the modifiers provided by the various effects above. If only one is targeted, the modifier is -2. This spell will not operate in magically created darkness.

**13. Snake summoning I**: This spell is identical in all respects to **animal summoning I** (D-4), except only eight snakes of up to four hit dice will answer the summons.

**14. Speak with snakes**: This spell is identical in all respects to **speak with animals** (C-2), except the houngan can only converse with snakes, and there is no limit to how many can be conversed with, so long as they are within the area of effect.

### LEVEL THREE:

**1. Animate Animal Skeletons**: Range: 1", Duration ? Permanent, Area of Effect ? Special, Casting Time ? 2 turns. This spell creates major animal skeletons (see appendix, monsters) from the bones of dead creatures; these skeletons will be completely loyal to the houngan who created them. The houngan can animate 1 skeleton for each level of experience. The material component for this spell is a salve costing 250 gp per skeleton to be animated, and requiring preparation time of 3 hours per skeleton.

**2. Call Lightning**: This spell is identical in all respects to the , spell except casting time is only 4 rounds.

**5. Death Armor**: Range 0", Duration 1 round/level, Area of Effect Self, Casting Time 1 round. This spell creates a faintly visible shimmering around the caster that affords protection equivalent to chain mail. In addition, anyone touching the houngan with exposed flesh will sustain 3?18 hit points of damage and must save versus paralysis to avoid being paralyzed for 2?8 rounds. The damage from the attack still occurs to the houngan however. This spell is defensive only, so initiating contact will not cause the effects. The material components for this spell include a gel requiring 50 gp in materials per casting.

**8. Nightmare**: Range Special, Duration Special, Area of Effect 1 creature, Casting Time 2 turns. This spell allows the houngan to invade the dreams of a target. The nightmare prevents restful sleep and causes the victim to lose 1 strength point and 1 dexterity point until a full night's sleep is gained. The target is allowed a saving throw versus spells to avoid the effects. Distance is not a factor, but the subject must be known to the

houngan. Once the houngan reaches level 10, this spell has a 10% of also causing insanity in the victim should the target fail the initial save. The material component for this spell is a strand from a nightmare•fs tail.

**12. Snake summoning II:** This spell is identical in all respects to **animal summoning II** (D-5), except only six snakes of up to eight hit dice or twelve snakes of up to four hit dice will answer the summons.

#### LEVEL FOUR:

**1. Animate Juju Zombies:** Range 1", Duration Permanent, Area of Effect Special, Casting Time 2 turns. This spell creates juju zombies from the corpses of dead humans and demi-humans; these zombies will be completely loyal to the houngan who created them. The houngan can animate 1 juju zombie for every 3 levels of experience. The material component for this spell is a salve costing 400 gp per juju zombie to be animated and requiring preparation time of 4 hours per zombie.

**4. Fear:** Identical to the 4th level magic-user spell, except the spell is evoked by the houngan•fs hideous amplified laughter. Instead of a cone, the area of effect is instead a 12" diameter circle centered around the houngan.

**6. Lightning shield:** This spell is identical in all respects to **fire shield** (MU-4), except the caster is bathed with purple and green glowing tendrils of electricity. Anyone striking the caster with body or hand-held weapons will inflict normal damage on the caster, but sustain double the damage inflicted. This damage is trebled if caused by metal gauntlets or weapon. Any electrical attacks on the caster will be saved against at +2, and either half normal damage or no damage will be taken. Water-based attacks against the caster are

saved as normal, but if the caster fails a saving throw against it, he takes double normal damage.

**8. Protection from cold:** This spell is identical in all respects to **protection from fire** (D-3), except it is effective against cold-based attacks.

**10. Shock:** Range 0", Duration Instant, Area of Effect 6" radius, Casting Time 4 segments. The casting of this spell creates a blast of electrical energy emanating in all directions from the houngan, doing 4-32 damage to each creature within the 6" radius, friend or foe. A successful saving throw cuts damage in half.

**11. Snake summoning III:** This spell is identical in all respects to **animal summoning III** (D-6), except four snakes of up to sixteen hit dice, eight snakes of eight hit dice, or sixteen snakes of up to four hit dice will answer the summons.

**12. Wall of bones:** Range 6", Duration 1 turn, Area of Effect 10" square and 1/2" thick/level, Casting Time 1 round. This spell is identical to the 4th level wu jen spell of the same name (see *Oriental Adventures*) but is reprinted here for ease of use. When cast, this spell causes a wall of bones to erupt from the earth in whatever shape the caster desires within the limits of the area of effect. The wall must be solidly based or it will collapse in a random pile. The wall is not solid, having many small openings and gaps. Missiles can be fired through these and those sheltering behind the wall are considered to have 50% cover. Creatures of small size can slip and wriggle through the openings in the wall at the rate of 10 feet per round. However, the wall is quite spiky and those moving through it suffer 1d8 hit points of damage for every 10 feet traveled. The wall can be cast under the feet of creatures. When

this is done, the wall appears everywhere except where the creature is standing, possibly entrapping them within it. Creatures in the area of effect suffer 2d8 points of damage when the wall appears. The wall can be smashed down by creatures with an 18 or greater strength if they use a blunt weapon. Every ten points of damage the creature inflicts on the wall causes the collapse of a 5' x 5' x 1/2' section of the wall. The wall is composed of the bones of many different types of creatures, fused in bizarre angles. It cannot be animated by an *animate dead* spell. The material component for this spell is a human bone, which much be snapped.

#### LEVEL FIVE:

**2. Cloud of pestilence:** Range 3", Duration 1 round/2 levels, Area of Effect 4" wide by 2" high by 2" deep cloud, Casting Time 5 segments. This spell creates a hideous purple cloud filled with buzzing insects. Anything failing its saving throw is afflicted with a wasting disease that reduces strength by half and inflicts 4 hit points of damage per round in the cloud, making spell casting impossible. The loss of strength persists until **cure disease** or **heal** is cast. Even making the saving throw, one is still subjected to the effects of a **summon insects** (D-3) spell. The caster is not immune to the effects of this spell.

**4. Gaseous form:** Range 0", Duration 1 turn/level, Area of Effect Self, Casting Time 2 segments. This spell allows the caster to assume gaseous form (as a vampire). The caster moves at 18" and can slide through even the smallest openings. If menaced by a severe wind, the caster must save versus spells or suffer 10?60 hit points of damage due to the strain of keeping his form intact. The caster can end this spell at any time and is always aware of his surroundings.

**5. Instant Animate Dead:** Range 1", Duration 1 turn/level, Area of Effect 15" radius around caster, Casting Time 3 segments. This spell causes all deceased creatures within the area of effect to temporarily rise up as either skeletons or zombies, depending on the state of decomposition. The undead will be under the complete control of the caster, who does not need to maintain concentration. This spell will not affect corpses less than a day old, as the tether to life has not been sufficiently severed yet.

**9. Telekinesis:** As the MU-5 spell except material component is a platinum coin.

**11. True Seeing:** As the C-5 spell except material component is a piece of obsidian.

#### LEVEL SIX:

**2. Blade Barrier:** As the C-6 spell except the material component is the hounگان's own saber, from which the barrier expands.

**4. Conjure lightning quasi-elemental:** This spell is identical in all respects to **conjure fire elemental** (D-6), except there is a 90% chance of summoning a 12 hit die lightning quasi-elemental and a 10% chance of summoning a massive 20 hit die monster. Like the druid spell, concentration is not necessary. The material component is an elaborately carved copper tube (minimum 50 gp) which is blown for the summons.

**8. Ray of Weakness:** Range 0", Duration 1 round/level, Area of Effect Cone 6" long, 3" diameter at end, 1/2" at base, Casting Time 4 segments. This spell flashes a ray in the direction chosen by the caster. All those in its path must save versus spells at -4 or suffer debilitating weakness; strength,



dexterity, and movement are all reduced by half for the duration of the spell. Strength-, dexterity-, and speed-enhancing items or spells (such as gauntlets of ogre power or boots of speed) will not function for the duration of this spell.

**9. Wards of defense:** Range 0", Duration 1 round/2 levels, Area of Effect Self, Casting Time 3 segments. This spell creates a stationary force field of a 2" radius around the caster, shielding him from all magical or physical attacks for the duration of the spell or until it is dispelled. The houngan may cast spells of level 3 and lower from inside the field, and may fire missiles from within the field. The houngan may move about within the field, but if he moves up to or beyond the 2" radius from his original position, the spell is dispelled.

## LEVEL SEVEN:

**7. Lichdom:** Range 1", Duration Permanent, Area of Effect One creature, Casting Time 3 turns. This spell can be cast on a willing Haut Houngan or Grand Bokor of at least 18th level. The houngan must first make a potion for the target to consume (costing 6,000 gp). After drinking the potion and being the recipient of the spell, the target must make a saving throw vs. death magic; success means lichdom, failure means death and the loss of an experience level (but the recipient can be resurrected normally). This spell can be cast on oneself.

**10. Withering:** Range 4", Duration Special, Area of Effect One creature, Casting Time 1 round. Unless the target saves versus spells at -3, this spell causes the target to be afflicted by a hideous wasting disease similar to leprosy. The fast-acting disease causes 2 hit points of damage per round and loss of 1 point of strength, dexterity, constitution, and charisma every four

rounds (if any reaches zero, the creature dies), and it renders the target incapable of movement. Every ten rounds, a random limb rots away. The wasting can only be halted by a **heal**, **limited wish**, or **wish** spell; only a **restoration** spell will restore the character's lost hit points and attributes, and only a **regeneration** spell will restore any lost limbs. A successful saving throw versus spells averts the most horrible aspects of the disease, but the target still loses the attribute points at the same rate. This lesser form of the disease can be halted with **cure disease** or **dispel magic**, and then lost attribute points can be restored through any healing spell, even **cure light wounds**.

## THE ENCHANTMENT

By Richard Miller

Dedicated to the memory of Gary Gygax

In search of adventure from days of old  
And weapons and scrolls and silver and gold,  
There is a place most young boys know  
With towering castles and mighty foes.

And caverns of doom where dragons dwell  
With treasures hidden and guarded well,  
And snares and traps and helldogs too,  
Preying on those both tried and true.

The elves with cunning, clerics wise,  
The halflings use both ears and eyes,  
To peer beyond a secret door  
Or loot dead bodies on the floor.

Testing potions without a doubt,  
Many a hobbit's life gave out;  
Fleeing a dragon undefied,  
Many a poor old halfling fried.

While others fought and won new skills,  
Waving wands and casting spells,  
With swords plus one and shields plus two,  
They learned to last a venture through!

## Tower of the Elephant

By Thulsa (<http://hyboria.xoth.net>)

An AD&D Adventure for Character Levels 4-6

The shimmering shaft of the tower rose frostily in the stars. In the sunlight it shone so dazzlingly that few could bear its glare, and men said it was built of silver. It was round, a slim perfect cylinder, a hundred and fifty feet in height, and its rim glittered in the starlight with the great jewels which crusted it. The tower stood among the waving exotic trees of a garden raised high above the general level of the city. **Robert E. Howard:** *"The Tower of the Elephant"*

**Introduction.** The Tower of the Elephant is a low-level adventure based on Robert E. Howard's short story by the same name. It is suitable for 2-4 characters of levels 4-6, preferably a mix of fighters and thieves, although a magic-user could be useful. The adventure should be playable even for those players who have read the original story; part of the challenge is to find Yag-Kosha and the Heart of the Elephant before the PCs stumble into Yara, the wizard of the Tower. Although it is not absolutely necessary, it obviously helps if the DM has read "the story prior to running this adventure.

**Summary:** In the temple district of Arenjun, Zamora's notorious City of Thieves, stands a glittering tower said to house a fabulous jewel called the Heart of the Elephant. The city's thieves avoid the tower and the jewel, fearing its master, the sorcerer Yara, who is said to be three hundred years old.

The PCs, being brave or foolish (or both), have no such hesitations. They set out to steal the jewel from the wizard. Inside the tower, the PCs learn why the jewel is called the Heart of the Elephant and how it turns out to be their key to destroying Yara.

The PCs should have little trouble getting directions to the Tower. At the same time, they hear rumors of Yara's dark powers, his incredible age, and how his power is drawn from the magical jewel. No unwanted visitor has ever returned from the tower.

### Rumor Table:

PCs in Arenjun are able to pick up 1-3 rumors from the following table if they spend some time seeking out information. This should make for some fine role-playing; be sure to play up everyone's great fear of the evil Yara.

### Die Roll

### Description

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | The wizard of the Elephant's Tower, is over 300 years old. (True)   |
| 2 | The Elephant's Tower was built in a single night using magic. (True)  |
| 3 | Undead guardians stalk the gardens of the Tower. (False)  |
| 4 | Yara came to Zamora from Khitai, where he lived in a great jade palace with a hundred servants. (Partly true)                 |
| 5 | Even the king of Zamora fears Yara's power. The king drinks heavily to dampen his fears. (True)                               |
| 6 | The wizard has one known weakness: He can only die if he is slain with a silver dagger blessed by a priest of Ishtar. (False) |
| 7 | Yara once killed a foreign prince by turning him into a spider, and then crushing the spider under his heel. (True)           |
| 8 | Re-roll (or DM's invention).  |



check means that the character drops down and suffers normal falling damage (1-6 per 10' fallen). PCs scaling the tower end up on the tower balcony (AREA 5-2). **Entering the Tower from the ground:** Of course, the PCs might also choose to enter the tower from the ground. They will have to fight, neutralize or sneak past the gate guards and the guards on the lower floors. If the guards manage to sound the alarm, Yara is alerted and responds in force, after preparing himself with protective spells.

