

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER[®]

LOST OMENS

RIVAL ACADEMIES



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LOST OMENS

RIVAL ACADEMIES

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This book refers to several other Pathfinder products, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available for free at paizo.com/prd.

Lost Omens Impossible Lands (LOIL)
Lost Omens Mwangi Expanse (LOME)
Lost Omens Travel Guide (LOTG)
Lost Omens World Guide (LOWG)
Player Core 2 (PC2)



WELCOME TO THE CONVOCATION



The most prestigious schools from far and wide now come to us in our fortress-city of Nerosyan, as the Academy of the Reclamation hosts the first international Convocation. Lasting several months, this gathering draws together academies of magic and related traditions to exchange knowledge both magical and cultural and to build friendships.

As a descendant of Sarkoris, I hope this great gathering of minds also helps us reclaim more knowledge of our homeland and fill the academy's libraries with new wisdom from those who helped us during our time of need. While the schools each have their exhibitions, and their students may be preoccupied showing off to one another (and perhaps getting into some mischief), many teachers and other learned representatives have pledged to help us recover what we can of our past and our culture as we look to reenter our ancestral lands.

Not a day goes by where I, Bia Isha, fail to think of what's been taken from us. When the Worldwound opened and demons spilled out across our lands, we didn't just lose family and friends. Our culture, our traditions, the way we made sense of our lives and cared for our lands—all was shattered in that cataclysmic moment. I wasn't alive when it happened a century ago, but sometimes in the quiet of the night, I somehow hear their screams. It's as though the earth still holds the cries, the deep anguish, the ravaging fires, and the spilled blood. The weight of all those lost lingers like a mist, rising in the quiet and the dark where the echoes of ravenous howls still reverberate. But just as the saplings now spring up and the grasses begin to spread across the ruins, so my hope has returned. In the five years since the Worldwound has been sealed, I look toward my ancestral lands and sense the rebirth, and I take from it the strength to continue my labors.

When Sarkoris fell and our world ended, my grandparents fled with what they could carry. They came here to Mendev, refugees who eked out a living supporting both the fortifications of their new home and the attempts to reclaim our ancestral one. In the crush and turmoil of desperate battle after battle—as endless waves of demons poured through the gaping wound, tore through the crusading forces, and besieged our defenses—my grandparents did their best to keep our traditions and beliefs alive. They did what they could to honor the past while being focused on survival in the present. So much wisdom was lost. Overburdened hearts and grieving tongues could no longer speak and share that wisdom, so much of which was tied directly to our land.

For the schools that join us here at the Convocation, behind the vision of spreading and sharing their wisdom (and perhaps even some of their secrets) is

the specter of our calamity, of the very real possibility that a single disaster could erase countless stories and traditions as an entire culture is scoured from the world, abruptly and mercilessly. Many of the schools here have already tasted this tragedy. To prevent such a

loss from ever happening again, the Convocation's goals are to disseminate ideas through lectures and demonstrations, stimulate discussions beyond these formal events, and inspire joint projects that will continue the learning by bringing scholars together for years to come. Every friendship with someone from a different academy that begins during this Convocation is to be celebrated, for each one is a major step toward these goals.



BIA ISHA

THE SPONSORS

While a great number of schools are sending small delegations, the Convocation revolves around the six sponsoring schools that are attending in force. Hosting the great gathering is our new Academy of the

Reclamation. Its founding might seem to undermine some of the most ancient of Sarkorian traditions, for we as a people have long eschewed the arcane arts. Indeed, it was such spellcasters who not only invoked the cataclysm of the Worldwound but who also, once freed from their prisons, served the demons as overseers of the dominated land.

For many Sarkorians, wizardry and evil are forever intertwined. But my family came to believe the prohibitions themselves were to blame, for these customs had caused the spellcasters to be imprisoned in the first place. At the same time, we as a people were depriving ourselves of a source of power that could help restore all that we esteem. And so it was that our community came to establish the academy, to teach the stories of Sarkoris and study all forms of magic. While some among us still regard the new academy with suspicion or disdain, many rightly take pride in it. Our hope is for the Convocation to shore up both the ability and reputation of this new endeavor.

The unusual school called Cobyslarni, which joins us directly from the First World, bears the name of its headmaster. Indeed, you can see him from here. That elephantine creature is no mere beast. He carries the entire school on his back as they wander between planes. The fey are well represented among the students, and I hope we can all be understanding as they adjust to life off their headmaster's back.

The renowned Kitharodian Academy, located in the venerable empire of Taldor, emphasizes music, acting, and the magic inherent in such things. We all look forward to performances of celebrated plays, epic poetry, and tantalizing music in the traditions that Taldor has preserved and perfected. Stories that all their

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students become operatives for Taldor's intelligence service are clearly overstated, and I'm sure they'll be leaving any political machinations at home.

The esteemed Magaambya, one of the oldest schools on the planet, has time and again shown itself to be central to the preservation and development of both magic and Golarion itself. We are beyond honored that they bring their powerful union of arcane and primal magic as well as their blending of so many traditions from across the Mwangi Expanse. Without their wisdom, material aid, and network of contacts, this Convocation would not be here in Nerosyan today.

The Houses of Perfection train in the mastery of elemental martial arts, and the Monastery of Unbreaking Waves is one of their most distinguished schools, focusing on the tenacity and flexibility of water. This tenacity and flexibility has proven yet again, as they've rebuilt their school from just a few souls discovering ancient lessons. We look forward to learning what perfection means to them and perhaps discovering what it means to us.

The University of Lepidstadt is an infamous school of occultism, alchemy, and technology. I confess I'm somewhat wary of this school, as their studies push the limits well past traditional understanding and seek to escape reality itself. But descendants of Sarkoris walk its halls, the families of refugees who were welcomed by the institution in the hour of their

greatest need. Few indeed welcomed them in Ustalav, and I could never turn my back on those who have offered us such aid.

THE VENUE

Since the Convocation was first conceived, we worked tirelessly to prepare an area of Nerosyan to host it. Our efforts had to be persistent, for the strain of so many years of warfare has taken its toll on this city, and its officials were slow to see that the benefits of our plans outweighed the expenses and effort. Now that the crusaders have left, the city has more than enough space to host great numbers of visitors, but we lack many of the comforts such visitors might expect. On top of that, we are far from experts in their different customs and manner of living. Fortunately, representatives from our sponsoring schools have devoted themselves to helping build out our event grounds around the Academy of the Reclamation.

This early show of cooperation has turned lackluster support into true enthusiasm among the people of Nerosyan. The city residents were particularly excited to see how the event grounds emerged from a forgotten and slowly decaying corner of their town, as spires and rooflines rose to the south and the west of the Academy of the Reclamation. Because the academy was founded in a section of the city formerly used for

housing and training the armies of crusaders, there's no shortage of empty buildings.

While much of this corner of the city had been abandoned, we're happy to bring more attention to the few stores and taverns here. Ancuin's Brewery is one such establishment, proud to continue making the brews that fortified crusaders for a century. Two blacksmiths, Asa Lyster and Coulter Flathand, maintain a good-natured rivalry as they continue crafting arms and armor both functional and ceremonial. And the irrepressibly cheerful Vera Bumpus runs a general store that provides a wide variety of useful items.

Though the Academy of Reclamation's buildings are made from the same sober gray stone used throughout Nerosyan, we wanted the Convocation grounds to stand out, so we worked with each of the sponsoring schools to paint their buildings with their school colors in the hope of promoting fellowship and good cheer. While the blue, green, and gold of Kitharodian Academy fit perfectly with this theme, the black and gray of the University of Lepidstadt made a slightly different, if distinct impression. It's remarkable how much school spirit their students have, for they all tend to wear black even to festivals.

We've provided spaces for sleeping, eating, learning, and practicing for each sponsoring school, as directed by their representatives. In most cases, these are separate buildings located close to each other, with a lawn or courtyard as well as stables, but a few spacious buildings contain both dining and sleeping areas. The Monastery of Unbreaking Waves asked for one such building as well as for a view of at least one river from their sleeping quarters.

The big exception to our housing ideas was Cobyslarni, who simply needed ample space for himself. I confess I was among those who worried about their arrival, for how could such a massive being navigate our narrow streets without causing serious damage? The school's representatives assured me that no problems would arise—we had only to show them the space set aside for Cobyslarni. And sure enough, one day they were suddenly here, the entire school having arrived seemingly out of thin air during the night. Truly, there is much that we all have yet to learn about magic!

Smaller delegations also each have their own building, though without as many amenities, and we have, again, distinguished these buildings with their colors as best we could. For those few school representatives coming alone, we've found space among these smaller houses or within the academy buildings. A profoundly awkward moment occurred, however, when the delegation from the Halls of Revelation arrived. We hadn't prepared a single thing for them—because they were never invited! But as a testament to how many visitors we could accommodate, that delegation now occupies the astronomy building.

While each of the six sponsoring schools has their own kitchen, we thought that shared spaces for eating would help to encourage the exchange of customs and ideas. We also realized

that the delegations from the smaller schools weren't likely to want the responsibility of preparing their own food all the time. So we've commissioned dining halls, staffed by locals and available to all participants as well as to the city folk. We've also established libraries for the use of all. Our hope is that these public spaces bring our guests together and foster friendships.

Of all the fine buildings on the event grounds, I'm proudest of the exhibition hall, which stands at its center. Rightly called the heart of the Convocation, much of what we aim to achieve will occur here. We've constructed a light and airy building with a soaring roofline, its dramatic tent poles and draping fabrics paying homage to the nomadic traditions of our Sarkorian ancestors. Each school has dedicated space in the hall to establish their exhibition.

Second to the exhibition hall in importance are the spaces for each school's performances. We've needed more than one space for these, for the Taldans and Ustalavs usually require a raised stage with seating arrayed before it, while the Magaambyans, like us, often place their performers in the center of the audience,



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with no need to raise up the performers. A third space, open and empty except for its level floor, is required by the students of the Monastery and of Cobyslarni, for they prefer to move among the audience, drawing them into the performance.

It's perhaps good we had so many different needs. Hardly a night goes by that even one of the performance spaces is empty, as smaller concerts and dances spill into Ancuin's Brewery or the sponsor's courtyards. With many cultures here, there seems to be an endless variety of festivals. Just last week, the Indraracha Institute held their Flower Festival, and the magically created, luminescent flowers defy description. Other nights see performances by poets, singers, and musicians ranging from the virtuoso to the exuberant amateur.

We've also enlivened the event grounds by displaying art and antiquities, several of which are Sarkorian in origin. Of these interesting pieces, the most unusual is a worn stone statue whose cracks reveal intricate stone clockwork that appears locked in place, if they ever worked. This curiosity washed up a short while ago on the shore of the Lake of Mists and Veils. Its original purpose is yet unknown, though it's done well in its temporary role driving scholarly discussions.

As is to be expected at such large gatherings, some sideshow attractions have gathered around the grounds. Fortune-tellers, alchemists real and spurious, tattoo artists, dealers in trinkets and relics, hatmakers, and other such vendors crowd into whatever spaces they can find. We do our best to disrupt those that take advantage of the more gullible students, but I suppose these characters are part of the experience.



DROUGE

COOPERATION AND COMPETITION

One the Convocation's primary goals is the sharing of ideas and magical knowledge, hopefully inspiring scholarly collaborations for years to come. Already we've seen such fosterings of friendship, as Irriseni summoners discuss herbalism with Arcadians, and a naga shares their dances with the troupe from Kitharodian. In this light, the Convocation shines as a cooperative beacon, illuminating the future with knowledge and collective hope as the participants let their defenses down and focus on sharing their own discoveries.

These scholars come with generous hearts—and some true pride—to help Academy of the Reclamation put down its roots and prosper. And many of our visitors, whether out of sympathy for our cause or the Magaambyans' gentle encouragement, have offered to work with us in recovering what we can from our demon-haunted homeland. So many brilliant and talented minds working together to investigate and rebuild Sarkoris would be a dream come true! And I hope each step taken together can also bring us closer to the Convocation's goals.