Human guards patrol the outer garden day and night. Every ten minutes, there is a 1 in 4 chance that the guardians come across the PCs. They do not bother with questions before they attack, although at least one guard attempts to retreat to the tower to warn Yara of the intruders.

The guards are equipped with silvered corselets, jewelled sword-hilts and plumed helmets. There are 24 guards within the tower. The guardians (AC: 1 (w/DEX), F2; HP: 11 ea.; #ATT: 1; DM: 1-8) wear +3

**OUTER GARDENS.** The Tower itself is surrounded by two circular walls. Starlight or sunlight is reflected in a great jewelled dome. It is said that Yara built the tower in just one night, using powerful magic.

Each storey is about 25 feet tall (including the stone in floor and ceiling; inner height is about 18 feet), and there are six stories, although this is not apparent from the outside. There are cleverly constructed doors and windows, but they are closed and not visible from the outside. The occupants of the tower breathe air that comes from above.

**Scaling the Tower:** The walls of the tower are smooth and cannot be scaled without rope and grappling hook. A successful ranged attack roll against AC: 2 is required to throw and fasten a grappling hook to the balcony. Climbing up to the dome balcony is daunting; the walls are considered "very smooth" for purposes of a thief's Climb Walls ability (q.v., DUNGEON MASTERS GUIDE). PC thieves must make three climbing checks; at 50, 100 and 150 feet, respectively. Failing a



**studded leather** and bear a **+1 small steel shield**). They are armed with longswords.

**INNER GARDENS.** During the day, lions are kept in caves beneath the tower garden. Human guards patrol the inner garden from sunrise to sunset, after which the lions (see below) are released from their cages. Should the tower come under attack during the day, the guards attempt to warn Yara, and the wizard responds to intruders in force (by first releasing the lions in the garden, and then attacking with spells - levitating above the party if they are outdoors, trapping them within a wall of force if they are indoors).

During the night, there are no human guards in the Inner Gardens, but instead a far more insidious threat; a pack of five lions (AC: 5/6; MV: 12"; HD: 5+2; HP: 31, 30, 29, 28, 25; #ATT: 3; DM: 1-4/1-4/1-10; SA: rear claws for 2-7/2-7; SD: Surprised only on a 1). Yara has enchanted these lions with a permanent **silence 15' radius** spell. They attempt to move silently and attack with surprise. Spell-casters who come too close find it impossible to cast spells with verbal components.

**Taurus, the Prince of Thieves:** If the PCs are in the inner gardens at night, they encounter Taurus, the Nemedian Prince of Thieves, on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6. Taurus knows much about of the tower's background history (he knows 1d4+2 rumors from the Rumors Table). The master thief is initially distrustful towards the party. He won't simply stand aside and let the PCs steal all the treasures of the tower for themselves, but neither will he join a party unless he feels he is properly compensated. If the party offends or threatens him, he leaves, but if sufficiently provoked, he might wait for the right moment to sneak attack and use his black lotus dust against the offenders.

*Taurus, called a prince of thieves, was tall as the Cimmerian, and heavier; he was big-bellied and fat, but his every movement betokened a subtle dynamic magnetism, which was reflected in the keen eyes that glinted vitally, even in the starlight. He was barefooted and carried a*

*coil of what looked like a thin, strong rope, knotted at regular intervals.*

**Robert E. Howard:** "*The Tower of the Elephant*"

Taurus is tall and muscular (although with a big belly), but with lightning reflexes. Taurus has shoulder-length black hair and a wild, ungroomed beard. Although Taurus is a Nemedian, his skills rival those of the Zamoran master-thieves. He has travelled far in the Hyborian world and (somewhat exaggerated) tales of his escapades can be heard in the drinking-dens of major cities such as Belverus, Messantia, Asgalun and Shadizar.

Taurus will always carefully plan his thievery. He sometimes accepts missions to retrieve precious items for people who pay the right price, with few questions asked. As befits a Prince of Thieves, Taurus often swears by Bel, the Shemitish god of thievery.

Taurus is a 7th level Thief (AC: 7; MV: 12"; HP: 20; S: 14, I: 14, W: 13, D: 16, C: 8, CH: 17). He is armed with a **+2 dagger**. He further carries one dose of black lotus powder (equivalent to **dust of sneezing and choking**) stolen from a caravan bound for Stygia, 150 ft. of rope made from dead women's hair, and his thieves' tools.

## DUNGEON LEVEL

0-1 STAIRWAY. The stairs down from the entrance hall (Area 1-1) lead into this chamber.

0-2 HALL. This great hall is the living chambers of Yara's guardsmen. A large wooden table stands upon a floor of lapis-lazuli; upon the table are half-empty wine goblets and food plates, as well as dice and a few coins (2-20 sp).

Unless the alarm has been roused, there are 2-8 guards in this room (and unless it is night, they are wearing armor and keep weapons within arm's reach).

0-3 BARRACKS. Sixteen beds are arrayed along the walls of this room (the guards never sleep at the same time). Under the beds are small chests and bags



containing personal items such as combs, mirrors, a few coins (1d8+2 gp) and a 5% chance per chest examined to find something of greater value (roll on a random non-magical treasure table in the DMG).

0-4 TOILET. The guards' latrine stinks of stagnant urine and dirt. The sturdy door is kept closed most of the time.

0-5 ARMORY. Several weapon racks are stacked with melee and ranged weapons, including 12 daggers, 10 longswords, 2 battle-axes, 4 halberds, 7 shortbows and 80 arrows.

0-5A CELLS. These cells serve a dual purpose. In addition to keeping his prisoners here, Yara uses some cells as cages for the lions which patrol the gardens at night. If attacked in the dungeon during the day, the guards attempt to free the lions.

The prison cells currently contain nothing but empty chains and a few skeletal remains with cracked, yellowed bones (but see below). The DM might wish to place NPC prisoners in the cells to be used as seeds for further adventures.

For each cell examined, there is a 1 in 8 chance that the PCs encounter a violet fungus (AC: 7; MV: 1"; HD: 3; HP: 15; #ATT: 1-4; DM: 0; SA: flesh rot). It attacks without provocation. It is a recent inhabitant of the dungeon; not even the guards know about it yet.

0-6 FORBIDDEN VAULT. Yara has forbidden his guards to enter this room. The double bronze doors are green with age, covered with cobwebs, and feature strange designs and carvings of demonic spiders.

Inside the dark and unlit chamber, covered in more cobwebs, is a strange idol, nine feet tall, representing a man of Eastern appearance. It appears to be of a greyish stone, but if the stone is damaged (5 hp or more), it is revealed that the idol is actually made of gold but encased in stone. The origin, history and

true value of the statue are unknown (and are left up to the DM to decide).

If anyone lingers in this vault, they are attacked by a pair of spectres (AC: 2; MV: 15"/30"; HD: 7+3; HP: 40, 26; #ATT: 1; DM: 1-8; SA: energy drain; SD: +1 or better weapon needed to hit) who appear to be the shades of Khitan warriors, judging by their ancient armor and weapons.

## LOWER LEVELS

1-1. GRAND ENTRANCE HALL. The main doors to the tower are 9 feet tall and made of bronze. Three guards are always stationed outside the doors. In the event of an attack, two remain to fight intruders while the third attempts to escape to warn Yara.

Inside the entrance hall, the western set of stairs lead down to the dungeon level (Area 0-1). The eastern set of stairs lead up to the first floor (Area 2-1). Rich tapestries adorn the walls, but the room is dominated by a black stone statue of a giant spider which stands on a low dais to the north. The statue is non-magical.

2-1 STAIRWAY. The western set of stairs lead to the grand entrance hall (Area 1-1); the eastern stairs lead up to Area 3-1.

2-2 EMPTY ROOM. This chamber is empty.



2-3. **YAG-KOSHA'S PRISON.** This is the prison of Yag-Kosha, the elephant-being of Yag (see the statistics for details of his appearance). In his current state he is mangled, blinded and broken. On a gold and ivory altar beside the creature is a huge crimson crystal, the Heart of the Elephant (worth 10,000 gp).

Several outcomes of the party's encounter with Yag-Kosha are possible. If the party approaches the elephant-being with respect, allowing Yag-Kosha to "identify" them with his proboscis, and he feels they can be trusted (using **ESP** to find out whether they intend to simply steal his gem and leave, for example), the elephant-being begs the party to kill him. This will empower the "sorcery of the Blood and the Jewel" (a **trap the soul** spell), allowing the PCs to attempt to imprison Yara in the gem.

On the other hand, if the PCs attacks the elephant-being or behave disrespectfully, Yag-Kosha ignores them (killing him simply ends his misery, but if slain in combat he will obviously not help the party by enchanting the Heart).

Yag-Kosha, the elephant-being of Yag (AC: 3; MV: 6"; HD: 11+11; HP: 31; #ATT: 3; DM: 6-9/6-13/6-13; SA: spell-like abilities; SD: spells; See NEW MONSTERS, q.v.). Yag-Kosha's stats differ from those presented in the NEW MONSTERS appendix ; he is blind, weak from torture, and has long since lost the ability to fly, since his wings withered when his race first came to earth.

2-4 **MAP ROOM.** This room contains several large maps of Zamora, Shem and Turan, including maps of major cities, caravan routes and oases. A few maps contain the suspected locations of lost cities, tombs and treasure hoards.

2-5 **TRAPPED CHAMBER.** The door to this chamber is trapped with a poisonous needle trap (save or die). The chamber itself contains little of value.

2-6 **EMPTY ROOM.** This small chamber is empty.

3-1 **YARA'S STUDY.** The archetypical wizard's study, this room has a white marble floor and is furnished with rich silvered tapestries (worth 320 gp), two wooden divans with silken cushions (50 gp), and a large ivory table (200 gp). In a secret compartment in the eastern wall are two small wooden boxes. Both are trapped with needles which deliver the dreaded Greenblood Poison. If the saving throw is failed, the victim loses 1-2 permanent points of Constitution. The first box contains a scroll of **bestow curse** and **magic jar**. The second box contains a bronze circlet, set with an amber in the form of a spider, inscribed with ancient Zamoran letters (worth 500 gp).

3-2 **LIBRARY.** Yara's library contains a medium-sized collection of sorcerous tomes, among them titles such as The Seven Curses of Khrosha, The Book of the Spider-God, and The Invocations of Zath. The books mentioned each have 1-3 random magic-user spells within their pages, levels 2-4, as well as much interesting information regarding the spider-cult of Yezud and their god, Zath.

## UPPER LEVELS

4-1 **STAIRWAY.** The western set of stairs lead down to Area 3-1; the eastern stairs lead up to Area 5-1.

4-2 **FAILED EXPERIMENT.** Yara used this room to attempt the construction of a flesh golem. He was only partly successful; his rituals have produced a hideous amalgam of dead body parts with a small spark of unintelligent life. The creature is in effect equivalent to a juju-zombie (AC: 6; MV: 9"; HD: 3+12; HP: 29; #ATT: 1; DM: 3-12; SD: +1 or better weapons needed to hit, immunities). The wizard has no control over the creature, so he has locked it away in this room; the flesh golem-zombie attacks anyone entering the room.

4-3 **YARA'S CHAMBER.** Unless roused by the alarm, Yara, the wizard of the Elephant's Tower is here, slumbering in evil dreams induced by the black lotus. Since the door to his chamber is locked, however, he probably wakes up and prepares himself to face any intruders should someone attempt to breach the

doors. The doors are **wizard locked** at 10th level of ability.

Yara, the wizard of the Elephant's Tower, is a potent foe.

Then came Yara, versed in dark knowledge handed down through the days of barbarism, since before Atlantis sank. First he sat at my feet and learned wisdom. But he was not satisfied with what I taught him, for it was white magic, and he wished evil lore, to enslave kings and glut a fiendish ambition. I would teach him none of the black secrets I had gained, through no wish of mine, through the eons. But his wisdom was deeper than I had guessed; with guile gotten among the dusky tombs of dark Stygia, he trapped me into divulging a secret I had not intended to bare; and turning my own power upon me, he enslaved me ...No more was I a god to kindly jungle-folk -- I was slave to a devil in human form.

**Robert E. Howard:** *"The Tower of the Elephant"*

Yara is a tall, gaunt old man. His eyes are cold and cruel when the sorcerer is awake; dilated and far-staring when he is intoxicated with the fumes of the yellow lotus. He dresses in silken robes and his voice is like the hiss of a cobra.



Although Yara is well-versed in arcane lore and magical spells, it is the magical jewel known as the Heart of the Elephant which is his true source of power. Yara had travelled far and wide, learning black and forbidden magic, when he came upon a yellow-skinned people worshipping an elephant-headed being in the jungles of Khitai. Through trickery and magic he turned this godling, Yag-Kosha, into his slave and brought him back to Zamora in chains of steel and sorcery.

It is said that Yag-Kosha built Yara's tower in a single night, and that the Heart of the Elephant keeps Yara immortal; he is already over 300 years old.

Yara is driven by a fiendish ambition. He is feared by all in Arenjun; even the king of Zamora fears him greatly. Yara is a 10th level magic-user (AC: 6(8); MV: 12"; HP: 26; #ATT: 1; DM: by weapon; S: 11; I: 19; W: 16; D: 14; C: 14; CH: 15). He wears a **+2 ring of protection** and a **+3 dagger** at his hip in a jewelled hilt (450 gp value). He further carries a **potion of vitality**, a **scroll of protection from devils**, and a scroll with two spells: **charm monster** and **stoneskin**. Note that Yara is immune to 1st level illusion/phantasm spells due to his supernatural Intelligence.

Yara has memorized the following spells:

first level: **armor** (already cast), **charm person**, **magic missile**, **shield**

second level: **ESP**, **levitate**, **mirror image**, **web**

third level: **dispel magic**, **hold person**, **lightning bolt**

fourth level: **dimension door**, **polymorph other**

fifth level: **contact other plane**, **wall of force**

The outer door is of ebony, with a silver grinning skull in the center.

The chamber itself is lavishly furnished with rich Iranistani carpets (worth 100 gp), silken tapestries from Khitai depicting demons

and devils (200 gp), and gold-decorated wooden chairs and divans (140 gp).

**Note:** If the PCs have successfully negotiated with and/or freed Yag-Kosha from his terrestrial prison, Yara becomes the target of a **trap the soul** spell cast by Yag-Kosha. This means that if a character has the gem prepared by Yag-Kosha (easily worth 10,000 gp), and can get within short range of Yara, he can complete the spell by speaking its final word. If Yara fails the save he is captured inside the gem. If the wizard makes the save the PCs are in for trouble!

**5-1 TRAPPED TREASURE CHAMBER.** Massive double doors of iron-reinforced wood prevent entry to this room. The doors are **wizard locked** at 10th level of ability. Inside is a great chamber filled with wealth; Iranistani carpets (worth 400 gp), fine silks from far-off Khitai (700 gp), and several chests containing Kothian silver coins (4,000 sp) and gold from the mines of Ophir (700 gp). One chest contains two **potions of healing** and one **potion of heroism**.

A giant spider (AC: 4; HD: 4+4; HP: 22; #ATT: 1; DM: 2-8; SA: poison, webs) guards this treasure room. Initially, it hides in the ceiling, and jumps down on unwary intruders. A set of stairs lead up to the top floor (Area 6-1); another set of stairs lead down (Area 4-1).

**5-2 OUTER TERRACE.** Attempts to scale the tower, if successful, are likely to end up on this terrace which juts out 20 feet from the main tower walls.

**6-1 HALLWAY.** The stairs lead down to Area 5-1.

**6-2 STORAGE.** The room contains various supplies, such as candles, chains, chalk, ink and paper, oils and powders, wax, spare clothes and so on. A thorough search reveals a silvered dagger (worth 100 gp).

**6-3 OBSERVATORY.** Several large windows in this chamber provide a great view of Zamora's night sky, allowing Yara to study the movement of the planets and the stars. Through magically enhanced

telescopes he has been trying to discover the green planet Yag (which according to Yag-Kosha circles on the outer rim of space), but he has so far been unsuccessful.

**6-4 LABORATORY.** This is a complete alchemist's lab.

**6-5 SHRINE OF THE SPIDER GOD.** Yara is a worshipper of Zath, the spider-god of Yezud. This chamber contains an evil shrine to that god. A black, three-pronged pedestal stands in the middle of the room, surrounded on all four sides by curtains of filmy, finely-spun cobweb. This web affects those attempting to pass through it (without first speaking a command word, "la! Zathar!") as a double-strength **web** spell.

Atop the pedestal is a silver amulet set with a yellow amber stone. Inside the amber is a tiny black spider. For a priest of the spider-god, the amulet functions as a **necklace of prayer beads** with the **bead of karma** special bead. For a non-follower of Zath, wearing the amulet has the same effect as that of a **periapt of foul rotting**. Yara cannot use it himself and keeps it for future bargaining with a priest of Yezud.

If the amulet is removed from the pedestal, a swarm of 2-12 tiny spiders (AC: 8; MV: 2"; HD: 1/2; HP: 2 each; #ATT: 1; DM: 0; SA: Poison (save at +2 or be paralyzed for 2-8 rounds) scurries out and attacks the transgressor!

**6-6 STORAGE.** Similar to Area 6-2, this room contains supplies of little value.

## CONCLUSION

Yara is a powerful wizard and could possibly kill the PCs whether they have Yag-Kosha's enchanted heart or not. The outcome of the adventure depends on the PCs' tactics, luck and timing. At the DM's option, the Yara's tower might collapse if the wizard is killed, since it was built using sorcery. The ruins might also become cursed (or haunted by strange monsters) to prevent player characters (and others - after all, Arenjun is the City



of Thieves) from plundering the gem-set outer walls.

## NEW MONSTER

### ELEPHANT-BEING OF YAG

I am very old, oh man of the waste countries; long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world, from the green planet Yag, which circles for ever in the outer fringe of this universe. We swept through space on mighty wings that drove us through the cosmos quicker than light, because we had warred with the kings of Yag and were defeated and outcast. But we could never return, for on earth our wings withered from our shoulders. Here we abode apart from earthly life. We fought the strange and terrible forms of life which then walked the earth, so that we became feared, and were not molested in the dim jungles of the east, where we had our abode.

**Robert E. Howard:** *"The Tower of the Elephant"*

FREQUENCY: Very Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 3

MOVE: 12"/24"

HIT DICE: 11+11

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 6-9/6-13/6-13

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spell-like abilities

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Genius

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Neutral

SIZE: L

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: nil/nil

X.P. VALUE: XII/4,400 + 16/hit point

The elephant-beings of Yag are a race of winged, elephant-headed humanoids from another planet or dimension. They have green skin, topaz eyes, wide flaring ears, a curling proboscis and white tusks. Due to their extreme longevity, usually learn to speak and understand most human languages.





These beings rely primarily on their magical abilities in combat, although they will not hesitate to use their considerable physical strength if it seems appropriate to the situation. Their physical attacks consist of a gore with their tusks and a pair of smiting blows from their fists. At will, an elephant-being of Yag may use any of the following spell-like abilities: **cause/remove fear**, **dispel magic**, **ESP**, **ray of enfeeblement**, **shield** and **wizard mark**. They may cast **fabricate** and **major creation** seven times per day. Once per day they can grant another's **limited wish**. The beings also have the ability to cast a special form of **trap the soul**, which requires the sacrifice of a sentient creature of equal or greater Hit Dice than the target. Note that the elephant-being can sacrifice itself to employ this ability. All spell-like abilities are employed as if the elephant-being were an appropriate spell-caster of 18th level. Elephant-beings of Yag take only one-half damage from acid, cold, and electricity-

based attacks. They possess both infravision and ultravision 60'.

Originally from the green planet Yag on the outer rim of space, a number of their race rebelled against their king, but were defeated and cast out. They fled through space on great wings which carried them quicker than light, and came to earth before the rise of Atlantis and Valusia. They witnessed the Cataclysm and were worshipped as gods by the jungle-folk of the East. The elephant-beings of Yag are not immortal, although their lifespans are claimed to be "as the lives of planets and constellations". Upon coming to earth, the race lost their wings and could not escape from the planet. As such it is a dead or dying race; Yag-Kosha was the only known specimen left alive before he asked Conan to kill him, thus releasing him from his earthly prison.

HERE ENDS THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

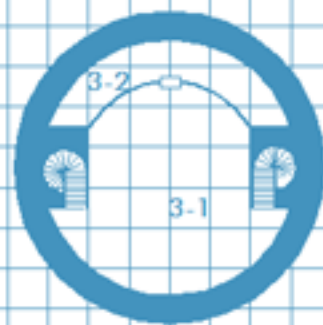
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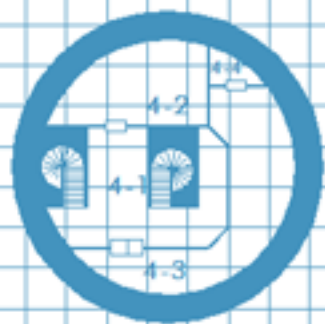
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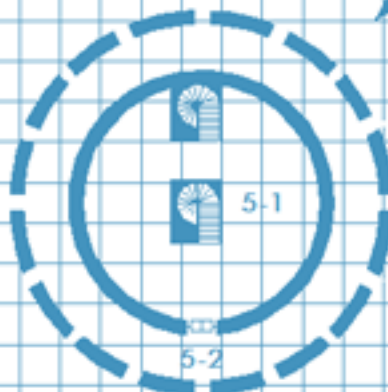
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## Alien Versus...Druid?!

by Thomas Worthington

NOTE: This article is based on a couple of lines from *E. Gary Gygax's* many online postings. One stated that druids do not worship any deities, and the other that they regard many of the monsters of **AD&D** as alien intruders. That is the total contribution from any "official" source for the train of thought that the rest of this text represents. Also note that the text assumes *Unearthed Arcana* is in use at least in regards to Druids.

### IN THE BEGINNING—THE DRUIDS' WORLDVIEW

The world was once inhabited by animals and plants whose "purpose" was to survive and thrive in a pure "survival of the fittest" environment which favoured the breeding of those populations which were best suited to that environment.

When each living thing died its spirit or soul would be reincarnated again in a new form or, having seen all it wanted of life as an individual, would join with the spirit of Nature itself. This spirit is the closest thing the druids have to a god and they often refer to it as a female. Their chief duty is to protect her from attack by unnatural beings.

As each spirit travelled around the cycle it learnt and grew and so the world developed and changed and became ever more complex, sophisticated, and beautiful but still red in tooth and claw, for that is the power that drives the engine of development. In other words, druids are evolutionists, and this is the philosophical origin of their ceremonial combats.

At some point, one or more species arose which had freewill and sentience. In turn, freewill allowed for personal dispositions and these led to patterns of behaviour which are now thought of as the nine alignments, including neutral but excluding True Neutral.

The appearance of these proto-alignments was of no initial concern to Nature as they simply represented survival strategies and as such were just part of the never-ending natural struggle. Even if one

of these had become dominant it would not have represented any more of a threat to the natural order than when one animal develops a better poison and all those members of the species who do not possess it are out-competed, while at the same time the race begins to find a counter to the new development, and so the balance of nature is preserved.

### THE GREATEST GAME

When the first sentient creatures were starting to take and espouse ideological and philosophical stances, and perhaps for a long time afterwards, the world looked much like our own. There were few, if any, "monsters" of the sort that are not found on Earth today. (EGG, for example, has stated that Oerth was very similar to Earth about 2500 years before the initial assumed game date).

Alas, the world is not alone within the Prime Material Plane. It is only one of an infinite set of possible worlds, separated by the dimension of probability, as two people are separated by the dimensions of distance or two events by the dimension of time. Only the greatest of druids can walk this axis, visiting alternative worlds, where greater distances represent worlds less and less like the traveller's native world (and, to the inhabitants of each, of course, theirs is the original world and the others the alternatives). The DM might, for game purposes, find it convenient to treat our real Earth as the "Most Probable" end of this axis. What the other end might be is literally anyone's guess.

## Alien Gods

But Hierophants of the Cabal are not the only beings able to traverse the planes of existence. The druids teach the higher members of their order that a war has raged for untold aeons across the Prime Material Plane. This war has taken on the form of a great game with pieces being moved across the vast board by shadowy players. The players of this game are commonly termed "The Gods", and their servants are the playing pieces in a game designed to make inter-deity conflict as rare as possible—better that worshippers die than the shining gods should ever perish!

The druidic view of the gods is that they are beings who roam the alternative universes of the Prime Material Plane looking for worlds where intelligence has arisen and then attempt to bend that intelligence to worship of them. Worship is one of the things which make a deity stronger and more powerful and thus able to conquer new worlds. Even greater power is gained from those followers who become so identified with a deity that their soul journeys to live on that god's plane after death.

The druids claim that once a world is converted to exclusive worship of the deity or pantheon in question, they move on, revisiting only in order to reap the harvest of their worship and so refresh them for the ongoing struggle to master the whole of the Prime Material Plane. These 'gods' are all convinced utterly of their own correctness or, at the least, of the unworthiness of those who would oppose them. It is said that this arrogance is part of what makes a god a god. It is also a trait which many would claim the druids share.

Nevertheless, once these self-styled gods found the campaign world, they set about using it and its inhabitants for their own ends. For many, not just the evil ones, this involved making changes to both the world and the living things in and on it.

Suddenly the natural order was thrown into disarray as these "Outsiders" (actually

a derogatory term originating with the druids) used their powers to introduce allied races from other worlds, or create new races and creatures either from whole cloth or moulded from existing species. Many native inhabitants were dominated by awe or force. These beings formed the pieces in the great chess game of the gods. The means used varied largely by the alignment of the deities but all contributed in some way to establishing the new world order.