Yet mortal frailty ensures that the altruistic candor and bridge-building must be punctuated by rivalries and jealousies, as well as the expected misunderstandings from cultural differences. Naturally, each school wants to show off their best work, impress as much as possible, and, well, look smarter than everyone else. The schools, professors, and students can't help but desire to use the spotlight to spread their influence and fame. Success in the academic world can too often become a competition, with money, prestige, and egos all on the line.

Also naturally, every school wants to extend and amplify its own prestige by shaping our fledging Academy of the Reclamation. It's no secret that the opportunity to impress the academy's leaders and shape its views has added a competitive edge to the Convocation. Though I'm told the process of a school finding its academic identity can take many years, watching others take so active a hand is a little frightening, if I'm honest. But the children of Sarkoris have returned with countless new stories to go with the old and I believe each should be learned in its proper context.

The most obvious display of competition occurs in the performances and exhibitions, where the visiting schools are showing off what they have to offer. We have refused to make a formal competition of these events, so no rankings or prizes are offered for such performances. Considering the riot we'd have had if we gave an award to Lepidstadt's strange talking box, I think we made the right decision. Still, the competitive atmosphere is almost palpable at times, and the fame of performers and schools who do well spreads quickly.

Indeed, competitions crop up even as you try to prevent them. Reclaiming the relics of Sarkoris is no sport, but the medals we've awarded for those who do recover precious knowledge have sparked competition. Anything that can be counted becomes a score, although the teams think we don't know about their leaderboard. Thankfully, my colleague Rolam Bitterpath was adamant the medals only go to discoveries found while a Sarkorian scholar could supervise their excavation efforts. I hesitate to think of the disaster otherwise. It was my suggestion that each such expedition contain students from multiple schools. Actually, I proposed that no more than one student from each school is allowed, but the sponsor schools watered it down. Perhaps it's for the best, although I still think it does well for students to cast as wide a net as possible in their recruiting.

Thankfully, the expedition competition has only increased interest in our public demon-hunting league, where registered teams get points for each demon or corrupted creature slain. At the end of the Convocation, prizes will be awarded! Though some of the visiting schools expressed some concerns about the dangerous nature of the competition, all of our sponsor schools have applied themselves to the event with gusto. Although, it hasn't escaped my notice that most of the teams are identical to their expeditions, Messida Vost's students at the Acadamae have taken an early lead in a single-minded pursuit of demons. It's likely we'll do this again next year for anyone who cares to visit, although perhaps with an added rule that you can't summon fiends to do the work for you.

Demon-hunting appears to have coincided with another "hobby" that appears prevalent among academics: day drinking. While I was less than certain about encouraging the idea at first, I could hardly begrudge our brave victors a celebratory toast after a successful hunt. We've since discovered that the quickest way to lure an academic into a room is to open a bottle of spirits. Fortunately, our scholarly visitors are far less rowdy when down in their cups compared to crusaders! I have to admit that listening to half-inebriated professors as they hold court has proven very educational, if not in a strictly academic sense.

From the beginning of our planning, we wrestled with what to do concerning the pastimes that are so popular throughout the Inner Sea region, although they don't directly serve the goals of the Convocation. We eventually simply ran out of time. It turns out we needn't have worried, because students themselves organized several jousting tournaments, races, and matches of the sport called basilisk. Most of these competitions take place just outside the walls of the city on old crusader staging grounds that we, lamentably, didn't have time to prepare. The grounds are mostly free of rocks and scrub brush, but they're far from groomed or even level. We can only hope that no surprises lie underground.

A tournament of a different sort has been set up around another popular pastime, one that was also relatively unknown in Sarkoris of old—namely, the game of drouge. Vudrani in origin, this is an intricate, two-player game that's particularly popular among the intellectuals of Absalom, so being able to play it well is something of a status symbol among the academic community. Furthermore, many of our guests have brought their own sets, which is typical when scholars travel, it appears. The intricate animal and monster pieces carved in obsidian, jade, and other beautiful stones are indeed lovely, and I myself would be happy to learn how to play. Setting up the tournament has been a challenge, however, as the most suitable spaces, with tables and seats enough, are the dining halls, but the preferred venues are the libraries—and neither location can be entirely sacrificed for the hours upon hours that this sort of tournament requires. Unlike the physical games, these endeavors are under no conditions, I'm told, to be rushed.

Of course, anyone who's spent time around the crusaders of Mendev can tell you preventing gambling is a lost cause. It seems that academics can turn anything into a bet! The students seem as eager to adopt the game called towers as the crusaders who once stayed in this corner of the city, many flaunting the occult protections of the harrow deck. The fizzleton variant, where you bring your own custom deck, seems to be the most popular, strangely enough. Although several schools have asked for an official ban, so far we've saved such drastic measures for games like knivesies that court injury and disaster. Betting is also rampant, of course, with elixirs, spells, and texts changing hands alongside gold after every demon hunt or game of basilisk. I've even seen coins exchanged over the attendance at competing recitals.

Despite all these efforts and diversions, it seems duels are as inevitable as a river flowing to the sea. Indeed, we can't even ban them like knivesies, because the Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves considers such challenges an important part of training, and the students at Cobyslarni also practice something they described as dueling in illusory rooms that mimic different realms of the First World. That was actually their third or fourth explanation, so it might be better to ask them about it. The students of Lepidstadt and the Kitharodian may have less official backing to their duels, but they're just as eager to meet the challenge, and also rather skilled at hiding their clashes from campus authorities. We've planned for all this as best we can, setting up guidelines for duels that prohibit them from being lethal, doing irreversible harm, or happening outside supervised areas.

I only hope that's good enough. History is filled with cases of revenge sparking a cycle of violence that spirals endlessly out of control. And nothing would undercut the goals of the Convocation quite so utterly as a blood feud between Golarion's most powerful schools!

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Welcome to the Six Schools' Convocation!

On behalf of the Academy of the Reclamation and the citizens of Nerosyan, we extend warm greetings to you. As we acknowledge our past mistakes and pledge ourselves to a new understanding and appreciation of the magical arts, we are truly honored to host this gathering and hope that our time together will yield academic cooperation for generations to come.

Below, you'll find helpful information and guidelines for your stay. As questions arise, we are at your service—simply look for anyone wearing the Welcomer badge or find one of the friendly faces on the other page. You can also stop by the porter's gate in the Academy of the Reclamation at any time, day or night, for answers, assistance, recommendations, and money-changing services.

Accommodations: Each school has its own dedicated area for sleeping and learning. Your school colors and seals decorate the areas and buildings assigned to your delegation, making them easy to identify. Please see your delegation head for specific room assignments and for your home ribbon. This ribbon should be worn at all times for identification purposes, especially in the event of a citywide emergency or a personal tragedy. Please also see your delegation head for curfews and any restrictions on staying outside your assigned housing or entertaining late-night visitors.

Dining: If you're from one of the sponsoring schools, your accommodations include a dining hall or similar space where your accustomed foods will be prepared and served. Additional dining halls, staffed by locals and open to all participants and Nerosyan residents, are located throughout the event grounds. The types of food served in these halls and the hours of operation vary by location.

Libraries: All libraries throughout the event grounds and at the Academy of the Reclamation are open to any participants. Every library has posted hours. A respectful deportment is expected in these and in all academic buildings. Take care to read any additional warnings posted near Cobyslarni libraries.

Exhibition Hall: The exhibition hall is open from sunrise to sunset. A chime will indicate the opening and the closing of the hall. No one is to be in the hall before or after this chime unless accompanied by a Welcomer.

Schedule: A weekly schedule detailing the exhibitions, performances, lectures, competitions, festivals, and other events for the following week will be distributed to each delegation head every Oathday. This schedule will also be posted throughout the event grounds. All are welcome at these events, though seating at some lectures may be limited.

Demon Hunting: Although the Convocation and the city of Nerosyan is sponsoring a demon hunt, be mindful that it is an inherently dangerous venture. Teams can be formed of up to six students, and proof of success can be turned in at the porter's gate in the Academy of the Reclamation. Prizes will be provided for the top teams at the end of the Convocation.

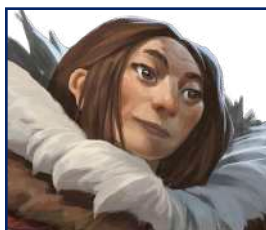
Competitions: Please compete in the spirit of learning and camaraderie. Duels are allowed between individuals or groups, provided that all efforts are taken to prevent permanent injury and a member of the Convocation staff oversees the duel. Knivesies is banned, and anyone playing will be ejected from the Convocation.

Disciplinary Action: Each delegation will follow its own traditions for all disputes and violations occurring within that delegation. All cases of intimidation or harm across delegations will be referred to a Welcomer who'll make inquiries and, if necessary, convene a council involving the offending parties and representatives of their delegations. The council will determine any penalties. Anyone ejected from the Convocation will also be banished from Nerosyan for the duration of the gathering.

ACADEMY OF THE RECLAMATION



Telva Renn

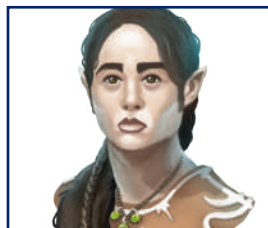


Diarra Romagne

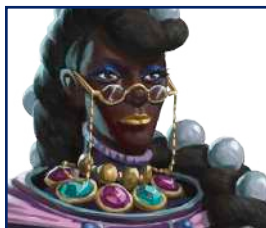


Vil Seral

COBYSLARNI



Zemnaïde



Bofika Nemesan

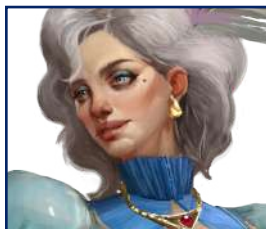


Murrou

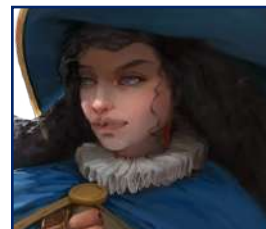
KITHARODIAN ACADEMY



Jarn Lesantillo



Tatiana Lesantillo



Mircea Celeste

MAGAAMBYA



Nsentiah



Msuna Elewe



Azimbye Baadurlo

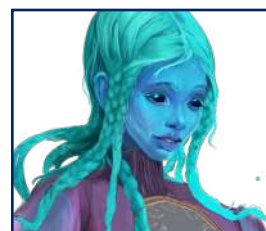
MONASTERY OF THE UNBREAKING WAVES



Kitaja



Swordmaster Ganhil

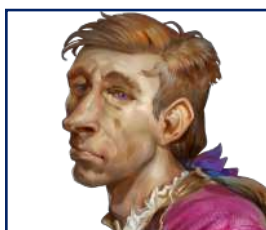


Abhaya the Returner

UNIVERSITY OF LEPIDSTADT



Kateriyana de Rijene



Professor
Cheris Nefritius-Sincoth



Tere Athlanere

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MENDEV

The Convocation takes place on a historic site, the city of Nerosyan that turned back countless waves of demons. Although Nerosyan is in Mendev's borders, climbing any of the great defensive towers will reveal the West Sellen River and, past it, the lands of Sarkoris.

Over a century ago, when demonic power flooded Sarkoris and opened the Worldwound, countless Sarkorians were pushed from their homes. Some clans were forced even beyond the continent of Avistan, settling in Iobaria to the east or Garund far to the south. Many families, including mine, settled just across the border here in Mendev. They fought alongside native Mendevians and their crusader allies to hold the walls of Nerosyan and contain the Worldwound's blight.

Mendev is as visually stunning as it is dangerous, with its dense forests and snowcapped mountains. Untold treasures lie hidden in the snow-fells and thick groves, yet as much as these riches beckon, remember to exercise caution. The forests and mountains alike boast healthy populations of elk, moose, and caribou, which in turn sustain robust populations of predators who know little fear. Other areas reverberate with the souls of the dead who have been unable to sever themselves from the injustices inflicted during their lives. Even more to be feared are demons and other vicious interlopers from the Outer Rifts. While the sealing of the Worldwound means their hordes are no longer being reinforced, they still spread their torment across our lands.