## Artificial Life

As a rough rule, any race which is listed in THE MONSTER MANUAL has having an inherent alignment is seen by the druids as literally alien or, at best, a native race which has been perverted by the efforts of the gods who wish to rule them and use them as their tools on the Prime Material Plane.

The DM should draw up a list of which races are viewed as native by the druids and so exempt from their Great Plan of purification. The DM must decide for him/herself what the relationship between druids and the creatures of the fairy realm is but I would recommend treating them as totally native to the campaign world and likewise ill-disposed to the newcomers and their fancy religions and churches. The demi-humans must be decided on too, but elves and halflings can be druids by the book and so presumably are accepted as native to the game world. Giants are another strong possibility for native status too, in my opinion.

The world—Nature—rebelled against the invasion in much the same way as a body does when invaded by disease. Instead of antibodies, Nature produced the druids who are charged with using whatever means necessary to eject the invaders. The DM might like to imagine the druids' attitude as being similar to that of R.A.F. pilots shooting down Luftwaffe planes over the cliffs of Dover. The objective is to return to normality and any blame for the death and destruction caused by the struggle is squarely placed on the shoulders of the invader.

## The Cabal

Many of the hierophant druids (16th level and up) are employed by the uppermost elite of the druidic order: the Cabal. The Cabal's membership requirements are strict and simple—one must be a 23rd level druid and willing to work towards the overthrow of the Great Wheel of the outer planes.

Many of the highest level druids are multi-classed elves who have had perhaps two thousand years to accumulate arcane knowledge and magical equipment. Their henchmen will be followers of "the Old Faith" and at least 18th level of experience in their classes, although lower level characters right down to 1st level will be used by proxy on many occasions. All (knowing) associates of the Cabal must be "non-aligned" in the same way as druids.

Such an organisation is not to be safely disregarded even by those who rule entire planes, despite its relatively small size.

The ultimate goal of the Cabal is to find a way to permanently close off access to the Inner Plane to these interlopers, or at the very least to seal their own native world. If the Cabal ever succeeded in this goal, then some even amongst the eternal gods wonder if eternity might turn out to be a good deal shorter than expected.

## The Great Wheel and the Broken Cycle

The reason for all this opposition to the Great Game, and the main motivation for the druids, is what happens after death. Although the gods who rule the outer planes gain some power from the devotion of the living, they value the actual souls of the dead much more. Each inhabitant of, for example, Gladshiem, feeds the power of the ruling pantheon which inhabits it, and especially the specific deity worshipped by the individual. Each dying worshipper's acts and thoughts in life somehow activate a connection to one of the planes of the Great Wheel which then draws their soul or spirit to it to spend eternity serving and powering its ruler(s).

Once a spirit/soul is ensnared by the worship of a god and the conscious adherence to an alignment, it is trapped in the single experience of its afterlife. While it is true that for many this is exactly what they desire, the druids' view is that they have been duped and that even such an existence in the Seven Heavens is a myopic parody of the endless vistas of everlasting and ever-changing life which are lost forever, while the undesirability of the fate of those who inhabit the Abyss or Hell is beyond debate.

This "theft" of souls and the breaking of the cycle of reincarnation is, to the Cabal, the ultimate crime. The gods are quite literally stealing the very souls of their worshippers. No matter what justification is offered to them there is little chance that they would ever bring themselves to a permanent reconciliation with even the most benign-seeming of celestial beings.

Each meeting of the Cabal begins with the members speaking the phrase "The cycle must be unbroken" in unison, and ends likewise with the phrase "The cycle will be unbroken".

## THE ORDER OF THE DRUIDS

All of the above is, of course, not revealed in one huge burst to hopeful candidates for acceptance into the more mundane Order of non-hierophant druids. The opponents of the Cabal are the gods themselves and consequently secrecy is a constant in their workings. It takes literally years for a person to build up enough trust with them before they would even discuss the ideas in this article. The gods have a great deal of patience; the druids must have too.

If a DM wishes to use this vision of druidism in their game, and their players have not read this document, I would suggest not mentioning anything to Ovates and only letting Initiates into the fact that there is a degree of animosity between the druids and the gods worshipped by others. As the character climbs the ladder, s/he can be fed more information and the final step to becoming a full druid at 12th level should be accompanied by a complete "history



of the world" as seen from the druid perspective.

From 3rd level onward, the druid receives their spells through some Nature spirit. This spirit will act as their 'handler' and will attempt to gauge and guide their feelings towards the ultimate elimination of the gods. Initially this spirit will stress the artificiality of the other alignments. If a character seems to be unable to take on, even in the small way that an Initiate of the 1st circle does, a long term plan to return the world to a state of godlessness, then it may become apparent at this point. As they climb the circles, any such issues will become more and more of a concern although they do not automatically become a barrier until hierophant ranks are reached.

Any character who ever knowingly rejects any or all of the orthodox druidic view will, of course, no longer be in harmony with the source of their powers and will therefore immediately lose all their druid abilities and spells, including first and second level spells. Don't cross Mother Nature!

## RELATIONS WITH OTHERS

From the above it can be seen that the Cabal's long term goal is one of cosmic significance against which the issues of short term alliances with non-neutrals pale into insignificance. Thus, it is clear that the traditional outside view of druids—that one can not trust them because they may change side mid-fight to "preserve the balance"—is nonsense. Such short term thinking is very unlikely to serve the druid's long term goals at all.

Nor can one say that druids wish to see the world given over to equal amounts of Law, Chaos, Good, and Evil except insofar as that amount is nil. They reject all the alignments and wish the world rid of their ideological adherence completely.

An individual druid can and will certainly make friends and allies, particularly amongst the races which the DM has determined are "native" for the game world and insofar as these may include kobolds, orcs, dragons and so forth (as the

DM decides) there will plenty of reasons for them to mix with other characters.

A druid will almost certainly find it much easier to work with a Chaotic Good Treant than a Lawful Evil Devil, and possibly a Chaotic Evil Quasit even less so, but these are really issues of trust than any sign that Chaotic Good is accepted as a "correct" philosophy. Outsiders and their agents (e.g., clerics) will always be treated with more suspicion but as a practical matter those representing Good will probably be favoured in the short-term over those representing Evil, simply because the latter is more immediately destructive compared to the former.

As people, druids generally love nature and wild places but most also see Humans and Demi-humans and their towns, farms, and so forth as no more unnatural than an ant's nest or a bee hive. All native creatures are entitled to find their own survival strategies and the sentient races no less so.

Druids do, of course, feel that they are endowed with a particular insight which can advise those who will listen as to which strategies are too short-term and will ultimately lead to destruction. If they feel that a group of creatures—"native" or not—are causing havoc (by any means) for no purpose, then they will intervene. But they are not simply opposed to all human development of land, for example.

## The Gods

The gods and, by extension, their highest-level clerics, know that the druids oppose their very presence in the world and their views on the subject vary by alignment and religion. The Evil powers especially do not care at all about the druids, their desire for independence, or their plans. The vast majority of these beings are far too arrogant to ever consider such a small group as anything other than a sideshow compared to their everlasting struggle with the forces of Good (to say nothing of their everlasting struggles with the other forces of Evil). Asmodeus may occasionally ponder the issue but He is secure in the belief that no mortal power

can reshape the multiverse. He may or may not be right.

The Good deities, when they teach anything at all on the subject, generally teach that the druids are simply misguided and will in time come to realise that the newcomers are no more threat than the appearance of a new species and can, once the disruption of Evil is overcome, be integrated into the “natural” world in a harmonious way. Indeed, they say, “natural” is not really a valid term to use in connection with druids who can call up flame strikes and cause a person’s heart to stop beating with the point of a finger. The LN and CN alignments viewpoints on the druid issue are very similar to each other, ironically enough, and basically amount to “Things have changed; get over it”. This underscores another misconception about druids—they do not feel any more connected with the “semi-neutral” alignments such as LN.

### **Nature Gods**

Nature gods are a tricky issue that requires some thought from the DM. The druids do not have to worship any such god but, if the DM desires, they may view some of these beings as more powerful analogues of themselves. Just as they are empowered in relatively large numbers to protect Nature, so She may also have created a few much more powerful beings—aspects of herself—to muster those who are not druids to her defence. An alternative for some or all such deities, is to treat them as the ultimate usurpers who desire to replace Nature completely. Obviously, as such they will be a particular target of Druid activity. This would be my interpretation.

### **True Neutral**

“True Neutral” is not a term used by druids in connection with themselves. The druids view themselves as non-aligned. The druids do not want a balance of the other alignments, they want to eliminate them all, at least as idealised goals.

Good, Evil, Law, Chaos are all options to those with freewill but animals and plants get by without such notions and the druids believe that they are simply too rigid. While any of the nine primary alignments can be a sensible approach to particular situation, the druid way of thinking is that these positions should be discarded when the situation changes. Nature has granted the intelligent races a great power of flexibility in the form of freewill and intelligence and it is foolish to abandon this in order to cling to a particular moral or ethic which may have outlived its usefulness.

**The plane of Concordant Opposition** was initially introduced in DEITIES AND DEMIGODS as the home of those beings which do follow the True Neutral philosophy, often ascribed to the druids, which desires a balance of alignments. These beings do not wish to see Good overcome Evil, or Chaos overcome Law, or vice versa. For their own reasons, they wish a more-or-less equal mix of all. Once again, the druidic view is that these beings are using the world for their own ends and they are as much their foes as any other Outer-Planar beings. Possibly more so than most, in fact, as Concordant Opposition and True Neutral could be taken as a parody or insult to the druidic viewpoint, a sort of “counter-propaganda”.

### **Other-Planar Allies**

Across the multiverse, the Cabal may find others that feel as they do and are willing to work together towards a common goal of cutting the Outer Planes off from the Inner Planes. One example might be the Blasphemous Accelerators of Tekumel (AKA Empire of the Petal Throne), and another could perhaps be Elric and the inhabitants of Moorcock’s Tanelorn. These and other alternative Prime Material Plane allies might be factors in a high-level campaign where the Cabal is active.

## NEW MONSTERS

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**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** I know the following monsters are –charitably– a bit odd. They should be; they came to me in a dream. I dreamed that my wife was working in the Netherlands again. While wandering the wonderfully cramped, shop-filled streets of The Hague, I stumbled upon a gaming store (a Game Designers Workshop store, to be precise). There, on a dusty shelf, I saw it.

### *Fiend Folio II.*

Stunned, I lifted the tome off the shelf. It had an electric blue cover, much like the first installment. Rather than the iconic githyanki, however, there was some other fearsome beast. I wish I could recall it more clearly, but I do recollect that its claws came out of its face. 'This was never released in the U.S.,' I recall thinking as I flipped eagerly through the pages. It was chock full of weird and nasty critters; acid mephitis, spider-bears and termite people among them, all depicted with the wonderfully gritty and eccentric artistic styles of Russ Nicholson and Alan Hunter. There, midway through, I found the time-traveling Kzaddich and their arch-enemies from the Fourth Dimension, the Tsalakians. Without further ado, I present a pair of monsters that make the flumph look positively pedestrian by comparison.

### KZADDICH

FREQUENCY: Very Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1-4

ARMOR CLASS: -8

MOVE: 12" (24")

HIT DICE: 1+1

% IN LAIR: 10%

TREASURE TYPE:

NO. ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Haste

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: See below

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Neutral (with Good tendencies)

INTELLIGENCE: High

SIZE: M

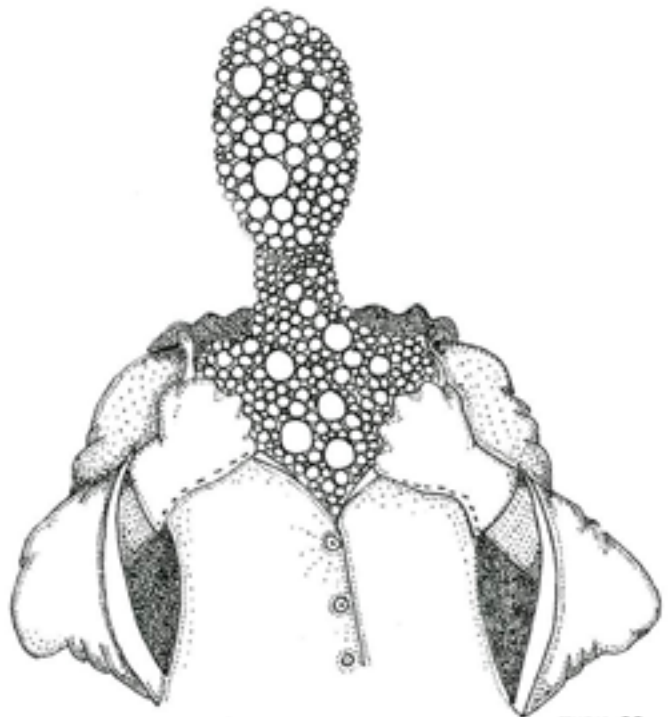
PSIONIC ABILITY: 240

Attack/Defense Modes: C, D/F, H

X.P. VALUE: 296 + 2/hit point

This weird but benevolent race exists outside of the normal concept of time. They may come from the distant future, but could just as easily hail from the distant past or from an alternate reality altogether. The existence of these enigmatic time travelers is only whispered in the most arcane of works. When encountered, they are generally working to defy the plans of their arch-enemies, the Tsalakians (q.v.), and organize resistance against them.

The Kzaddich (singular and plural) always appear as man-sized figures, completely covered by cowled cloaks. Their own speech sounds not unlike wind chimes. When dealing with sentient creatures, they use their native telepathy. Their true form



defies immediate description; uncloaked, they appear as an amalgamation of shifting, softly glowing spheres in a rough approximation of a bipedal form.

The Kzaddich can slip in and out of the time-stream at will. As a result, they are exceedingly difficult to harm. They can anticipate the future actions of their opponents; this results in their high armor class. Moreover, they make saving throws as if 8th level clerics and take half or no damage from damage-causing spells allowing saves, allowed a save even against spells that normally allow none, whether they cause damage (such as **magic missile**) or not (such as **faerie fire**). They are immune to all person-affecting spells (**hold person**, **charm person**, etc.) and cannot be effected by spells effecting time, such as **slow** or **time stop**. Indeed, Kzaddich can ignore the effects of these spells and even interrupt and take part in such magics, such as **withdraw**, **tempus fugit**, etc. (no doubt to the surprise of the casters). They are unaffected by magical aging.

Kzaddich are loathe to engage in combat, but if forced, they have the innate spell-like ability to **haste** themselves at will. If faced with certain capture or death, a Kzaddich can, at will, simply slip into the far future or past to avoid the situation, the game effect being similar to **teleport without error**.

Accomplished psionics, all Kzaddich have the following devotions at the 8th level of mastery: body equilibrium, cell adjustment, levitation, object reading, and telepathy.

The Kzaddich do not perceive time the way others do; they can perceive the future. As a result, they have, in effect, an at-will ability similar to **augury** that is 90% effective. It should go without saying that a Kzaddich can never be surprised. Twice per day, a Kzaddich may use the spell-like ability of **time stop** at the 20th level of ability, effectively permitting them to stop time for 2 full melee rounds. By touch, a Kzaddich may remove a creature from its place in the time-stream and bring it with them while time-stopping. By linking hands, a Kzaddich can withdraw up to two beings with them.

Almost nothing is known of the Kzaddich culture. They vie against the machinations of the Tsalakians on a scale that mortal creatures cannot comprehend and hint at a vast war between the two races. Kzaddich do not appear to have individual names, but often adopt pseudonyms when dealing with others (who they refer to, not unkindly, as "linnears").

## TSALAKIAN

FREQUENCY: Very Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1-3

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: Infinite

HIT DICE: 2+2

% IN LAIR: 10%

TREASURE TYPE:

NO. ATTACKS: 4

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4/1-4/1-4/1-4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: See below

INTELLIGENCE: Very

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Neutral (with Evil tendencies)

SIZE: M

PSIONIC ABILITY: 220

Attack/Defense Modes: B, C/F, H

X.P. VALUE: 510 + 3/hit point

The existence of these baleful beings is rumored only among the most erudite of sages and scholars. They exist outside of normal space. Their place of origin is unknown, but it is said that they have no individual wills of their own, but are instead the fearful servitors of some greater malign power. They eternally scheme against, and are in turn defied by, the Kzaddich (q.v.).

The Tsalakians appear as tall men, completely enshrouded in cowl-like cloaks. Although capable of speaking with any sentient being (an innate form of **tongues**), their voices float bizarrely around them, as though through a **ventriloquism** spell with a random range and direction. They rarely allow their true forms to be seen, for they are difficult to comprehend. When uncloaked, they have been described as a blurry whirl of teeth forming a rough approximation of a man-like form.



Tsalakians can bend and fold themselves through space, and are therefore extraordinarily difficult to successfully strike (thereby accounting for their high armor class). Moreover, they are fearsome in combat as they have the spell-like ability to **blink** at will. Their multiple attacks represent their ability to strike from several directions at once. A Tsalakian may divide its attacks among opponents within 20' of itself.

They may move any distance in any given round, ignoring physical or magic obstacles in their path. This functions as an innate form of **teleport without error**. They can even enter concealed or hidden areas, as they do not perceive space as others do, and can see "around" walls, floors and ceilings. Thus, they can disregard held portals, walls of force and the like. Secret, concealed and hidden doors and traps are always exposed to their weird senses, as are thieves attempting to hide in shadows. Note that they are, however, subject to illusions and cannot perceive invisible, out of phase, ethereal or astral objects or creatures. Unless opponents are protected by such means, a Tsalakian cannot be surprised. They are immune to "person" affecting spells, such as **charm person**.

Tsalakians are allowed saving throws against all spells, even **magic missile**, and take half or no damage from damage-causing spells on a successful saving throw. They make all saves as 8th level clerics. They cannot be restrained by any impediment and act as if wearing **rings of free action** at all times.

Tsalakians possess psionic ability. They have the following devotions at the 6th level of mastery: detect good/evil, detect magic, empathy, and telepathic projection. Note that these creatures often use the latter ability to project fear to those that oppose them.

Tsalakians, when encountered, are usually in the act of planning or carrying out some great ill, for they perpetually strive to bend

all other sentient beings to the will of their dread master. They prefer to work through others, themselves remaining out of the fray if possible, revealing their fearsome abilities only if pressed. Their hatred of the Kzaddich knows no bounds and they can detect the presence of those creatures and will always attack them on sight.



## VAMPIRE LORDS

Looking for the ultimate villain? This one comes with some teeth! (Part I)

By Brian Wells

The contents of this document are presented as a detailed outline for the Dungeon Master of an ongoing campaign. It is therefore advised that players make their Dungeon Master aware of this material, but do not study this with any depth, as the foreknowledge gained would spoil the excitement of discovery during actual play.

The vampire historically has instilled in us dark illusions of foul undead and the carnage that they bring to the living populations. The version of the vampire that is contained in this document was inspired by the latest trends in both popular motion picture productions and written publications. The goal of this writing is to shed a little modern light on this elusive creature. If you are looking for the most evil of villains for your party to face in their next adventure, or to possibly give them just a taste of the fringes of this evil monster ... then enjoy.

### The Vampire Histories

Millennia ago the ascension of the elite class of holy warriors (paladins) began. These holy lords served a deity of utmost good and could sway nations in their unyielding cause against evil. One of the few holy paladins of this most ancient time was the noble lord, Anuasa, ruler of the Darmesii Kingdom; an ancient desert civilization now lost to the dusts of time. Anuasa was driven to remove the evil hordes that had garrisoned, against him on the borders of his powerful nation. To do so, he formed a host so large that it took three days for it to pass a single point while on the march and the dust that rose above this army could be seen from horizon to horizon.

Anuasa divided his army into four legions that were under the command of his most trusted generals, Hydarnes, Herodotius, Persepolis, and Achaeminid. The full force

of this human machine of destruction was condemned to never see battle, for the forces of the evil hordes that were brought against the Darmesii Kingdom had with them the High Priest of Anshar, the God of Darkness and Night. This priest had secreted a Jar of Aknubii from its Guardian Demon, and now had this sacred item in his possession. Within the blackened jar was confined the essence of the Demon Lord Hadak. Hadak was the Soul Searcher of the God Druaga, Ruler of the Devil World of the Nine Hells.

On the floor of his tent, the High Priest carefully traced mystic runes and scrawled symbols, whose true meaning have been lost to the understanding of men. Once safely within this crude circle the cleric released the essence from the ancient clay jar. A fine glowing mist emanated, which then thickened and coalesced into a most foul shape. The priest then commanded the Demon Lord Hadak, whose material shape had taken form, to dispel the army of Anuasa that was aligned even now on the plain against the horde.

The demon asked for particulars of Anuasa and a conversation was begun that lasted into the early hours of evening. "We must make a pact, priest," said Hadak, "with your unholy Symbol of the God Anshar, traced with a dark long lost symbol drawn in your blood, I can promise you victory. Once this victory is complete, you will release me and I will return to my dark lord." The priest was unsure but gave in and the Hadak pricked the priest's finger and marked a glowing symbol. Then the demon dripped a misty liquid from the unholy symbol into a small vial. He looked into the eyes of the priest and stated that before the light of dawn strikes the plain shall the mournful wail of Anuasa be heard, and the sound would mark the end of his kingdom, and the beginning of the priest's.

With the coming of darkness, the demon then transformed into the likeness of the high priestess of Girru, Anuasa's most trusted advisor. The disguised demon then crossed the wasteland between the two armies and entered into the tent of Anuasa, just as the king was sending for his generals. The disguised demon used guile and lies to convince Anuasa that there should be a new course of action to ensure victory against the threatening horde. Hadak consulted with Anuasa and bade him to drink the potion that "she" had in her possession. In a convincing voice, she intimated that this wondrous potion would provide Anuasa with the powers of true sight, and give him the command of the field of battle on the morrow, leading he and his trusted generals to ultimate victory against the evil horde. Convinced, Anuasa then willingly took the potion from the demon.

In short order the generals entered the tent of Anuasa. The disguised demon sat quietly in the back shadows as the king was finishing the last draughts of the potion. As the generals took their places, suddenly the king's body became rigid, his eyes fixed and staring. Then a horrible anguish went through Anuasa and the piteous sound of his wail permeated the camp of his warriors and reached the very fringes of the gathered evil horde, and to the waiting ears of the High Priest of Anshar.

To the horror of the gathered generals, the king was unresponsive, his eyes filled with watery pain and staring with malice at the form of the priestess of Girru. The generals seeing this, looked also to the priestess, but instead of anger they looked for guidance. For the demon again used guile to direct the distraught generals as to what to do to save their lord and king. The demon pleaded with each of them to draw their daggers and injure their necks and to then press their wounds to the lips of their king, if they did not act quickly the king would most assuredly die and their cause would be lost. Each loyal general willingly did as he was told, and as the king tasted the blood of each of his generals the act of betrayal was complete. With a flash of radiant blue light Anuasa fell from grace in the eyes of his

god, his anguish passed, life returned to his limbs, and he flew into what seemed to be a blinding rage, biting and slashing his hapless generals to death. Then Anuasa went from the royal tent killing all that he encountered. With a greasy smile the demon then strolled over the bodies of the slain generals and returned to the High Priest of Anshar, to be released from service.

Emerging from the dark moist earth within the camp of the evil horde, the demon sought out his master; whom he located quietly sipping wine in his tent behind a screen of rare hides and fine silks. With assurances that Anuasa's army was no more, the High Priest of Anshar released the demon from his service, free now to return to its vile plane. The demon's smile caused a shudder within the priest. And as Hadak left the presence of the priest, it said "Beware the Lords of Darkness my master, for they drink a most fowl brew." Then with a hissing laugh, the demon strode into the earth on its long journey home, just as the first rays of dawn broke on the horizon.

News of the king's madness and the slaughter of his commanding generals swept the army like a firestorm. With the rising of the sun the army of Anuasa had been decapitated, there was none that dared to oppose the evil horde as it began its invasion of the Darmesii Kingdom. Victory was assured and was complete as the horde swept over the land and the Darmesii Kingdom was no more. The body of Anuasa was found on the plain between the two armies, scorched beyond recognition; identified only by the clothes that were on the corpse. The bodies of the generals were never found, and it was thought that loyal servants had secreted the slain bodies away in advance of the horde.

The commanders of the evil horde were now the lords of this newly conquered land. But soon there was found a pestilence within this subjugated kingdom. The morning watch began to find slain citizens and minions of the horde with the rising of each morning's sun. Throats slashed and bodies drained of blood were becoming common place within the



boundaries of the once great Darmesii Kingdom, now a cursed land.

On a dreary night during the time of the blood moon, the High Priest of Anshar found himself alone in his heavily guarded chambers. The shimmering red disk of the moon had barely risen when there came shrieks from the servants and the guards that protected the priest. The priest hid in fear, cowering behind the carved stone divan within his room. There came a knocking at the heavy iron bound doors that guarded the entrance to his room. Out of fear he deigned to answer the hollow sounds as they reverberated in the great hall outside his room. A fine mist began to flow under the door, which then coalesced into four shadowy figures. These dark figures sensed more than saw that the priest was in the room. They moved with a speed that surprised their hapless victim. And barely did the priest realize they were in the room when he was surrounded and staring into the cold dead faces of the commanding generals of the slain Darmesii King, Anuasa. Each bore no marks of the horrible battle that was their end, yet each sported sharp fangs, hardened claws, and the foul smell of the grave as they pressed in on the shrieking priest.

In short order the High Priest of Anshar was no more, as limbs were rendered and blood was splattered and drained. With the death of the priest, a prophecy was fulfilled, and the transformation from mere undead to undead lords was complete. Thus the "Lords of Darkness" would begin to build their secret society with man and his brethren as their prey. To this day the blood descendants of these foul creatures stalk the night; seeking fresh warm blood to feed their fetid thirst. Their secret society is safe, so long as man is unaware that this predator is lurking in the darkness of the misty nights. The race of vampires is among us.

**DM Note on Material:** It should be noted that the god Druaga, Ruler of the Devil World of the Nine Hells is a Lawful Evil Devil, and the god Anshar, the God of Darkness and Night is a Chaotic Evil Demon. Hadak is of devil stock that now is a follower of a demon lord. The impression that Hadak is

a Chaotic Evil Demon is a misleading flaw in the legend. Should a high level adventuring party attempt to contact and control Hadak to gain knowledge of the locations or weaknesses of the vampire lord societies, while assuming that Hadak is a demon that may or may not have a negative impact on the results of their exploits. But it is a detail that the DM should carefully consider.