Here are some general guidelines for traveling in Mendev, beyond the walls of Nerosyan.

Never travel alone. The ravages of a century of war on a land that was never heavily populated by humanoids means that you could easily travel from sunrise to sunset without encountering a camp or settlement. And any camp you do find is likely to belong to bandits, often deserters from Mendev's crusader armies. Even if you're confident in your magical abilities to travel easily and quickly, take at least one friend with you. We recommend larger parties with an experienced guide.

Be prepared. Mendev has a way of outwitting the self-assured and especially the arrogant. Always take extra provisions, such as food and winter clothing. Please leave your travel plans with your delegation head. If you're the delegation head or otherwise would like me to keep track of it instead, ask any volunteer for Bia Isha.

An additional word about treasure-hunting. We ask that all recovered Sarkorian artifacts be treated with respect and brought to a Sarkorian leader in Nerosyan for evaluation, where we reserve the right to purchase or trade for those that have true significance. As an added incentive, we will give you an honest evaluation of your finds and have a good chance of recognizing demonically cursed items masquerading as priceless artifacts.

NEROSYAN

Known as the "Diamond of the North," the fortress city of Nerosyan brings to mind the Mendevian Crusades. But originally, the settlement that arose at the confluence of the Egelsee and West Sellen rivers was a haven for pirates working the Sellen or bringing plunder from the Lake of Mists and Veils. The city is in fact roughly diamond in shape, though that's impossible to see once you're inside the fortress walls, thanks to the warren of narrow streets snaking their way through the crowded jumble of buildings. Having been rebuilt time and again over the last century, everything from the stone construction to the high, smooth walls throughout the city to the sudden ending of streets in narrow footpaths manifests a single idea: we will not be overrun.

The noise and bustle of those wartime efforts can only be imagined now, as the crusaders abruptly left the city to engage with the Whispering Tyrant. In their place, we have begun a slow transformation. **Chancellor Irahai** (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Legends* 54) has begun the difficult process of uniting the remaining crusaders, native Mendevians, and those descended from Sarkoris.

If you want to venture beyond the neighborhood of the Convocation, Nerosyan has many sites of historical and political significance.

Cruciform Cathedral: At the center of the city is the massive edifice that fueled the bravery and bravado of the five Mendevian Crusades. Without the legions of crusading faithful, its glory has begun to tarnish a bit, and the building, albeit stuffed with artifacts, feels empty. Services to Iomedae are held regularly, however, and the music is powerful and inspiring. The cathedral is generally open to the public, and when services aren't being held, visitors are welcome to wander its four wings and take in the art and architecture. A good deal of the last century of Mendev's history is visible in the paintings, statues, and tombs that line the cathedral's walls, and the stained glass creates some gorgeous colors when struck by sunlight.

Fire Circle District: This varied collection of shops, eateries, and rooms for rent along the city's west wall offers a firsthand experience of Sarkorian cultures, with traditional and modern approaches to everything from clothing to education on display. Here, our cousins offer food, advice, and community for many returning Sarkorians and plan forays into our homelands. Even among those of us who intend to stay in Nerosyan, we have fervent discussions over our future and host performances in the streets and taverns. Our art is everywhere in this district, woven into our lives instead of hanging in a museum. Although it might feel intimidating to outsiders, respectful visitors are always welcome, and the food vendors are among the finest cooks in the city.

Hank the Alerunner's Hideout: Although Ancuin's Brewery is far closer to the Convocation, this cozy tavern at the extreme east edge of the city has the largest collection of artifacts from Nerosyan's long-past days as a pirate town. Coins, portraits, old bottles, even bits of ships line the walls, and a buoyant, colorful mural graces the back wall, complete with a smiling kraken and angry mermaids. The food options are limited, but the selection of meads and ales is robust.

Mendevian Delegation Forum: While not strictly speaking a forum, this collection of buildings at the north end of the city is the seat of the government. Its name emphasizes the importance of deliberation and of listening to many voices—values and practices absent under the rule of Queen Galfrey. Despite her righteousness and zeal, the queen showed little concern for anyone other than her soldiers; her chosen successor, Chancellor Irahai, works hard to remedy that oversight. Visitors are welcome to observe the Delegation in session, to attend public suppers to share their views, and to view the collection of items and commentary in the Hall of History.

Queen Galfrey's Palace: While not much of a palace by southland standards, the former home of Queen Galfrey is now a shrine to the former leader, who abdicated her crown when she became the herald of Iomedae. Her furniture and other worldly possessions form the background for displays chronicling her life and writings. Additionally, murals and portraits detail each of the five crusades while foregrounding Iomedae's involvement—and largely ignoring the persecution of "heretics," many of whom were burned at the stake by these same crusaders. I can only hope those who follow behind me are as forgiving of my faults.

Starrise Spire: By far the highest structure and best landmark in the city, the spire is older than even the fortress wall, and the celestial light atop it has burned steady and bright for generations. Whether you find yourself lost in Nerosyan's winding streets or on the scarred plains outside the city, its beacon will lead you back near the Convocation grounds.

A well-loved legend here claims that, so long as even a single guard remains within the spire to defend the city, the light will never falter. The spire houses a branch of the Pathfinder Society sworn to the protection of the city, though their focus as always is in recovering lost knowledge and relics. Small wonder, then, that they've been quite helpful in founding the Academy of the Reclamation. Furthermore, being particularly adept at cartography, they're certainly proving their worth in mapping out the Sarkoris Scar. They welcome visitors, especially those with a genuine interest in their library and enjoy swapping tales and knowledge. Climbing to the top of the spire—often, though not always, an option for those who politely request to do so—grants a tremendous view.

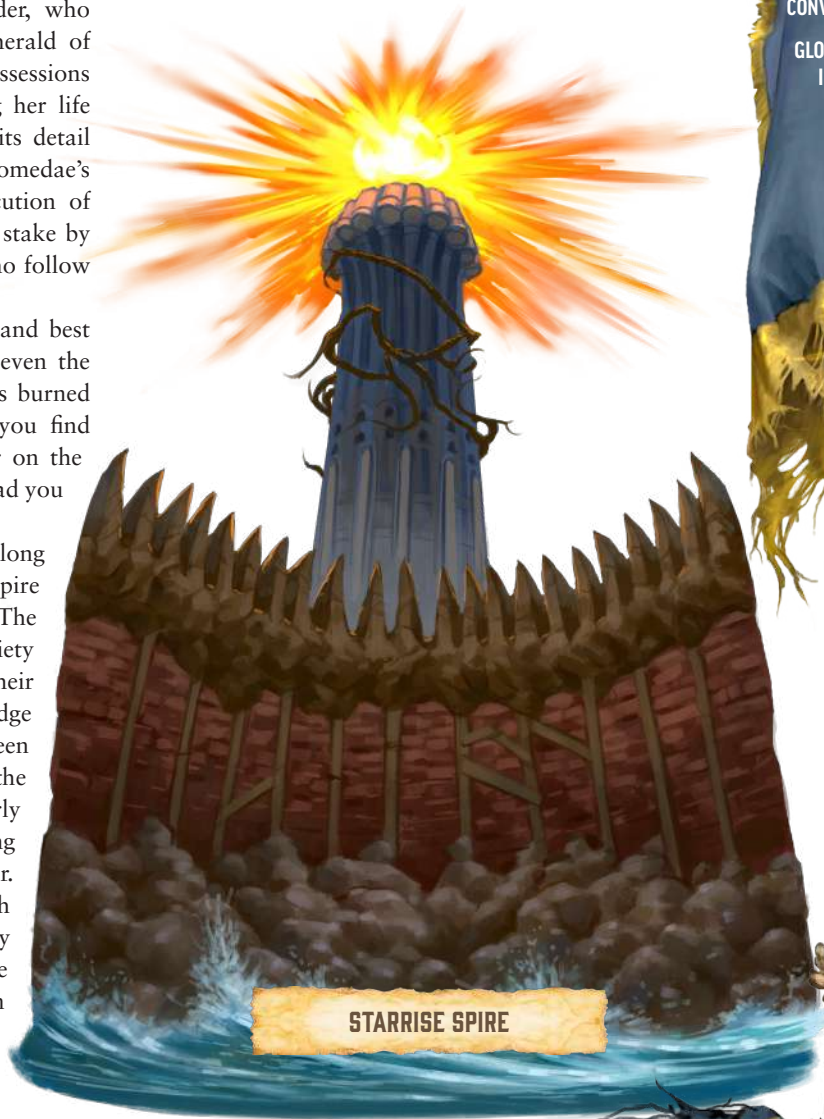
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With most of the crusaders having turned their blades toward the Whispering Tyrant in the south, Mendev is as empty as it's ever been. Old strongholds are repurposed as homes for hunters, deserters, and bandits. Although certainly less dangerous than the depths of Sarkoris, Mendev is still not a land to be traveled lightly.

I will leave our ancestral lands of Sarkoris in the hands of Rolam Bitterpath, one of the Reclamation's finest scouts. But Mendev has been my family's home for generations, and I feel confident in my knowledge, perhaps sharing some of its secrets.

Unfortunately I can't shed much light on Mendev's newest mystery. Shortly after the death of Gorum, perhaps during the Godsrain itself, towers of jagged rock burst from the ground at isolated points around Mendev. His followers among former crusaders claim the towers rise from nine planar battlefields he'd once conquered, one on each plane of the Outer Sphere. From my grandmother's tales of Gorum, I can't imagine narrowing that list down to simply one per plane.

Whatever Gorum's role, Chancellor Irahai has asked Mendevians to stop climbing the towers. Yawning gaps a few hundred feet up apparently lead inside to strange,



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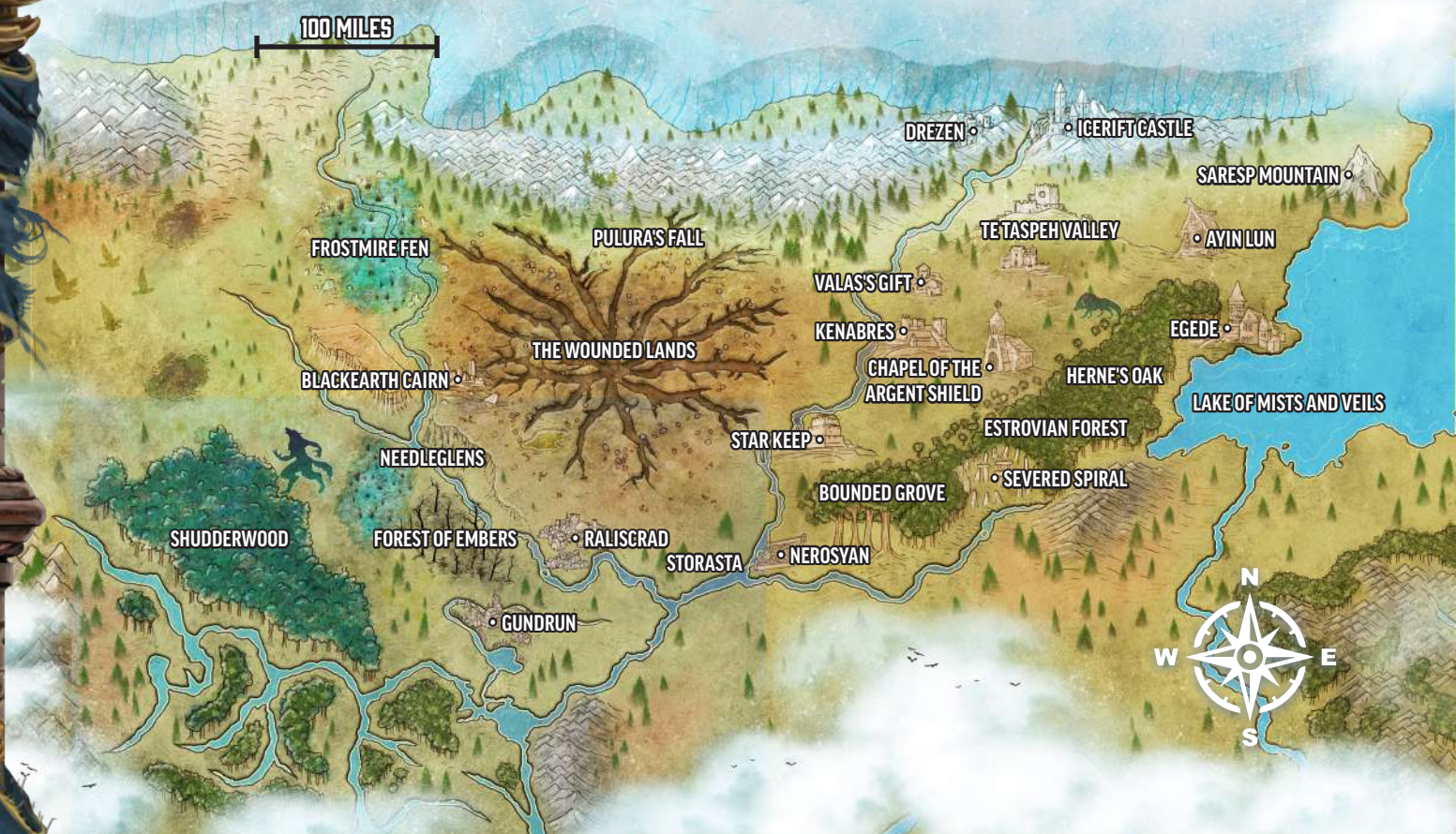
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dreamlike vistas. The inhabitants, even those who appear as angels or their celestial kin, have proved hostile, and these lands cannot risk another such war.