Legends are notorious for being informative and yet inaccurate. For further reading of some of the source material referenced in this introduction, see the First Edition Deities & Demigods (DDG), Babylonian Mythos.

### Vampire Commonalities

Vampires were created when the paladin Anuasa fell from grace and was transformed by consuming a Potion of Creation followed by the blood ritual initiated by the demon Hadak. It is because of the fact that Anuasa was a paladin that ceremonial burial rituals, bless spells, etc. are such critical aspects in the creation of a Vampire Lord. With Anuasa's sharing of blood with his generals and then slaying them in the presence of a force of ultimate evil, a core of undead entities, equal to each other, was created that would now feed upon human or humanoid blood to survive and have the capacity to spread their undead existence like a plague upon the land. The slaying and consuming of the High Priest of Anshar, further committed these foul creatures to survival in a world of darkness, but also gave the race of vampires a very long if not eternal **unlife**. And by slaying the high priest of Anshar, the transformation ritual was complete; the demon Hadak was revenged, and vampires began their blood feasts as they ascended to the top of the food chain. These undead then consolidated their strength, and hid themselves among the populations of the world.

All vampires are descended from the same initial Blood Ritual. The Blood Ritual involves the vampire drinking the victim's blood, then sharing the vampire's blood with the victim to complete the ritual. Only Vampire Lords may create other Vampire



Lords, and those must be human and have full ceremonial burial rights performed at the time of burial. The elite within the vampire communities are the Vampire Lords. These are the organized ruling vampires that have formed the secret society and trace their ancestry to one of the original vampire dynasties that was created when Anuasa fell from grace. The four dynasties of the Vampire Lords are known as the Hydarii, the Herodotii, the Persepolii, and the Achminii.

A lower and reviled form of vampire is the **Rogue Vampire**. The Rogue is a vampire that failed in some way to fully become a Vampire Lord, and conforms to the material and statistics of the First Edition Monster Manual (MM). Rogue Vampires are created by other Rogue Vampires or were non-human; were unwilling to become a vampire; or did not have proper burial rights performed at the time of interment.

Vampires are driven by the pursuit of power, control, and their continued undead survival. Collectively, vampires view the various races of human types and humanoids as both prey and as predator. As prey, vampires view populations as a food commodity to be exploited. Because of this they will not be found far from locations of civilization. But vampires are weak during the day as they rest, so they are very secretive and defensive in their dealings with those local populations. Vampire hunters are predators that can easily slay a vampire while in its resting state of weakness during daylight. A vampire will go to extreme lengths to keep the knowledge of the location of their lair a secret, lest they be sought out and eliminated.

Through promises of wealth, vile threats, and assurances of eternal life, all vampires are able to attract a number of non-vampire henchmen; the number allowed is based on the vampire's Charisma score. These henchmen or henchwomen can provide the occasional blood feasts for the dark lord, and will protect and conceal the vampire from harm during times when the vampire is in a weakened state. These henchmen also do the bidding of the vampire as needed. For the

Rogue Vampire, the most loyal and powerful of these followers will be subjected to the blood ritual and converted to vampire slaves.

A Vampire Lord will only seek out a willing human victim to be made into a blood descendant. This individual is known as a **Chosen**, and will become a vampire slave to the master until they are of sufficient level to be considered a Vampire Lord. It is critical that the Chosen be voluntarily made into a vampire of their own free will; if this is not the case then the created vampire becomes a Rogue Vampire, and will most likely be hated and slain by the Vampire Lord. Vampires are thus able to sense each other's presence and they can accurately determine if the other is of the race of a Lord or a Rogue.

A vampire will create as many vampire slaves as allowed by their Charisma score, beginning at the 8th Level for Vampire Lords. These Chosen will begin at 1st level Bloodsuckers on the Progression Tables (q.v.). As these vampire slaves complete tasks they gain experience and progress on the table, becoming stronger. As the vampire slaves reach 8th Level they are now Vampire Lords of their own. They will swear fealty to the Vampire Lord that created them, be assigned lands and communities to conquer and establish an undead coven. Vampires, in general, are masters at infiltrating a community and establishing secure strongholds of their own. Should a Vampire Lord's creator be slain then this vampire will become free of its vassalage, and will try to gain power and fill the position that was vacated by their slain master. This will result in a civil war within this branch of blood descendants, as other Vampire Lords that were descended of the slain lord will also vie for the position of power and title. These Vampire Lords will also seek out the slayer of their master, more to ensure that the same fate does not befall them, as opposed to any sense of loyalty.

For Rogue Vampires, see the information printed in the MM. The vampire slaves will do the bidding of the Rogue Vampire, until the vampire is slain. At that point the vampire slaves will become free ranging Rogues in their quest to attract followers among the living, create vampire slaves,

and gain power in the likeness of their master; so that they can freely feed on the societies of man.

The weakness of these powerful undead monsters is evident each day with the rising of the sun. The vampire is nearly helpless during the hours of daylight, as it lays in its lair awaiting the arrival of yet another sunset. This state of weakness makes the vampire vulnerable to any physical attack. When they are resting during the day in their lair, the vampire must be in direct contact with their native soil or the soil that they were interred in at the time of death. While resting, the vampire is totally dependant upon their living henchmen to guard and protect them. Lacking this resource, then the vampire must rely on their own abilities to maintain the secrecy of their lair. A vampire that is exposed to sunlight is immediately rendered immobile, and the vampire will then perish within 1 turn of continued exposure. As a result of this condition, their first choice of a lair is a location that is deep and foreboding, where the chance of sunlight reaching them is essentially non-existent. If an ideal lair of this type cannot be found then they will fortify a location to reduce the chances of light reaching them while they rest, and take measures to ensure that humans do not stumble upon them. They will take no chances in their selection of a sanctuary. The place of hiding selected will allow the vampire to avoid the sunlight, limit the chance of discovery while resting, and afford the vampire a hidden means of escape should the lair be discovered; these are the priorities at all costs.

The resting time for a vampire may be cut short only if their lair is deep under ground. These undead are slow to arouse when caught while resting, but with the setting of the sun they awaken and are very quick and violent if they have unwelcome visitors. The methods of slaying any vampire are covered in the material presented in the MM. To be truly slain is known within the vampire societies as "oblivion", and that is a truly heinous prospect for most any vampire. It is a sacred term of this undead as they are aware of no existence beyond true death.

Once slain, all that remains for this undead is oblivion.

A vampire that is captured "alive" and threatened with oblivion is very talkative indeed. The threat of exposure to sunlight is a most powerful threat in the eyes of this undead. Beginning an interrogation with the rising of the sun is a very effective way to gain information. But keep in mind that the vampire has many powers at its disposal, so there are issues that must be overcome, or the creature may just slip away forcing the hunt to begin again. Low-level Vampire Lords are much easier to deal with when the party is gathering information. But in any case, you are dealing with an evil untrustworthy undead monster that sees all living humans and their ilk as food.

"The Hunger" is something that all vampires have felt and know all too well. When the Hunger strikes, it is not just a feeling of unease and discomfort for this undead. The Hunger is a burning and gnawing sensation that drives the vampire to seek out a blood feast. The Hunger is felt in varying degrees by all vampires during their waking hours, and this feeling grows ever stronger as the time between feedings lengthens. A Vampire Lord can fend off the Hunger for a maximum number of days equal to their level up to 10th level; a Rogue can fend off the Hunger for a maximum number of days equal to their hit die. Once a vampire has not fed for their maximum period of days the Hunger takes control. The vampire will be ravenous, and will take little or no precautions in acquiring a blood feast. The culmination of the hunt under ravenous conditions will be violent, with none of the usual subtleties that the vampire prefers. In extreme cases a vampire may even attack a victim in front of shocked onlookers, with no consideration of their personal safety or secrecy. This is a violation of the code of secrecy, and a sentence to oblivion under the Vampire Law.

If a vampire has not fed for a period of 30 days, it will be forced into a quasi-status between a plane of existence and oblivion, this is the hibernation, that the Fathers of Eternal Darkness are periodically

subjected to. When the vampire comes out of hibernation, they will be rested, refreshed and lacking the Hunger for a period of 2 days. Should a blood feast not be found within that period, the desire grows and the vampire will continue through the stages of Hunger and eventually becoming ravenous once more, with the process repeating. The Hunger can make a vampire very incautious, placing the vampire at great risk of discovery; and that is why vampires will be found in close proximity to their preferred food source. Newly-made vampires, unused to the Hunger and the slaying of life to ease its impact, will suffer the negative effects from the Hunger more often until they learn to control it. These fledgling vampires must learn to feed as a course of survival.

There are theories that the vampire's fear of the true death that sunlight brings is the main reason why such a powerful creature as the vampire is not an overly aggressive foe to be contended with in open battle. The vampire operates with a mindset of survival and the use of stealth and subterfuge; all vampires will maintain

those goals when dealing with a powerful threat. Of course, if cornered they will fight viciously and without mercy; but given the opportunity to escape, that choice will be the vampire's first option. For any single Vampire Lord or Rogue, the first line of defence is their henchmen followed very quickly by their vampire slaves. Vampires use their henchmen and vampire slaves to seek out and gather information on those forces that present a powerful threat. These minions of the vampire will look for weakness or deal with that threat directly. Vampires are cautious when threatened with harm. A vampire will avoid direct combat with an unknown and suspected powerful adversary, unless they are given no choice. If they discover that they are being hunted, they will relocate their lair as a precaution as they plan the demise of the threat. Vampires will only abandon an area entirely if they suspect that they could be slain by a powerful threat and thus committed to oblivion.

While this game of cat and mouse is being played out, the Vampire Lord will

## Vampire Lord Progression Table

Experience Points	Experience Level	Accumulated Hit Points (d8)	Level Title
0-2,000	1	1	Blood Sucker
2,001-4,000	2	2	Neck-biter
4,001-8,000	3	3	Night Prowler
8,001-18,000	4	4	Night Stalker
18,001-35,000	5	5	Bat Lord
35,001-70,000	6	6	Blood Hero
70,001-125,000	7	7	Nosferatu
125,001-250,000	8	8	Vampire Lord
250,001-500,000	9	8+3	Vampire Knight
500,001-750,000	10	8+6	Vampire Count
750,001-1,000,000	11	8+9	Vampire Duke
1,000,001-1,250,000*	12	8+12	Prince of Darkness

\*250,000 experience points per level for each additional level above beyond the 12<sup>th</sup>.

desperately attempt to get word of the threat to their next in order of precedence within the society. Nobles will contact vassals for support, and vassals will plead for aid and support from their noble. High-ranking Noble Vampire Lords may plea to the Council of the Lords of Darkness directly for aid to stop discovery or the ruin of a coven by their living foes. These high-ranking vampires can rely on aid from the Council, those of lower social status may have to fend for themselves or offer proof of the threat. Asking a vampire for proof of a threat is a delaying tactic while the vampire then councils with their advisors and decides whether this particular vampire is expendable.

The vampire enjoys its undead existence and the power that it brings, but there is nothing left to it if truly slain and committed to oblivion. They feed upon the living and use guile and trickery to obtain victims. In their dealings and manipulations of the human and humanoid populations, a vampire will never openly identify themselves as to their true nature. To do so would be to indicate to your possible enemy not only your strengths, but would give unneeded insight into your weaknesses, and vampires have periods where they are very weak. The vampire is a secretive creature by nature, it has to be. It is up to you as the DM to develop an understanding of a vampire's limitations and exploit its strengths. The only individuals that will know a vampire's true identity are that vampire's servants, henchmen, and vampire slaves. If the vampire be of the lord race and is also a Noble Lord of the Secret Society, then they may have vampire vassals, and they will be part of the Secret Society as well. When encountered, vampires can easily detect each other and determine race.

### **The Vampire Lord**

Vampire Lords are each descended from the direct bloodlines of the four generals that were slain by Anuasa. Each of these warrior generals represents a single lineage of Vampire Nobility within the Secret Society. The progenitors of each of the vampire dynastic lineages are known collectively within the Secret

Society as the **Fathers of Eternal Darkness**. Vampires are truly long-lived and vile creatures. And yet so much time has elapsed since Hydarnes, Herodotius, Perspolis, and Achaeminid each became the first surviving vampires, that time has taken its toll even on these vile undead. The Fathers of Eternal Darkness have been deified by the descendants within their lineages and are also revered by all members of the Secret Society. The Fathers of Eternal Darkness are so ancient that they are only active for a few years at a time. Following this brief period of activity, they must sleep for several decades or centuries to recover from the rigors that they endured during their activity period. As with all vampires, they are most vulnerable when they sleep. These ancient undead must seek refuge in their native soil during this hibernation period, as they rest and recuperate. There are secret ruins and crypts deep within the Vaudish Desert which have been fortified by the Secret Society and act as sacred crypts for the Fathers of Eternal Darkness while they rest. These are also the locations of the Council of the Lords of Darkness, which leads the Secret Society while the Fathers sleep. It is certain that these crypts are heavily guarded and protected. This required hibernation of the Fathers of Eternal Darkness results in the misfortune of having the power-base of each dynastic family being absent and sleeping for decades and centuries at a time; the result of this is that the Secret Society would have no guidance during these times of hibernation. To resolve this recurring power vacuum, the Fathers have each appointed for their dynastic family a representative to sit in their stead on the Council of the Lords of Darkness for the duration of the time of hibernation, or even longer at their choosing. In the eyes of the Father the most powerful Vampire Lord of each of the dynastic bloodlines is seated at the head of the council and represents the interests of their bloodline in all vampire matters while the Father sleeps. It is the duty of all members of each of the bloodlines to protect the Father of that bloodline at all times and especially when he is at his weakest, while he sleeps. Should



the Father of a bloodline truly be slain and committed to oblivion, then all vampires directly descended of that bloodline will also meet their doom with the next rising of the sun. So even though there are bloody and vengeful power struggles within each of the bloodlines or across bloodlines, the Fathers of Eternal Darkness are all protected and coveted by their respective dynastic descendants.

The four dynastic bloodlines of the Vampire Lords are: the Hydarii, the Herodotii, the Persepolii, and the Achminii. When a Vampire Lord (8th Level and above) of one of the dynastic lineages has located a likely candidate, they will probe and delicately inquire in an attempt to persuade that character to consider joining the named lineages of the dynasties and become a follower and servant of the Vampire Lord. This person that the vampire has taken an interest in is known as a "Chosen." No matter how the Chosen lived their life, all Vampire Lord Character types are of evil alignment, and only humans can be made into Vampire Lords. To begin the progression of becoming a Vampire Lord, the Chosen Character must **willingly** give themselves into the transformation ritual to pass from human to an undead Vampire Lord. The Blood Ritual involves the sharing of the Chosen's blood with a Vampire Lord followed by the sharing of the Vampire Lord's blood with the Chosen. Once this ritual is completed, the body of the Chosen will slowly and painfully die over the next 1-4 days. Once death has taken its grip, the Chosen must then be interred into the earth or mausoleum, etc. Because the Vampire Lord was created from a fallen Paladin, all religious and holy burial rights must be performed on the body of the Chosen for the victim to become a Vampire Lord. In another 1-4 days the Chosen will rise as a newly-made Vampire Lord of 1st level. Only Vampire Lords and above on the Progression Tables may create a Vampire Lord candidate. A **wish** spell cast at the point of the Chosen's death will stop transformation to a vampire of any type; however, the character in question will still die and must then be brought back through various other means.

All newly-made vampires that attempt to progress on the Vampire Lord path will abide by the progression table as they rise to the level of Lord and beyond.

Vampire Lords will attack and save as Fighters or as the most beneficial table if multi-classed. They can also use all items usable by fighters and once they reach 8<sup>th</sup> Level they can also resume their previous class at the level that they were prior to being transformed into a vampire and are at that point multi-classed, as covered later. Vampire Lords are both physically very strong and quick in their actions should the need arise. To reflect these advanced physical characteristics, at the time that a character becomes a level 1 Blood Sucker, they will add +2 to their Strength to a maximum of 19; they will also add +2 to their Dexterity for a maximum of 19. Vampire Lords need to get close and gain the trust of their blood victims in order to feed, acquire henchmen, and create vampire slaves from the Chosen. Physical force is only for the most brutish of vampires (see Rogue Vampires) to aid this vampire type's ability to feed and function within the societies of the world; Vampire Lords also get to add +1 to their Intelligence and +1 to their Charisma, neither of which may exceed a maximum of 18. As vampires of this racial stock progress, they gain certain cumulative powers at each level:

1<sup>st</sup> Level – Vampires are immune to **sleep**, **charm** and **hold** spells. A Vampire Lord may **spider climb** at will as per the magic-user spell.

2<sup>nd</sup> Level – Vampires are now immune to poison and paralysis attack types; and cold based attacks do only half damage.

3<sup>rd</sup> Level – Vampires can now summon 10-100 rats or bats, these latter do not attack but create confusion, and either will arrive in 2-12 melee rounds.

4<sup>th</sup> Level – It will now require a +1 or better weapon to hit a Vampire Lord of this level or above.

5<sup>th</sup> Level – The damage done by the vampire is by Weapon Type + strength bonuses, or 2 claw attacks at 5-10 hit points of damage each attack.

6<sup>th</sup> Level – Can assume **gaseous form** and **shape change** into a giant bat 1time/day.



The vampire's gaze acts as a **charm person** spell, with a -2 penalty on the save.  
7<sup>th</sup> Level – Can summon 3-18 wolves while in a wilderness environment. These will arrive in 2-12 melee rounds.

8<sup>th</sup> Level – Once the title of Vampire Lord is attained, the vampire can **shape change** into a bat of any type at will. With a claw attack, a vampire can now has the ability to energy drain 2 levels with direct physical contact on a human or humanoid character when a successful "To Hit" roll is made. Any characters slain by having their life levels drained to 0-level will arise in 1-4 days as a Rogue Vampire unless their body is cremated. A vampire at this level and above is now able to regenerate 3 hit points per round up to their character maximum. And at this level and above the Vampire Lord can now resume any special classes that they had while still among the living, and continue to progress in those classes as a multi-class character, dividing Experience Points between the classes as they progress.

There are however several restrictions to the multi-class Vampire Lord. Only Clerics of Evil Alignment may resume their Cleric Class, and there may not be multi-class Druid, Ranger or Paladin character combinations (the Anti-Paladin/Vampire, Dragon Magazine Issue 39 page 8, is acceptable providing the Vampire Lord's alignment is Chaotic Evil). Vampire Lord/ Assassin type characters exist only under special conditions (see The Council of the Lords of Darkness, q.v.).

## The Secret Society

The Secret Society of Vampires defines the social structure of this dark race. Within the Secret Society there exists a complex interweaving of the different social strata of the Vampire Lord populations. All vampires are evil by nature, and they are quite intelligent. As a society the vampires have come to realize that there is safety in numbers and there is control of those numbers with organization. This organization is aimed at ensuring that the vampires as a race remain undetected or at least only suspected so that they will remain viable within the populations upon which they feed.

Humans and their ilk may fight wars, build cities and establish great wealth and empire, but very few of these accomplishments were not aided or manipulated in some way by the decrees of the *Council of the Lords of Darkness* and the activities of the *Secret Society*. In the value structure of a vampire, if it means a growth in the populations of the world (read this as an increase in food production), or an increase in personal wealth and power, vampires will support it.

There are four competing empires within the Secret Society, the blood dynasties. The social structure of the Vampire Lords is a governing system based on a Feudal society. The Father of Eternal Darkness represents the Sovereign or Emperor of the social structure and below them are the Dukes, Counts, Barons, and Blood Knights etc. Vampire slaves are at the bottom of the vampire nobility, and any living henchmen that serve the Vampire Lord are considered peasants and serfs within the social structure. A good text on the Order of Precedence (see Footprints #12) will be a great aid in laying out the social ranking and hierarchy of the Secret Society.

Vampire Lord society is dependant upon the races of humans for their survival. Populations are a commodity, a source of power and wealth within the Secret Society. For a vampire to infiltrate and gain control within a large city, the Secret Society may consider that Vampire Lord to be a Blood Baron. A vampire that acquires vassals in neighboring communities along with the promise of aid and the swearing of fealty, will experience a rise in social status along with power, control, and influence within the Secret Society. But should another vampire establish a territory within communities that have already been claimed, a social upheaval will be the result until the dispute is settled and the most powerful and treacherous is usually the victor.

The social ranking within the various titles of nobility within the vampire society is based upon the length of time that individual has been an undead. The older

vampires have progressed higher in the social strata, for a Vampire Lord becomes stronger with age (progression on the table). Though there have been instances of lower-level vampires defeating a vampire of higher level and assuming control of their lands and property, this is rare. The empire of a specific blood dynasty is a matrix of the populations of all the vampires that are descended from a specific father and the prey populations that they control. These dark empires are not measured in land acquisition, but in the defending of human prey population centers from other Vampire Lord dynasties.

Within this matrix are established the Kingdoms, Principalities, Dukedoms, Baronies, etc of the blood dynasty. The kingdoms and their feudal social structures are of great value to the Secret Society, for they control vampire commerce in the various races of humans and humanoids that are considered desirable vampire slaves, henchmen, or delicacies by this vile undead. Vampires do wage violent and bloody war with each other, but they do not threaten the Fathers of Eternal Darkness. Therefore, these social upheavals are conducted under the very noses of the humans that they are warring over. The conflicts are low scale, of short duration, and clandestine in nature. The populations of man may be suspicious, but they never know for sure the true ramifications of these incredible events that periodically unfold. There have been large scale wars that have taken place. But these involved the manipulations of the humans themselves. By causing the humans to engage in massive wars, reduces the populations that vampires rely on, thus stripping the land of its value in the eyes of the Secret Society. If one Blood Lineage wishes the cities and communities of another, but they lack the resources to contest the claim, they will usually start a war among the populations of men. The loss of human life during a war will so devalue the land that it may cause the controlling Vampire Lords to retreat, and thus allowing the new vampire tenants to establish themselves and begin rebuilding the human populations once again. As long as vampire activities are secret or at the very least only suspected, the Secret

Society will not align itself against the violator of the vampire code of secrecy. Humans must never know that with the setting of the sun there is a separate, parallel society that rises each night.

### **The Council of the Lords of Darkness**

The Council of the Lords of Darkness is the governing body of the Secret Society of the Vampire Lords. Vampires have established a social hierarchy, and they defend their claims of land and possessions against the usurpations of competing vampire lineages. These established claims on the world's populations conform closely to the Feudal System such as Empires, Kingdoms, Principalities, etc. This structure of vampire society serves to regulate and control the spread of vampirism and keep the Secret Society hidden as it cultivates its favorite blood feast. Vampires have their own undead feudal social structure that they use to govern the vampire lords and ensure the secrecy of the vampires within human populations. The Vampire seated on the Council of the Lords of Darkness is considered the Sovereign or Emperor of each dynastic bloodline. Located deep within the shifting sands of the Vaudish desert, this council is comprised of the Father of each Blood Dynasty or their appointed representative. Below the council are the separate kingdoms, principalities, duchies, and baronies that are further controlled by the various levels of nobility of this dark social grace. The powerful nobility among the vampires (Prince of Darkness Levels) have established these major boundaries through the use of guile, betrayal and many bloody wars.

Under the direction of the Council of the Lords of Darkness are specialized vampires known as Slayers. A Slayer is initiated as a vampire slave (of 1<sup>st</sup> Level). Upon request of the Council, a number of selected Noble Vampire Lords will send a levy of 1<sup>st</sup> level Blood Suckers to the Council of the Lords of Darkness. Under the guidance of the Council these select vampires are trained in the dark arts of assassination as those arts relate to vampires, humans, and humanoids. Slayers will progress from that point on as a Multi-Class Vampire Lord/

Assassin. The Slayer will never be a noble within the vampire social structure, and will never own land or gain the political powers of the other vampire lords. But the Slayers are feared and revered within the vampire societies. For when a Slayer arrives with word from the Council of the Lords of Darkness, informing a powerful vampire king that he must eliminate a section of his household due to a threat to the secrecy of the vampire society, there are few if any questions. It is merely done, because a threat to one is a threat to all. If there is a further violation of the vampires' code of secrecy, then the Slayers are sent to deal with the offending vampire and all his followers and slaves. No vampire will lend aid to a vampire that has been marked by the Council of the Lords of Darkness, for to violate that sacred pact threatens the entire Secret Society.

If the Vampire Lord is too powerful or uncooperative for the Slayers to handle directly, then the Council may require of the other blood dynasties aid in dealing with the offending Vampire Lord and their descendants. With this request, another undead war will commence, until the offender and all their descendants are committed to oblivion.

The Slayers also actively hunt Rogue Vampires and their descendants. The Rogue is considered a vile abomination to the Vampire Lord. Rogues are chaotic by their very nature and they threaten the secrecy that vampires rely upon. It is usually a Rogue Vampire that has drawn the attention the Vampire Hunters. And it is not unheard of for a Slayer to provide hints and leave obvious clues that will lead these Vampire Hunters to a Rogue, thus saving the Slayer the trouble.

The final and a most important function of the Slayers are to locate and remove any human opposition to vampires. Any empires, kingdoms, or regions, where the nobility of the Vampire Lords are having difficulty becoming established will be infiltrated by Slayers and the non-vampire agents of the Council, in the attempt to remove the problem. If groups of humans have determined that there is a presence of vampires among them and are taking active steps to combat the vampires, the

Slayer is the Secret Society's initial solution to this dilemma.