This prohibition and even the few guards they can spare have worked about as well as you'd expect. The youth of the ancestral Mendevians in particular have begun sneaking up the towers and surviving their trials as a rite of passage. And perhaps it is. Many of them have returned when more experienced explorers do not.

Ayin Lun: Among our oldest legends are the tales of a hallowed enclave of scholars and oracles that would host thousands of visitors on feast days. But the city was overrun by undead generations ago, and the few survivors worked to erase all memory of its location. I'm told that the search for this site throughout Sarkoris was never successful.

Three of the Godsfall towers rose among the remote valleys of northern Mendev, including one that courses with the energy of the Outer Rifts. Although the ruins nearby suggest the legendary site may finally have been found, I can only suggest avoiding the towers until they're better understood.

Bounded Grove: This location at the edge of the Estrovian Forest, not far from Nerosyan, was the site of a horrific tragedy long ago about which little is known, save that a tremendous number of lives were lost. To honor this loss, Mendev's ancestors marked the trees around the fallen, sanctifying the area to their rest. For generations,

we honored this area by giving it a wide berth. But over the past century, crusaders and demons alike have trespassed on this site, and demons lair there now. Although the old families of Mendev are not our kin, coming from Iobaria to the east, their desire to reconsecrate the area and learn its story echoes our own.

Chapel of the Argent Shield: This temple to Iomedae lies on the road between Kenabres and Egede, a welcoming sight for footsore travelers, especially those in need of aid. The priests tend to be friendly and helpful, if somewhat zealous to promote their beliefs. The shrines and dedications to fallen crusaders that line its walls inside and out are a moving tribute to them, and I've heard the artworks collectively provide a surprisingly complete map of the battlefields in the region.

Drezen: Although on the Sarkorian side of the river, this fortress's history is the history of the crusades. It was built by dwarven crusaders to stem the tide of demons during the First Crusade, fell to treachery during the Second Crusade, and was liberated by the great heroes of the Fifth Crusade. The defenders remaining there are a fierce and proud lot, mostly crusaders who aided in retaking the citadel.

Although the journey there is treacherous, the residents are welcoming to members of the Reclamation and should be open to most attendees of the Convocation. In addition to serving as a haven in the north, Drezen also holds the *Purity Forge*, a sacred relic of the Fifth Crusade that

can reforge items corrupted by evil magic. Although the process is said to be arduous, it provides a hope for many relics that would just have to be destroyed otherwise.

Egede: Mendev's second-largest city, this port on the Lake of Mists and Veils became a boomtown during the crusades. Its return to its roots as a trading center has been relatively easy, though the loss of revenue has been hard. On the other hand, the rowdy and irreverent character of the town has reasserted itself, and my fellow Sarkorians now feel much more welcome there.

Mysterious treasures pass through Egede frequently, with some of the newest washing right out of the lake, including a statue we've displayed on the Convocation grounds for inspection.

They're not without risks, however. Recently, a tantalizing group of relics purported to originate with our ancestors were brought to Nerosyan from Egede. They turned out to be demon-infused fakes, and their curses created a great deal of suffering and havoc. The source of these appalling items has yet to be identified or punished.

Estrovian Forest: This vast and ancient forest covers much of central and southern Mendev. Before the crusades, Mendevians frequented the forest and drew on its bounty. The crusaders were less respectful, and its druidic keepers took steps to limit their trespasses. For three generations, the watchword has been to avoid the forest because of its witchwargs, pale flightless griffins, and the new stag-horned guardians of the forest. But the forest is also home to a family of bears who once walked among the druids and can guide respectful visitors around the worst of the dangers.

Herne's Oak: In the densest part of the Estrovian Forest lies the gathering place of the forest's mysterious humanoid guardians, the stag-crowned hernes. Stories of fishers who ply the Lake of Mists and Veils paint the first herne as a noble hunter cursed by druidic magic to guard the forest forever. The same stories say that herne is buried under this ancient oak with all his ill-gotten treasures, much of it stolen from Sarkoris. If there's truth to either story, it's likely to be found at this great tree.

Icerift Castle: This remote fortification, founded on the West Sellen River near the Crown of the World, was meant as a staging ground for crusaders to enter the Worldwound from the north. Chancellor Irahai only recently released records of the castle's failed construction, suppressed by the crusader government. Its remote location proved untenable, but the soldiers who went to bring the workers home found them all slaughtered, their hearts torn out and devoured. Rumors persist there's something worse than a demon in the ruins, while the local area is stalked by arctic bugbears known as wikkawaks and their blood-matted bear companions.

Kenabres: North of Nerosyan along the river lies a motley sprawl of buildings behind patched defenses. This quiet town quickly became a bustling, fortified crusader city of thousands when the Worldwound erupted. At the beginning of the Fifth Crusade, the city was all but

destroyed, and its draconic defender killed. Few crusaders remain, but determined residents continue to rebuild under the leadership of **Horgus Gworm** (foul-tempered male human treasurer).

The Riftwardens here have also spent decades trying to understand the Worldwound and now the rocky spire outside their city. My understanding is that they're the foremost experts on the topic, although they're reluctant to share that information widely.

Saresp Mountain: This remote peak holds dozens upon dozens of cave tombs. Far from being abandoned to the dead, these caves used to serve as winter homes for the descendants of those who'd been laid to rest. During the darkest and coldest weeks of the year, when horrible snow rolled off the lake, the people would live as small family groups in separate caves, where they intoned prayers and pondered the past. These families accepted many fleeing Sarkorians but disappeared in the waning days of the crusades. Most of the caves have been sealed now, and those that haven't show tampering from grave robbers.

The Severed Spiral: In the southern part of the Estrovian Forest rises a circle of standing stones, forty-three titanic menhirs arranged around seven dolmens. Half of these stones are black basalt, while the other half are white dolomite. Rumors that two-headed trolls guard the stones are enough to keep away most scholars, but others argue the site is clearly dedicated to Nethys or Pharasma.

Star Keep: On the cliffs overlooking the West Sellen River stands a renowned fortress that was staffed by several holy orders that worked independently of the larger Mendevian crusade. Their exploits plunging deep into Sarkoris have become legendary. When so many other crusaders began withdrawing, the Hellknight Order of the Pike saw hope of ending the demon threat and poured resources into the fortress. Although they're skilled hunters of demons and all forms of corrupted beasts, their sudden prominence further complicates the Reclamation's efforts to recover the relics in the keep's vault. Proving ownership to their satisfaction is often impossible, instead leaving a slow trickle of relics out into the hands of the best liars and forgers.

Te Taspeh Valley: Just north of the Chapel of the Argent Shield lies a peaceful valley with the ruins of ancient wooden homes, the beams and posts covered in curious carvings. This valley was once the heart of ancient Mendevian society which, though largely seminomadic, had settlements at important spiritual centers. These ruins have been occasionally plundered but not yet investigated. Threats from a territorial adamantite dragon, though, have deterred such explorations.

Valas's Gift: Along the road to Kenabres is a bubbling spring of blood-red water. Despite the unsettling appearance, particularly so close to blighted lands and among the overgrown ruins of a town, it's said to be the blessing of the holy man Valas, and the red water once supported vast fields of hardy plants.

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BEARING OUR SCARS

When you think of Sarkoris, you think of loss.

Now, there's good reason for this. For nearly a century, the Outer Rifts scoured our home. Recent history has left no room in Sarkoris for anything beyond demons, crusades, and an endless amount of pain. The stories of our clans and peoples have been forgotten in the years of violence, replaced by a story of struggle, battle, and tears shed for a dead nation. Our history is buried beneath layers of blood.

But pain isn't all that Sarkoris contains. We remember the Song of Sarkoris. We will add new verses.

SINGING NEW SONGS

The first of these new verses must be the reclamation of Gundrun led by the Clefthorn clan. For over 50 years, our people have held onto this foothold back in our homeland. For over 50 years, we've told the world that we continue to live, that our home has not forsaken us.

But we seek to reclaim more than just land. A culture is more than the place it was born. Our knowledge keepers were killed, our cities razed, and our relics appropriated. Our past was devoured by the Locust Lord or destroyed in the century of violence. Our material history is divided among chthonic claws, crusader lord collections, and

bandit hordes. Simply put: Sarkorian history does not lie in the hands of Sarkorians.

But stores of knowledge can be rebuilt, and we're beginning to make strides. The Pathfinder Society has spent years assisting the Farheaven Clan in their return to the Forest of Embers near Gundrun. And with them returned one of the old gods of Sarkoris, **Dolok Darkfur** (nurturing male old god of Sarkoris). His memory stretches back centuries and is an invaluable link with all that came before.

Although another stride forward, the Academy of the Reclamation is a sore spot for some. And how could it not be? The same arcane arts that called the Locust and scoured our home are being taught in our name. Still, it provides a home for our children and for our history, where they can look after each other. Perhaps the formal nature of the institution can persuade some of the more difficult "collectors" to return our belongings to the academy, allowing them to return to our people's hands even if they remain in Nerosyan.

Many of you, I imagine, will be seeing our lands for the first time. Make sure you're well prepared before you do so, for venturing into Sarkoris is never easy. The history of the place rushes over you like a river. The actions of our ancestors echo with every step across the scarred landscape. Not all ghosts are so easily

banished. For those who are guests, step carefully. So much of our recent past has been decided by outsiders. And while we cannot overlook the aid that Mendev has provided against the Outer Rifts, these remain our lands. When you enter them, you enter with the understanding that you are our guest, that the relics you find within are our treasured history, not mere war trophies or curios for a collection. Our ancestors belong where they're found and aren't to be poked or prodded at. We invite you to aid us, to become our allies. Sarkoris remembers many great friends from all across Golarion, and we've room for many more. For those of my people seeing Sarkoris for the first time: welcome home, cousin. Our grandmothers remember you.

SURVEYING THE LAND

For my cousins and visitors both, there's much work to do be done in Sarkoris. We've made great strides in reclaiming our home, but the land has changed greatly in our absence. Many water sources have dried up, and those that remain are tainted. The Outer Rifts have destroyed our natural weather cycles, creating a strange and unpredictable climate. Many of our plants and animals didn't have the opportunity to escape as we did, and so they've taken new forms to endure their century of torment. I do not ask you to get involved in our work of reclaiming the land, though you're of course welcome to assist us in it. What I do ask for is your help in something that I hope your academies can provide for our people. I ask that you help in reclaiming our knowledge.

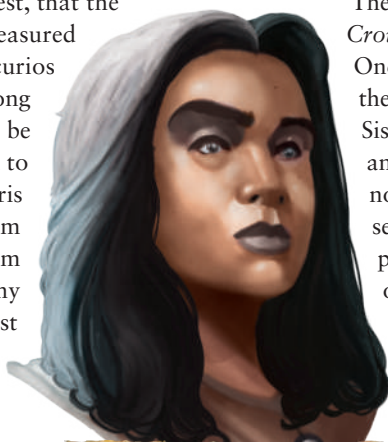
When we were forced to flee our home, we lost access to our past. Our buildings, temples, and libraries all fell to the demonic incursion. Many of those who lived in Sarkoris before the fall have passed on, taking their memories with them. We cannot share our story if we do not remember how to tell it. But the land has not forgotten. Our scouts have found sources of knowledge spread across our land, hidden among straggling demons, haunted ruins, and ancient curses that have only grown more potent in our absence. The old gods claw their way free from beneath demon corpses and hidden strongholds to sing with us once more.

BLACKEARTH CAIRN

I know mention of Sarkoris and the Worldwound can stir up excitement for demons and righteous vengeance. While I'm uneasy about students marching into battle, no matter how just the cause, I know there will be those among you who crave the chance to prove your own skill, and it would be hypocritical of me to deny my cousins the same path I myself have taken. But dethroning **Jaalika** (wary female nascent demon lord

propagandist), the self-styled Queen of Despair, has not been a simple matter. During the war, Jaalika and her followers forced their way into the family cairn of the Blackearth Clan, overwhelming the cairn's spiritual guardians.

There she remains, with the Blackearth's *Crown of Feasting Ravens* atop her head. Once the symbol of the clan's victory over the Willowgrasp Clan at the Battle of Two Sisters Hill and singing the knowledge of their ancestors from the jeweled raven's beak, it's now used to spread hints of that knowledge in service to Jaalika's twisted message. Whatever purpose the seraptis had when she invaded our land, she seems to have forgotten it. Instead, she builds her petty kingdom from within the cairn's walls, convincing our own people that reclamation is a hopeless endeavor and turning their despair to her cause. She must be dislodged, but I've already lost too many friends to the demon's grasp.



ROLAM BITTERPATH

THE FOREST OF EMBERS

Although Gundrun serves as the Reclamation's physical base of operations, I must admit the Forest of Embers serves as its heart. Countless new trees sprout from the demon-stained ashes, blessed by Dolok Darkfur and watched over by his Farheaven Clan and their goblin allies. Although the trees are young and the forest is still dangerous, you can see a glimmer of old Sarkoris in what they've rebuilt here.

Most of the god's guidance comes through **Nelket** (driven female human god caller), carrying the wisdom of Dolok Darkfur's long memory, but finding her as the clan travels through the forest and beyond can be a challenge. Fire still haunts the clan's steps like a lingering curse, with small groups of brimoraks and corrupt elementals regularly appearing to hunt travelers and burn back new growth. Although they don't dare confront the old god directly, some force still clearly continues to summon them.

Don't worry about the goblins, though. They're friends the Farheaven Clan brought back from their time in Iobaria to the east. Nelket insists that even the fires they frequently set serve a vital purpose, clearing away rot and keeping other, more malevolent, fires contained.

FROSTMIRE FEN

Although this desolate tundra and its sulfurous springs might seem like a place of demonic influence, Frostmire has never been hospitable. Today, a few secret paths through the fen connect us to dwarven allies in the citadel of Jormurdun and our cousins welcomed alongside them.

Even beyond the cold and damp, the fungal infections and bowel worms, the situation here has gotten worse. In the last year, the forces of the fen have become even more hostile, thankfully warring against each other

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rather than turning their gaze outwards. The marsh giants, controllers of the fen for generations, have grown only more eager to devour travelers since they've begun worshipping their leader **High Priest Glungur** (gluttonous male nascent demon lord cleric) alongside his frozen god Sithhud. Rising to overthrow them are the fungal horrors that sprout around the foulest sulfur springs. It's said even the terotricus, a catastrophe of the Outer Rifts, must obey **Enivuni** (exacting female nascent demon lord despot).

GUNDRUN

Destroyed by demons and the chaos brought in their wake, Gundrun was rebuilt over 50 years ago. Behind its wards is where we prepare for our journeys, host our festivals, and celebrate the knowledge we've reclaimed. I do hope that at least some of you will be present at a time when the reclaimers return to town and are honored with a feast. It's here we share the knowledge we've learned of our home, tell the stories of our braver members and, if we're particularly blessed, sing songs we've relearned in our searches.

But while you're there, you should also visit the Walk of Lost Gods. As our people returned to Gundrun, they added what monuments remained of their gods to the standing stones of old Gundrun's deities. There are over a hundred markers in carved wood, etched stone, or cast metal. Although we've relearned some, adding their verses back to the song, dozens are left without even a name to remember them by. It's my hope that visiting scholars will recognize some symbol or remember a story carried out of Sarkoris by our cousins.

NEEDLEGLENS

Unlike the Forest of Embers further down the Sarkora River, the Needleglens grew rather than shrank with the Outer Rifts' influence. The tangled undergrowth and gnarled trees don't look much different than they did to my grandfather, who told me stories he was taught as a child of the sacred spaces there. Our scouts have found a new entrance into one of these places, a narrow crevasse opened during the tumult following the Locust's defeat. Inside those unsealed caves we saw walls covered in pictographs drawn with paint so fresh we weren't convinced that it wasn't a cruel joke made moments before we arrived. My experience tells me that the paintings reference a song, its images meant to remind the singer of the flow of the song as well as the content. The song's subject seems to be about how a clan obtained their first huzuri, a symbol of a clan's spirit and past. To understand this song would give us great insight into our history and, if we can locate the huzuri mentioned, allow us to find and restore the soul of one of our clans. Unfortunately, we lack so much context that we wouldn't know the full words even if we could sing them, and our time in the caves is limited by the beasts of the Needleglens that embraced the Outer Rifts' corruption to survive.

PULURA'S FALL

The great temple to Pulura, the Shimmering Maiden and old god of the nearby town of Dyinglight, withstood a century of demonic siege. Although the great waterfall has run dry, the faithful of Pulura have begun teaching a new generation, seeking to replace the aging survivors of the siege. Although their aging leader **Eliandra** (exhausted female nephilim high priestess) has barely appeared since she helped break the siege, I saw her back then and can only say the stories understate her power and generosity.

Many of our cousins, sent to rest in the lake at the base of the falls, now wander the muddy lake bed after being disturbed by demons. Those learning Pulura's ways are responsible for putting them to rest. One, in particular, might interest you. She claims to possess a wealth of stories about Sarkoris and the land but will only trade like-for-like. She traveled much of Sarkoris in life at the command of her god and now wishes to know of distant



DOLOK DARKFUR

places and cultures, the histories of nations she's never heard of and people she never got to meet. We spent an evening sharing the stories of us and of our diaspora, but I get the sense that she's withholding her deeper secrets until she hears a tale she deems of equal value.

RALISCRAD

Not far from our sanctuary of Gundrun are the ruins of Raliscrad. We remember it as a trading hub, built where the Sarkora and the Isk met to connect our lands and our people. My grandmother was buried there, in the garden she kept in what was once my family's home. I have not been able to bring myself to check if she's still there. Raliscrad's future was snuffed out by the actions of **Minagho** (vengeful female lilitu demon) and her Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth, who had turned our city into her personal kingdom.

At the heart of Raliscrad lies Ivyfane, a temple our ancestors made to honor death and nature alike. In the temple's underground vaults lie ceremonial belongings, libraries of knowledge, and the bodies of our ancestors. Many of our clans kept their people and treasures safe in the temple's catacombs, under the watchful eyes of many gods. Pharama's own people hid the temple's secrets from the demons after the other gods guarding the temple fell. We heard rumors that during the incursion, they had allowed some crusaders access to the catacombs, deeming it better to be in the hands of the crusade than Minagho's. Some of those belongings have been returned to the Academy of the Reclamation, and they've ignited a great passion in Gundrun. Anything we can find to understand and perhaps revive the faith of Raliscrad is of great interest to my clan.

Unfortunately, the same psychopomps that barred the demons' entry deny us as well. We've learned that the leader the temple's guardians, **Atzemsira** (suspicious female morrigna psychopomp), has also received similar requests from Minagho's remaining followers and emissaries from Blackearth Cairn to the north. In that haze of lies, we've yet to even convince the psychopomps that Raliscrad's children have returned.

SHUDDERWOOD

Despite their best efforts, there are still places the Outer Rifts could not claim. Though of course, it could be argued they never belonged to us either. To the west of Gundrun stretches the Shudderwood, a forest so deep that not even the demons could change its nature. That's not to say it's pristine. The northern reaches of the forest echo in pain, the ghosts of our loved ones lash out against their fate and reenact ancient grudges. But venture deeper into the forest and you will find a memory of what Sarkoris once was and, perhaps, what it can become again. We aren't the only ones who have called the Shudderwood our home, however. Denizens of the First World have been there for ages, perhaps even longer than us, and they've taken great issue with our

perceived encroachment. If we can come to an agreement with the fey, as nervous as that phrase makes me, we can start learning more about the nature of Sarkoris and how to combat the effects of the Outer Rifts.

STORASTA

Although the cities of Iz and Undarin suffered similarly tragic fates, Storasta deserves a special mention being so close to Gundrun and your gathering in Nerosyan. Its fall is memorialized in what many outsiders call "the Song of Sarkoris," although I prefer "the Last Defense." Any true Song of Sarkoris would include the countless lost defeating **Carrock** (corrupted male arboreal regent) and pulling his roots from the city.

Little remains of Storasta now. Although the twisted brambles and fungus fields that linger on are a mere hint of the blight of years past, they still serve as nests for countless vermin and corrupted plants. Many relics of old Sarkoris still rest in the ashes beneath them for those with the time and bravery to sift them out, alongside the bones of many dead who should not be disturbed. If you venture into the city, beware the trees near its heart. Most are the sprouts of Carrock's seeds, arboreals that shelter his blighted nymphs beneath their boughs and consider the ruin to be their garden.

UNDARIN

The touch of demons has spread throughout our lands, but Undarin is something of a special case. Its ruler used it as a testing ground for countless experiments, rebuilding the city with ghouls and demons alongside human prisoners forced to pretend all was well.

The charade was ended with her defeat by the heroes of the Fifth Crusade, with a lucky few survivors able to flee to Gundrun as her demons ran wild. Those demons and her experiments still run rampant, fighting pitched battles that flicker like lightning atop the plateau and in the rubble of fallen buildings below. Although she was responsible for the Worldwound's opening and all the ruin brought on these lands, the most twisted scars left by **Areelu Vorlesh** (patient female demon archwitch) can be seen here.

THE WOUNDED LANDS

Still overrun with the demons of the Worldwound, these chasms are no place for mortals.

NEW VERSES

This is where Sarkoris now stands. A land that has changed greatly, but one that remains our home. One haunted by old pains but aching for new triumphs. Our people have suffered greatly, but we will not suffer forever. Our land has survived, and so will we.

When you know Sarkoris, you will know strength.

Rolam Bitterpath
Captain of the Reclamation

RIVAL ACADEMIES

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Academy of the Reclamation

Cobyslarni

Kitharodian Academy

The Magaambya

Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves

University of Lepidstadt

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPONSORS

Whether your characters are more interested in arcane theories, theatrical displays, surgical procedures, or mystical introspections, the six sponsors offer many new options that support scholarly pursuits of all stripes. Although many more schools are attending the Convocation, these six have brought enough staff and experienced students with them to continue passing on the techniques they're so renowned for.