## Vampire Lords Appointed Representatives to the Council of the Lords of Darkness

### Hydarii Dynasty

Ecbatana (Son of Hydarnes)

18<sup>th</sup> Level Vampire Lord

Alignment: Lawful Evil

Hp: 71

S:17 I:14 W:16 D:14 C:14 Ch:17

Armor: **+2 chain mail, gauntlets of dexterity**

Magic Items: **amulet of the Day-Walker, wand of stinking clouds (8 Charges), ring of invisibility**

Weapons: **+1 broadsword of the Vampire Lord, +2 long bow of strength, +3 dagger of venom**

Ecbatana appears as a handsome young man in his early twenties. His dark angular features belie his ancient desert heritage of the Darnesii Kingdom. Ecbatana has shoulder length waving dark brown hair, flaming blue eyes, and a well defined muscular build. Among the world of the living, his youthful features give him the carefree appearance of a naive youth, an easy mark. This appearance is very deceptive of his true abilities and has been the downfall of many an underworld type looking for an easy victim on a darkened city street. He is also quite adept at drawing an attractive young maiden away for just a few private moments of conversation. If anything, Ecbatana is a very cunning predator of the living.

He is the son of Hydarnes. He was appointed to the Council by Hydarnes and sits in the highest seat of the Council of the Lords of Darkness. His dealings while on the Council have at times been brutal. His temper gets the better of him on occasion, but his power and the power of the Hydarii Dynasty seem to be well founded and undeniable.

At one time, centuries ago, Ecbatana sought out his mother, Amuria, to slay and end her existence as a Rogue Vampire. He found her preying off the inhabitants and travellers of a small out of the way

village. In the battle that ensued, Ecbatana was subjugated and made a slave to his mother. Now she controls him, as he is completely compliant to her every whim. With the information that she has gleaned from Ecbatana's position on the Council, she is now able to launch a very effective campaign against her former husband's blood dynasty. Ecbatana's frequent trips do not seem to draw any attention, and the mysterious way in which Amuria seems to defeat and escape the Slayers that are constantly seeking her doom, has as yet not been tied together. For now none of the Vampire Lords suspect.

## Herodotii Dynasty

Ahura

17<sup>th</sup> Level Vampire Lord  
 Alignment: Neutral Evil ( with Lawful tendencies)  
 Hp: 69  
 S:17 I:14 W:16 D:18 C:18 Ch:14  
 Armor: **+3 chain mail, helm of teleportation**  
 Magic Items: **amulet of the Day-Walker, ring of strength(+3)**  
 Weapons: **+1 short sword of the Vampire Lord, +3 dagger, +1 spear**

Ahura appears as a very muscular man of middle age. His face is criss-crossed with fine scars, which he gained in battles long ago while still in human form. His left eye has a cut that goes from the brow across the eye and down through the cheek. This injury has turned his eye white and it appears to be useless. In reality the damaged eye has a special ability; Ahura can clearly **detect invisible** objects with this white pus-filled eye. He has used it to great effect in the past. Ahura has developed a distinct preference for dwarven blood; he is one of the few vampires that does relish this race. He has been known to take small bands of newly-trained Slayers and raid through the high mountain warrens of the Darmenese tribes to satiate his palate. These dwarf tribes have evolved dark legends and Ahura is known as "*Akvarnia Necashim*" or the "Throat Ripper" in common. On his last visit only Ahura and two of the Slayers returned, but Ahura was satisfied none the less. He'll be much more careful in the future.

Many years ago, Ahura was the ranking officer on guard outside of Anuasa's tent the night that Anuasa went mad and flew through the camp in a violent rage, slaying all that he encountered. Anuasa knocked Ahura to the side and Ahura lay unconscious, while the guards that were on duty with him were slain. Ahura was awakened to find the camp in chaos. As the ranking officer still alive, Ahura had several other soldiers from his detachment take the bodies of the slain generals to a secret location. Once all was lost, Ahura returned and stayed on guard with the bodies of Anuasa's slain generals while the remainder of the detachment returned to the camp and tried to negotiate a proper surrender of the army and burial of the slain generals. In the days that followed, Ahura hid with and said prayers over the bodies of the lost generals. Then one night the body of Herodotius arose. Ahura thought it a miracle and that his prayers had been answered, and in his enthusiasm he was slain. Due to his unyielding loyalty to the generals when Ahura rose a few nights later, he was one of the very first of the Vampire Lords to be created by the blood ritual, and became a descendant of the Herodotii Dynasty.

Ahura is one of the oldest and most powerful of the Herodotii Dynasty. He sits in the second most powerful seat on the Council of the Lords of Darkness. This is a frustrating position for Ahura; power is something that he admires greatly. Herodotius has been building his power base within his dynasty for decades, and Ahura has been deflecting the Council away from gaining knowledge of this build-up. Soon the Herodotii Dynasty will challenge for the most powerful seat on the council. And Ahura will obtain the power and control that has been a driving force within him.

## Persepolii Dynasty

Nebuchania

14<sup>th</sup> Level Vampire Lord  
 Alignment: Neutral Evil  
 Hp: 54  
 S:10 I:17 W:16 D:15 C:15 Ch:17  
 Armor: **+3 studded leather armor, +2 large shield**



Magic Items: **amulet of the Day-Walker, staff of the magi, ring of spell storing** (4 spells of DM's choice)  
Magic-User Abilities: 12<sup>th</sup> Level  
Weapons: **+1 longsword of the Vampire Lord, +2 short bow, +3 dagger of venom**

Nebuchania appears as a frail female with a stern piercing stare. The immediate impression is a woman of early middle age, late 20's to early 30's. At a glance, Nebuchania has very plain nondescript features and could very easily blend into the background of any setting. She only makes direct eye contact when she is ready for the kill and her gaze becomes a very useful tool. Other than her intense stare, her sandy blond hair, pale bland facial features and quiet build make for a perfectly forgettable individual. This she uses to her best advantage when hunting for her next victim. She favors youth of elven stock, and the descendants within her blood dynasty are only too happy to supply Nebuchania with her personal culinary favorites.

When dealing with the other members of the Council of the Lords of Darkness, Nebuchania is well versed in the art of deception. It was her predecessor that lost the power that the Persepolii held for centuries and he paid the ultimate price for this loss. Now Nebuchania has taken it upon herself to recover that which was lost. Her deceptions to the council concern the secret acquiring of power that the Persepolii Dynasty has undertaken. The efforts are paying off and soon the time will be ripe with opportunity. The cost of recovery promises to be a most bloody event in the Vampire Lord histories.

**Achminii Dynasty**

Aechylius

15<sup>th</sup> Level Vampire Lord  
Alignment: Lawful Evil  
Hp: 62  
S:10 I:14 W:13 D:19 C:16 Ch:18  
Armor: **+2 chain mail, girdle of hill giant strength**  
Magic Items: **amulet of the Day-Walker, ring of invisibility, helm of teleportation**  
Weapons: **+1 broadsword of domination, +2 composite long bow, +2 dagger of venom**

Aechylius is clean-cut with a shaved head that hides the presence of his black hair. He has very fine features and a calm friendly demeanor when he is hunting. He uses these happy non-threatening character traits to great effect when hunting. His physical build is average and not very note-worthy, but his speed and agility is quite impressive. Aechylius cuts quite a dashing character as his personality is very flamboyant. He likes attention and seeks approval from the descendants of the Achminii Dynasty. Of all the appointments to the Council of the Lords of Darkness, Aechylius is the most open and friendly when dealing with fellow Vampire Lords; human types and their ilk are a commodity, and nothing else.

The Father of Eternal Darkness of the Achminii Dynasty, Achaeminid, has become even more reclusive during these last few periods of waking. Yet for an ancient that spends most of his active time pouring over dusty scripts and dead languages, Achaeminid is requiring hibernation on a more regularly occurring basis. This has concerned Aechylius. If Achaeminid is nearing the end of his undead existence this will be the end of the Achminii Dynasty as a whole, as the death of the Father is the death of the blood dynasty. His suspicions are directed towards the health and vitality of the Achminii father, for if he were to discover the true cause, the ramifications of Achaeminid's secret intentions would bring a bloody ruin to the Council of the Lords of Darkness, and allow only one surviving blood dynasty, the Achminii. Should Achaeminid's plan fail, it will be the ruin of the Achminii Dynasty. It's a winner take all proposal that the Council of the Lords of Darkness may have to face soon.

### Unholy Archbishop and Council Advisor

Cambyes (High Priest of Anshar)

20<sup>th</sup> Level Vampire Lord  
Alignment: Neutral Evil  
Hp: 68  
S: 10 I: 15 W:17 D:12 C:15 Ch:17  
Armor: Armor is worn only when ready for battle or outside of stronghold: **+2 plate**



**mail, +2 shield**

**Magic Items: amulet of the Day-Walker, well of lost souls, brooch of shielding, staff of command, potion of fire giant strength**

**Cleric Abilities: 19<sup>th</sup> Level**

**Weapons: +4 Mace**

Cambyses appears as an out-of-shape man in his late middle age. He looks friendly enough with his pudgy body and balding head; but when engaged in serious conversation, his demeanor changes. His gaze becomes piercing and his eyes take on a deep set appearance. Cambyses is not a vampire to be taken lightly.

Cambyses is the Unholy Archbishop and Advisor to the Council of the Lords of Darkness. His role is a very powerful one in the Secret Society. Cambyses is gifted in the fine arts of betrayal, and manipulation. His manoeuvrings within the Secret Society have been meteoric and his followers are both loyal to him and fearful of him. He was the force behind the formation of the Slayers, the enforcers of the Secret Society. Cambyses is regularly sent on missions for the Vampire Lords that net much wealth and have great influence on the populations of the world. His power base as Unholy Archbishop and Council Advisor is secure.

Long, long, ago Cambyses was a human High Priest of Anshar. He was the chief advisor to a most powerful dark overlord that had designs on the neighboring kingdom of Darmesii. Cambyses had taken his most powerful arcane item with him while on campaign. But the demon that Cambyses released on a fateful night capitalized on Cambyses' eagerness to bring success to the morrow's battle. His momentary oversight is one that will plague him for all eternity.

Occasionally, as he travels on Council business, he hears the retellings of the ancient battle with Anuasa that brought about the creation of the vile vampires. He liked the older versions, the ones where his name was used. Now all they remember is Anuasa, and sometimes the names of the Fathers of Eternal Darkness.

It was the slaying of Cambyses that was the final charm that brought about the

vampire as a powerful undead. Driven by an insane thirst, the generals of Anuasa were obsessed to seek out Cambyses, and so they slew him in a frenzy of feeding. This final act, initiated by the demon lord Hadak, took a group of mere violent undead and created an immortal evil. Because Cambyses was slain by each of the Fathers, he does not have a true father and is not a true member of any vampire blood dynasty. Only the death of all the Fathers may have any affect on the continued existence of Cambyses, for he is part of all and none at the same time. It may even be possible that Cambyses and all his descendants may survive unscathed if the fathers were to die. The Vampire Lords of Cambyses may, in fact, need to be hunted down one by one to truly wipe out the Vampire Lord race.

Cambyses is still a most favored high priest of Anshar. The creation of vampires has given Anshar a race of dark children that he takes great pride in. Though Anshar does not take to openly meddling in the vampire interests, he does keep tabs on their growth, and the undead strengths which they were given as a gift from him through the arcane revenge that the Demon Lord Hadak took on Cambyses.

On several occasions Cambyses has sought out Hadak. Cambyses has learned that Hadak was rescued from the vengeful anger of Druaga and is now an unholy duke of Cambyses' own deity, Anshar. This has increased Cambyses' hatred of Hadak. The last time that Hadak and Cambyses met, it took Cambyses several centuries to fully recover. Lord Hadak has grown very strong since his servitude to Cambyses those many centuries ago.

### **Haddak (demon lord)**

**Armor Class: -2**

**Move: 12"**

**Hit Points: 112**

**No. of Attacks: 2**

**Damage per Attack: 2-20/2-20**

**Special Defences: +2 or better weapon to hit**

**Magic Resistance: 20%**

**Size: L (11' tall)**

Alignment: Neutral Evil (with Chaotic tendencies)

Plane: Pandemonium

S: 20 (+3, +8) I: 19 W: 17 D: 20 C: 22 Ch: -2

Hadak can take on any shape or form that appeals to him. His prime form is of a large, eight-foot-tall, bull headed creature with fangs and black claws. His chest heaves with every breath and his arms appear as massive as his powerful legs.

Hadak returned to his master, the Lawful Evil deity Druaga, ruler of the Nine Hells, only to be beaten, tortured and condemned to a lingering death. But in short order, the Chaotic Evil deity Anshar became aware of the presence of a new evil entity in the world which Hadak had so recently visited. The scheming success of Hadak's creation of the vampire race made Anshar very pleased. The powers of Hadak's revenge had created an undead monster that worshipped darkness and fed on the blood of humans; both things met Anshar's most accepting approval. Anshar had Hadak retrieved, saved and elevated.

Hadak is now Neutral Evil and has power and authority as an unholy duke in the plane of Pandemonium. Hadak travels the Astral Plane visiting various parallel material planes seeking souls for Anshar to consume and when the circumstance are correct, creating more vampires whenever possible.

Recently one of the Fathers of Eternal Darkness has contacted Hadak. There was a discussion concerning deification, eternal unlife as a vampire god. Hadak's mind is twisting with the myriad of possibilities; all of them center on Hadak as a central and supreme power. Hadak has not as yet decided if he will share this contact with Anshar, or keep it to himself and use this undead as a pawn to someday aid him in over-powering his dread master.

With his power and authority, Hadak has become complacent, a dangerous thing considering the company that he keeps.