The six sponsors are the driving forces of the Convocation, responsible for organizing the event, providing key resources, and inviting many guests. For PCs at the Convocation, these schools provide both the best support network and most opportunities for specialized training.

However, these benefits also come with expectations: the beneficiary supports their school and might contend with rivalries that pull in even the least contentious student. Students from smaller schools who curry favor with the sponsors might suffer the same fate, although many would consider the secrets they obtain a worthy payment.

Advice for the GM to run the Convocation and distribute the knowledge of its sponsors can be found on page 120. This information can be particularly useful as the lines begin to blur and knowledge is shared between these academic titans.

BACKGROUNDS

Special uncommon backgrounds are presented for campaigns that take place at the Convocation and are optionally tied to the sponsor schools. These backgrounds might also be appropriate for other campaigns, particularly those with an academic bent.

THE SPONSORS

Six main schools are sponsoring the Convocation. Each has its own secrets, represented by new rules options. Uncommon options presented for these schools can be accessed by any student or staff of that school.

Each school section also includes a few scholars who have made their own innovations. These options are generally rare, requiring a character to learn or receive it directly from the creator.

As the inaugural host of the Convocation, the **Academy of the Reclamation** (page 24) straddles many possibilities and tensions between Sarkoris's past and future. Most controversially, the new academy seeks to form a Sarkorian school for wizards (page 32) despite studies of the arcane arts long being forbidden in Sarkoris. This school also preserves ancient arts that have survived the devastation caused by the Outer



Rifts, including the Campfire Chronicler archetype (page 34) recently rediscovered thanks to the spirit of a fallen Sarkorian storyteller.



Cobyslarni (page 36) is the silent headmaster of the school that shares his name, carried on his elephantine back. The wandering academy moves through the First World, the unfinished realm of the fey, where reality has a loose grasp and only agreements can be trusted. The headmaster offers contracts as a witch's patron (page 44) to a select few, while many more take advantage of his wanderings to find appropriate familiars. The scholars who live atop his back also provide lessons for pactbinders (page 46) who wish to form agreements with mysterious fey patrons.



Kitharodian Academy (page 48) holds the embers of Taldor's greatness close as its home empire slips slowly into decline. The academy's performers, skilled in the theatrics of stagecraft as well as the tactics of spycraft, have devised new performance items (page 56) to delight audiences and baffle observers. Their most dedicated thespians also learn the Kitharodian actor archetype (page 58), bringing the nuanced shades of Taldor's storied history into every role they play.



The Magaambya (page 60) brings hard-earned wisdom from the jungles of the Mwangi Expanse. As alumni of one of Golarion's most established magical academies, Magaambyans have developed the School of Rooted Wisdom (page 68), a flexible wizard school adapted from the academy's five branches. The Magaambya's masters of halcyon magic will also share new storytelling spells (page 70) that draw on the tales of their homeland.



The Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves (page 72) trains monastic warriors from Jalmeray with unique approaches to emulate the perfection of water. These techniques, which were long thought lost, include new feats (page 80) for monks to channel the waves' tenacity and dynamism. Additionally, the resurging maelstrom hybrid study (page 82) allows a magus to evoke broken weapons' tide-swallowed glories, turning shattered swords and splintered spears into tools of elemental power.



The University of Lepidstadt (page 84) hones the skills and talents of tireless and doubtlessly macabre students who seek to specialize in surgical arts and tinkering with crackling coils. It showcases gadgets (page 92) of special interest to inventors, and their medical students can also plunge their hands deep into the Lepidstadt surgeon's (page 94) bloody craft; this archetype allows doctors to bring an unexpected vitality to flesh and bone through the symphony of Stasian capacitors and immaculate scalpel-work.

OUTSIDE THE CONVOCAATION

Although the Six Schools' Convocation won't last forever, the sponsors hope to never stop teaching. Individual academies can appear in any campaign that reaches their region, but their students and staff spread far beyond that.

The influence of the Magaambya is the most widespread of all, but families in many countries north of the Inner Sea send their children to the Kitharodian Academy and the University of Lepidstadt. Those who have studied at Cobyslarni might seem rarer, but only because they're so widely spread into every corner of the First World and even stranger planes.

The two remaining sponsors aren't as well-known, even in the rarified atmosphere of academia, but that doesn't mean they're strangers to exploration. As the Academy of the Reclamation works to recover the knowledge of Sarkoris, its students often find themselves following the trails of the Sarkorian diaspora throughout the Inner Sea region. Similarly, the warriors of the Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves seek knowledge of elemental water to rebuild their lost teachings and witness their students' personal journeys to achieve mastery.

Students outside the Convocation still gain access to their school's uncommon techniques. Rare rules options are generally assumed to be part of their teachers' individual stories and are rewards for assisting or befriending those figures. As usual, any rarity restriction is subject to the GM's discretion. See page 22 of *Pathfinder GM Core* for more information about how rarity impacts your stories.

OTHER SCHOOLS

Beyond the six sponsors, there are many other participants in the Convocation. The most prominent are the Sihedron Spires (page 112) from New Thassilon, who arrived late enough that many assumed they wouldn't show up at all. They specialize in rune magic, practicing wizardry through an understanding of one of the seven runes of sin. The runelord archetype (page 114) allows wizards who learned at the Sihedron Spires or in the ruins of Thassilon to use this ancient style of magic.

Many schools have accepted invitations with smaller delegations. Although they're less involved, it's the better choice for many schools because of the great distance they must travel or the small size of their institute. Individual invitees (page 96) pursue their own research and have certain specialized understandings, but they don't carry the wealth of options a larger delegation would bring with it.

In addition to these invitees, virtually any school could send a delegate or even a larger group to the Convocation. There are few schools, whether near to Sarkoris or somewhere in the far corners of the planes, that aren't concerned with the preservation of knowledge. The list of invitees isn't exhaustive, and many invitations are declined or never receive a response.

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CONVOCATION BACKGROUNDS

At 1st level, when you create your character, you gain a background of your choice. For more information on backgrounds, see page 84 of the *Pathfinder Player Core*.

The following backgrounds showcase a variety of individuals who study at, work in, or otherwise represent the different academies that comprise the Convocation. You can also use these backgrounds to portray various aspects of academic life, with or without the presence of the Convocation.

Students at the Convocation attend to complete extracurricular projects, to take part in exchange programs, or to assist with lessons, exhibits, and outreach efforts. Meanwhile, academic staff are kept busy with teaching and taking care of students, with organizing conferences and hosting plenaries, and with managing the inevitable back-and-forth of sabotage and sniping that often simmers between career rivals.

You can also find many working the Convocation's business opportunities; while some attendees might be legitimate agents hoping to grow their institutions' networks and reputations, others might be more suspect and seek to line their pockets with excess research funding swindled from such a vast congregation of scholars. Of course, in contrast to such hard-nosed and material concerns, bookish mystics and seekers of knowledge are also present in full force. To these studious individuals, the Convocation's exhibitions of knowledge are the main draw.

Because each sponsoring academy encapsulates diverse paradigms and philosophies of theory and practice, you can customize each of these backgrounds to better fit the institution of your character's origin. To represent the effects of your education, you can choose from the following Lore skills associated with your school when given the option to do so by your background.

- **Academy of the Reclamation:** Demon Lore or Sarkoris Lore
- **Cobyslarni:** First World Lore or Legal Lore
- **Kitharodian:** Taldor Lore or Theater Lore
- **Magaambya:** Mwangi Expanse Lore or Storytelling Lore
- **Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves:** Jalmeray Lore or Plane of Water Lore
- **Lepidstadt University:** Construct Lore or Ustalav Lore

These backgrounds from *Player Core* are also suitable for characters attending the Convocation: acolyte, cultist, merchant, noble, scholar, and teacher. If you choose one of these backgrounds, you can replace the given Lore skill with one associated with your school.

ACADEMIC SCION

UNCOMMON

You were born to famed scholars of magic; your childhood was filled with old books, ink-stained lesson papers, and

casual dinners with your parents' brilliant colleagues. This erudite upbringing eases your academic journey, as you were introduced early on to seminal texts and foundational theories that granted you a preternatural instinct and affinity for magic, but that also exposed you to massive pressures from familial expectations.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Charisma or Intelligence, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Arcana. You're also trained in the Academia Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Arcane Sense skill feat.

CONVOCATION SCOUT

UNCOMMON

The Convocation is the biggest, most anticipated academic event in recent years. Eager to create long-lasting alliances as well as recruit promising students or staff to their own ranks, your school has sent you as a representative to advance their interests. Your tact, analytical ability, and gift for communication serve you well in scouting profitable partnerships with the Convocation's other sponsors and guests.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Wisdom or Charisma, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Diplomacy. You're also trained in the Politics Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Group Impression skill feat.

GHOSTWRITER

UNCOMMON

While you enjoy scholastic success, you lack either academic aspirations or academic integrity, and you instead conduct your illicit business of ghostwriting at your school. When desperate students and staff bedeviled by deadlines or quotas seek your services, their academic legitimacy is underpinned by your expertise in ghostwriting and forgery. The Convocation is a treasure trove of new clients and inspirations for someone of your particular skills.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Dexterity or Intelligence, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Society. You're also trained in the Scribing Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Experienced Professional skill feat.

LIBRARY DWELLER

UNCOMMON

The library serves as your refuge from a world that isn't always welcoming or reasonable. Knowledge pools in libraries, their collections accumulating occult power as teachings, interpretations, deconstructions, and translations intertwine. You've glimpsed these esoteric truths, perhaps prompted to by propitious instructors, or you might have independently attained such epiphanies. Whatever the case, you're a frequent pilgrim to archives and academies, and you seek patterns of cosmic proofs within volumes and tomes.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Constitution or Intelligence, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Occultism. You're also trained in the Library Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Additional Lore skill feat.

PARTY SCHOLAR

UNCOMMON

Perhaps because you already achieved what you wanted at school or your position makes you invulnerable, you've begun to pour your efforts into a lifestyle of hedonistic excess. The fact that the Convocation isn't a months-long party might thus come as a rude shock to you, but your skill at deflecting blame and making fast friends might mitigate that.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Constitution or Charisma, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Deception. You're also trained in the Alcohol Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Charming Liar skill feat.

RESPECTED MENTOR

UNCOMMON

While more career-minded peers consider dealing with students an annoyance and distraction from their own research, you're the rare exception who enjoys and finds fulfillment in educating and nurturing youths. Whether you're formally a teacher or still a senior student, you've impressed students with your dedication, entrancing lectures, genuine kindness, and generosity of knowledge.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Wisdom or Charisma, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Performance. You're also trained in the Academia Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Fascinating Performance skill feat.

SCHOOL MEDIC

UNCOMMON

Whether practicing as part of your course of study or serving on staff, you've been asked to help by a school concerned that Sarkoris's lessons might be too harsh for the visiting students. Although the city of Nerosyan is well-protected from the remaining demons of the Sarkoris Scar, the multitude of students seeking to help in that dangerous land ensure that you have plenty of chances to practice your medical arts.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Dexterity or Wisdom, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Medicine. You're also trained in the Academia Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Battle Medicine skill feat.

STAR ATHLETE

UNCOMMON

Whatever the sport, be it basilisk, kickball, wrestling, footraces, stickball, canoeing, or foot volleyball, you either have played it or are keen to try it. You probably missed some classes due to practice or competitions, and irate professors might dismiss you as lazy or incapable of learning. These assumptions ignore the countless hours you've dedicated to athletic excellence.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Strength or Dexterity, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Athletics. You're also trained in the Games Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Assurance skill feat with Athletics.

WORKING STUDENT

UNCOMMON

Many students look to education as a means of improving their lives. You are in the middle of that process or have spent a lot of time there, juggling lessons and textbooks with the manual labor to pay for them. Although this work might distract from your studies, it also teaches you other lessons, making you more worldly than your classmates.

Choose two attribute boosts. One must be to Strength or Intelligence, and one is a free attribute boost.

You're trained in Society. You're also trained in the Labor Lore skill or a Lore skill associated with your school. You gain the Streetwise skill feat.



PARTY SCHOLAR

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ACADEMY OF THE RECLAMATION

Hello and welcome! I'm Telva Renn, a semi-graduated fifth-year at the Academy of the Reclamation, and... wow, there are a lot of you! Which is good, of course. I mean, look at all you're bringing with you. The books, the furniture, the large number of awkwardly shaped musical instruments and metal coils. Not that we don't love those. We do. Of course we do. And honestly, we're grateful. So much of what you've brought is going to stay here at the academy as we grow our numbers, put down real roots here in Nerosyan, and help restore the Sarkoris Scar; it's just that it's a bit more hustle and bustle than we're used to. This is usually a pretty quiet place, focused on work and study. A bit of peace away from the demonic incursion of it all. Plus, who has time for that much excitement? Sarkoris isn't going to reclaim itself, right?

Sorry, bad joke. I'm a little nervous. Between us, I'm usually greeting a bunch of starry-eyed first-years looking to "find themselves in the heart of danger" or get closer to their Sarkorian roots, not scholars and students from some of the best schools in Golarion. Do you mind if I weave a bit while we talk? I'm working on a basket. It helps calm the nerves.

That's better. Let me start again.

Welcome to the Academy of the Reclamation. We're honored that the many paths you have taken have

converged here, in this place of learning, so that we may journey on together. We welcome you as visitors, ask you to embrace us as hosts, and hope that you depart as treasured guests, or even friends. To begin, please allow me to share a bit of what we've built here—built being the operative word. All of us, no matter what we end up studying, came here to be part of reclaiming and rebuilding Sarkoris, whether it's by creating something new, reconnecting with our own history, or smoothing the path for someone else's footsteps.

Take this basket, for example. It's not just a way to keep my hands busy (though it is pretty good at that). It's also a testament to everything I've learned here. When we pass through the threshold of the academy, the first thing we're asked to do is to lay the groundwork for our learning. That's an academy way of saying "go out and collect supplies while your teacher tells you surprisingly relevant stories about their grandmother's roof or the time they got lost in the Whisperwood." It's funny—you ask the average person what it would be like to study Sarkorian magic, and they'll start talking about the way that the god callers can manifest the power of gods in the world around us, but I think it's that first year that makes the academy special. We understand the things we learn all the way down to the bone.

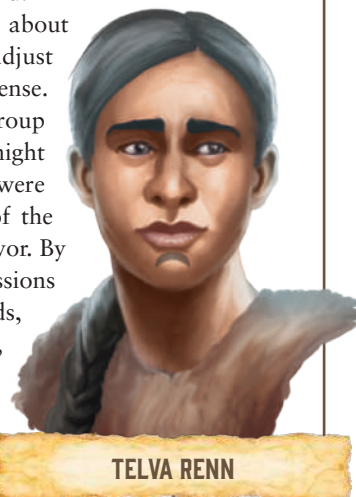
Still, just thinking back to my first year is enough to make me sweat. Laying the groundwork for a basket like this might mean venturing into the Scar looking for materials while learning pathwalking, or using the elements to turn half-destroyed pieces of wood into fiber for weaving, or trying to read the mood at the market to get dye at an affordable price. And it doesn't stop with baskets—in my first year, I spent three weeks giving myself thornrot while trying to find the last ingredient for the perfect bowl of tracker's stew. My friend Jelian carved so many wand forms that his room smelled like wood shavings for at least a year and a half.

Even with all we've been able to piece together, it can still be rough going. Things have changed in the hundred years since the Worldwound opened. Mushrooms we once harvested have become toxic. Wildlife we once stewarded has become extinct or been forced to adapt to the demons that tormented them. Migration patterns have changed, and animals have become more reclusive or aggressive. Coming to grips with what we've lost is its own challenge. One of my teachers wept for hours over a single tuft of grass we discovered while collecting reeds. Another cares for a single frozen frog, searching for a mate that we will likely never find.

Hard as it is, there's something meditative about all that work—gives you time to think and adjust to your surroundings before things get intense. My graduating class was the second full group of students here, so we thought all our late-night conversations hopped up on demonbark were special, but it's become such a regular part of the first year that we've started calling it firstie fervor. By the end of it, you're having four-hour discussions about the difference between patrons and gods, giggling over the sound of the word grimoire, and trying to figure out how to make your own magical tattoo ink using fermented berries and bloodsap (though the less said about that experiment, the better).

The fun of firstie fervor doesn't last forever, though. Bit of a tongue-twister, that! Once we hit second year, we're in the classroom learning theories and techniques from our teachers like students in most schools. The academy calls it building your base—taking all those skills and ideas and materials you've been collecting for a year and putting them into practice. You cast the spell, or call on the god of your ancestors, or start to weave the basket without using your hands. The work isn't great, at least at first, but you're trying. These bottom few rows on my basket here, where things look a little wobbly and the pattern isn't quite right? That's an exact copy of my second-year work. And even though I'm much better now, I always add it in when I weave, as a reminder of how I got started.

The only thing we don't get to do in our second year? Specialize. Classes are on a rotation, with everyone expected to spend some time learning each of the academy's focuses—Life, Path, Truth, Tale, and Essence. Roughly, they translate into inflicting and healing physical harm, finding or making a way through the land, sharing and manufacturing the truth, preserving and retrieving knowledge, and engaging with the world beyond our own. It's a pretty well-rounded curriculum, I think, though there's always a student complaining about learning something they don't care about. On the one hand, I get it—I definitely didn't enjoy the slight queasiness I had from learning how many ways there are to be deceived with illusions and songs and magically manufactured charm in my Truth rotation. But when Sarkoris fell, the first things to be lost were the trade secrets and single-person specialties. We can't make that same mistake again.



TELVA RENN



PAST AND FUTURE

Although the stories of Sarkoris and Taldor intersect during the Mendevian Crusades, there's a deeper line that I think bothers a lot of us. Well, maybe not the "Taldor will never fall" types, but I think we'll be seeing a few years where every opera has its heroes fighting to preserve history.

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THREE?

Although we value contracts with mentors as the Reclamation does, requiring precisely three is curious. It's encouraged some of our professors to experiment with a similar approach, much to the distress of students like Murrou who are suddenly asked to find two more mentors.

To be honest, we already lose enough from how squirrely everyone here gets about the study of the arcane. There's always this feeling that anyone too into the subject might somehow reopen the Worldwound, but even old Sarkoris was filled with way too many stories about some foolish woodcutter-turned-wizard who destroys everything they know with a magical tome they don't really understand. We're no crusaders burning people for healing a cold or anything like that, but I don't exactly go around academy parties sharing that my great-grandfather was a pretty decent wizard. Makes me glad that there are so many different types of casters here for the Convocation. Hopefully it helps to show off all the good that wizards can do in the world and maybe paves the way to a new focus for the third-years.

That third year is where everything starts to come together, really. We've laid our groundwork and built the base, so it becomes all about mastering the craft. It's when we learn how to use our skills to act and react, to push and pull, to move forward and hang back in the shadows. Weave over and tuck under.

In some specialties, like those of Life and Truth, you can probably guess how it works. Life is about how to attack someone and take life from them, but it is also about how best to heal. A little set you on fire here, a little seal your wounds with flame there, because you never know which one you might need. And Truth classes teach the tools of diplomacy and consensus—inspiring and calming and enchanting others—alongside lessons in deception and illusion.

For some of the other specialties, though, it can be hard to know exactly what to expect. Take my focus, Tale. We emphasize preserving knowledge and passing on stories, which is why my final project is to collect the names and domains of lost gods. But in class, we covered everything from how to tell stories with enough dramatic flair to make both the Magaambya and Kitharodian Academy proud, to techniques for hiding information from the unworthy and retrieving it from the unwilling. Only if necessary, of course, but this close to the Scar, it's easy to remember that you might need to go the extra mile to defend yourself and the folks you care about at any time. It's best to be prepared, no matter what you study.

The other thing we tend to learn here is the need for flexibility. That's what teachers say, at least, if we have to share a book, or if they stop class for a few days to help out the Nerosyan Council and make sure they stay happy that we're here. I think it's true, though—nothing's as clear-cut or set in stone as you think. That's why we start our third year by picking three mentors—usually one you've bonded with from your first year, and two who share your chosen focus. Then you work with them to figure out the right course of study. There are a thousand ways to cross a wood, as Reclaimer Jerissa might say. She's the mentor I picked first, even though she's focused almost totally on Paths work. Usually, those who study Paths are learning how to make their way through unfamiliar land, whether they're passing through quickly and quietly, trying to restore the natural world around them to some sort of balance, or turning the land against anyone who dares to test them. But they also know quite a bit about uncovering and creating hidden places, which is where you can sometimes find records and evidence of gods the world forgot. I also just love her sense of humor. Perfect fit.

I should probably also mention the students who focus on Essence. They're the one group that keeps the most to themselves in the classroom, probably because what they do deals with death, undeath, and other planes of existence, which can make other folks a little bit nervous. The rest of us barely see them at all, even in a school this small, but they throw this series of monthly get-togethers called the Essential Parties that absolutely live up to their name, and which I highly recommend attending.

I would have never thought to throw a dance inside a literal dream, but it's a great way to blow off steam, and they usually invite both students and locals, so you get to know some of the folks in Nerosyan before we head out into the world for fourth year.

The academy is big on the idea that instruction alone can't teach you what it means to bring your work into the world, so most of us spend our fourth year away from the classroom, putting our craft into practice. Some fourth-years, like my friend Jelian, go to root out pockets of demons in the Scar. Others work to make Nerosyan better, opening healing clinics or shoring up the city's defenses in case there's ever another attack. I traveled across Golarion, visiting folks originally from Sarkoris who were scattered near and far when it fell. Some were in bigger communities like the ones around Lepidstadt and the Magaambya, but even if it was just to talk to a single family, I'd teach them a bit of what I'd learned, which helped to cement it in my mind, and I learned how they did things in return. I did my best to create a bit of a web to help with everything from the Reclaiming to academy recruitment while getting better at even the smallest things I'd learned to do. See how the pattern changes here in my basket toward the top? That's a mishmash of a few techniques I learned while on the road. I think it really brings the whole pattern together.

Wherever we fourth-years go, we make our way back here at the end of the year to cross the threshold that we came through all the way back in year one, and then that's it. We've graduated. A little scary, to be honest, so I was thrilled that I wasn't the only one to hold off on my crossing to help prep the Convocation instead. Hence the "semi-graduated fifth-year" line. I don't want to lay my path toward the future until I make sure we pull all of this off in the present. And I want to have as many gods' names to carry with me as I can before I do. Even more than that, I like it here. Who knows—I might just stick around and become a teacher, or I might spend the next year cataloging all the new things we've gotten from this Convocation and figuring out what to do with them. But that's my future. As for yours, I hope you enjoy the rest of the Convocation, and welcome, again, to the Academy of the Reclamation. May you find something you need here and leave something for us to remember you by!

RIVALRIES

As the hosts of the Convocation, we officially view each and every visitor as a potential friend, but I'll admit that some are easier to build relationships with than others. The Cobyslarni folks are literally off in the clouds half the time—between their disconnection from the land around them and their peculiar sense of time, they sometimes seem either standoffish or flaky. So far, we've been happy to adjust the time of various events to make up for their ideas about timeliness, but if one more of them tells me that the loss of Sarkoris is just a fleeting moment in the span of the universe, I may, in fact, scream.

The Magaambya, meanwhile, are an odd case because they're so nice. Too nice, almost. They've provided a ton of materials to us here, and they're always asking how they can help, but it always seems like they're watching us a bit, wanting to see what we do with all the resources they've given us and judging our progress.

That's not as much of a fight as the one I'm going to get into if the folks from Kitharodian Academy don't stop asking if I want to make a few coins by talking about what it's like to be a part of history so they can give their show that extra bit of realism, but it's a scuffle all the same. Don't get me wrong; I appreciate that the Kitharodian students don't want to spread misinformation, but sometimes you want to enjoy yourself, not be stared at while you relive trauma as someone copies down everything you say and tells you "that's perfect" in the process.



BITTER DRAFT

To call Ustlav's treatment of Sarkorian refugees "unkind" is a profound understatement. Despite the intervening century, the people of Ustlav have a long memory and many still see any Sarkorian as a potential demonic thrall. Thankfully, our hosts seem to agree that our university is its own institution, even within Lepidstadt.

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HEALING THE SCAR

Are you ready to experience a reclaimed Sarkoris? *Healing the Scar* is our vision of what we think this land could be in the future, with a model home, a working cookfire with culinary demonstrations and samples of both mundane and magical foods (try the spiced demonade!), and our tapestry of lives across the model home's back wall.

I know what you're thinking—oh, what a beautiful rendering of a fully restored Sarkoris under the night sky—but the tapestry is more than that. Every single speck of gold and silver that you see in the sky represents someone who's part of our community. Students, teachers, anyone who claims a tie to Sarkoris, half of Nerosyan, even you (depending on how things go at the Convocation)—they all end up as stars in that sky. Touch one and the threads rearrange to show a constellation of who they are and how they connect back to the academy. It's one of my favorite things we have here, and not just because I did a bit of the weaving (both physical and magical) that made it possible.

As much as I love the tapestry, I think my favorite thing about this exhibit is the garden. We've gone a little bit beyond what an actual family plot might look like, but there are so many amazing forms of life in

every corner. See that purple-tipped bush there? It was planted using seeds that a family passed down for over a generation and was recultivated with the help of some of the Green Faith Reclaimers in Gundrun. If you get up close, it smells like the oddest blend of soothing and spicy that I've ever come across, and it has a taste to match—the berries are delicious but impossibly hot, so most folks lick the leaves before biting in. They numb your tongue enough that you aren't crying your way through enjoying the flavor.

And that stone path? It's dedicated to a Sarkorian goddess, the Stag Mother of the Forest of Stones. The stones are glowing now, but most of them were once pieces of soot-drenched rock taken from pusk hovels and absolutely drenched in demonic energy. Now they not only light your way, but also provide a bit of music, melodies tailored to each person who walks across them. It's never the same one twice, and I can't get the Truth students to tell me how they did it, but it'll have you humming the rest of the day, I promise.

Those stones bring me to the most important part of all of this. Everything in the exhibit comes directly from the Scar and has been restored, renewed, or reclaimed to make it safe to use. I mean everything, down to the earth beneath your feet. I know that may make some

of you nervous, given what you know of the Scar. It's true that though the Worldwound's been sealed, there are still demons roaming through the area, and there's still plenty of blight. But we've worked hard at figuring out how to cleanse what we find, bit by hard-fought bit. The exhibit even shows some of that process, there in the area beyond the garden, along with a surprise that I personally think is going to get everyone here talking.

I'm not sure how many of you have been out to the Scar—I grew up not far from here, but it wasn't until I was in my first year at the academy that I ever stepped foot out there, past twisted trees and ruined bits of houses and leftover scraps of flesh and bone from those who fell during the crusades. It was... a lot, honestly, but then I'd come across something—a flower in full bloom or a door long separated from the rest of a house in absolutely pristine condition. For all of us at the academy, those things are special, and no matter how or when we come across them, we stop to honor that bit of life. That's how we discovered Sarkorian salve, this magical semi-liquid stuff that can be found naturally in the Scar. It's either the land's way of healing itself or a gift from one of the old gods of Sarkoris, like the Dolok Trees in the Forest of Embers.

As with everything else here, we put the salve through the process detailed in the exhibit—create a safe path to it, clear any demon incursions in the area, contain the sample from the blighted or corrupted things around it, purify it three different ways at the hands of three different magic wielders, leave it in a shielded building and make sure nothing regenerates, then cleanse it one more time, just to be absolutely certain. It may seem over the top, but better safe than sorry. Besides, anything less would bring the Nerosyan Council to our front gates pretty quickly. Turns out, it was the shielded-in-a-building step that really helped us realize the potential of the salve. Seeds we put in the building later wouldn't just be grown by the time you got back, they'd have gone through several generations if there was anywhere to root. We've treated some seeds if you want to try it out, but we're planning on providing the other schools some of the salve. We're excited to see what they make of it.

ONE-HOUR FLOWER

ITEM 1

RARE CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 4 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk –

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

Popular with lovers, decorators, and sports fans, the seeds of these ephemeral plants grow and bloom immediately into flowers when placed in any warm environment, including a cup of dirt, a bowl of warm water, and a tightly clenched hand. The color of these flowers varies, but each has an internal glow that sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius. The radius of this light shrinks by 10 feet every 20 minutes. At the end of an hour, the plant disintegrates, leaving only a vaguely pleasant scent in the air.

SPICED DEMONADE

ITEM 2

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE ELIXIR

Price 8 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk –

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

There are some who claim that the original version of this tart red drink contained the ground skin of actual demons, but in truth, spiced demonade was created by a first-year academy student desperate to look awake and alert after a night of carousing.

After consuming spiced demonade, you ignore all effects and penalties from the consumption of alcohol and lack of sleep for 1 hour. These effects resume when the spiced demonade wears off, and you become temporarily immune to spiced demonade for 24 hours.



BRAIDED BRANCHES

Although the Uzunjati have long been collecting tales in Sarkoris while the Rain-Scribes help cut new trails, we are not the sole representatives of the Magaambya. Our other branches are not always as welcome, though their motives are no less pure. The Emerald Boughs are endlessly slandered as spies, and the Cascade Bearers delve into arcane theories some would rather see buried. Even the Tempest-Sun Mages helping secure the Convocation have intimidated many they seek to help.



UNBROKEN LAND

The dauntless persistence of these people and this land never ceases to inspire me. Although this is their exhibit and their story, I see much of our perfection reflected in it. They not only refuse to give up, but constantly strive for new solutions, the same as a river finds its path to the sea.

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DIARRA ROMAGNE

Persuasive female human recruiter

One of the most exciting things about the Convocation where I'm concerned? Diarra Romagne has put her travels on hold and is here in person. Hopefully with those chocolate cookies she's always carrying. I've honestly been thinking about them since the very first time I met Diarra in my parents' front room in a small Mendevian border town not too far from here. I know it was only a few years ago, but back then I was really just a kid. I'd gotten a little bit of a reputation for making something I called the godwalk—just a garden path and a few pamphlets about how to honor some of the old gods that Papa D told me about when I was a kid. But of course, somehow Diarra found out about it. I'm not surprised, really. Diarra knows everything about everyone.

Anyway, back then she was carrying those cookies—I dream about the smell sometimes, I swear—and giving the “join the academy and save your ancestral homeland” speech. It's a good speech, and it needs to be, given everything Sarkoris has been through. One hundred years is a long time to lose hope, and a

long time to forget our nation's loss isn't inevitable. To be honest, I think some of us are still working on accepting the very idea that the Worldwound is closed. It's easy to forget that when we settle down and put in the work, we can make things happen.

I've given a version of that same speech one or two times myself at this point, but I still say my coming to the academy is mostly about the way she carried herself—like you were sharing a smile, but also like she could see something in you that you couldn't yet see in yourself. Some people have a bearing that can cut through all the doubt and cynicism, and Diarra has that in spades. I didn't know how much it would mean for me to be here, doing this work, making things better. Without Diarra, who knows where I might have ended up instead.

Of course, when I arrived, Diarra was already long gone, off to recruit some other new student—I think there are only about two or three of us here that she didn't find and recruit directly. With all that time on the road, this Convocation will only be the fourth time I've seen her in the last five years, and I'm desperately hoping for a sit-down. And not just for the cookies. I'm hoping all her travel has given her some ideas about the lost gods' names I might be missing or where to track them down.

The problem is that Diarra's going to be focused on her job her whole time here, sizing up every single student from the other schools, looking to see if someone seems unhappy and might want to jump ship. It's probably bad manners to try to recruit in the middle of a Convocation, but I doubt that's going to slow her down. And with those cookies in hand? Good luck to anyone trying to stop her.



CONSPIRATOR'S COOKIE

ITEM 4

RARE CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 15 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

The shape and exact flavor of these chocolate-covered cookies vary slightly based on who prepares them and the language they are imbued with when crafted. Although named for their use in obfuscating communications, Diarra finds them useful for quite the opposite reason.

After eating one of these treats, you can speak and understand the chosen language for the next hour. If you have the Read Lips or Sign Language feat, you can use that language with those feats. A *conspirator's cookie* grants you a +1 item bonus to Diplomacy checks to Make an Impression or Request in the chosen language and you can add your level even if untrained.

Craft Requirements You must know the chosen language.

RECLAIMER VIL SERAL

Enthusiastic male human instructor

While Diarra Romagne is chatting up students from other schools, Reclaimer Vil Seral will be spending the entire Convocation talking to the other teachers. Since the moment he came up with the academy focus areas, *his* focus has been on adjusting the curriculum the academy offers. And then adjusting it again. And again. Sometimes we older students joke that if there's something you even wish you were learning at the academy that's not offered, all you have to do is think about it in Reclaimer Seral's presence and boom, it appears. Even if he's the one who has to teach it and he's only about five seconds more advanced than you are, he'll figure out a way to make it happen. I'm almost afraid of what the course list will look like in a month or two, but I'm pretty sure it'll include, at the very least, a class in Stasian tech or a workshop called something like "A Promise of Power: Supernatural Pacts and You!"

I probably shouldn't say this about a teacher, but even though he is very tall and very burly, I will also warn you that Reclaimer Seral has the energy of a puppy on a sugar rush. The minute he thinks of something, he's immediately telling you about it, no matter where you are or what you're in the middle of doing. He says it's because his ideas are like smoke—they come from a spark and dissipate on the breeze—and while I'm not sure I buy it, he's entirely too sweet to get angry with.

Still, the look that someone like Reclaimer Jerissa gives him when he stops by in the middle of her ley line workshop to talk about his ideas for a school-wide game of hide-and-seek? You don't need a Truth class to read the mood. The thing is, though, most of his ideas are pretty good, even if he has no sense of timing (if you want, you can get a taste of what that hide-and-seek game became by checking out our treasure hunt in between all the bigger exhibitions). I've also got to say that I love the way he's trying to push for a bit more arcane study here at the academy, so if you see a guy who looks like a tree but darts around like a hummingbird, steer him toward anyone from the Magaambya. No matter what he learns, I can't wait to find out what he brings to the academy next.

POCKET LIBRARY ◆◆◆

RARE CONCENTRATE EXTRADIMENSIONAL MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, occult

Duration 24 hours

Like Vil Seral, you collect information from all around you and store it in book form in an extradimensional library. When you Cast this Spell, choose any skill in which you are at least trained that has the Recall Knowledge action.

During the duration of this spell, you can call forth a tome from the extradimensional library when attempting a Recall Knowledge check using your chosen skill. This is part

of the action to Recall Knowledge. You must have a hand free to do so. The tome appears in your hand, open to an appropriate page. This grants you a +1 status bonus to the Recall Knowledge check. If you roll a critical failure on this check, you get a failure instead. If the roll is successful and the subject is a creature, you gain additional information or context about the creature. Once you reference a book from your *pocket library*, the spell ends.

Heightened (3rd) The status bonus increases to +2 and you can reference your *pocket library* twice before the spell ends.

Heightened (6th) The status bonus increases to +3 and you can reference your *pocket library* three times before the spell ends.

Heightened (9th) The status bonus increases to +4 and you can reference your *pocket library* four times before the spell ends.



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RECLAMATION WIZARDS

Few wizards operated in old Sarkoris, and even fewer did so publicly. In addition to their mission to recover the lost secrets of their past, the Academy of the Reclamation has also focused on developing a new school of arcane magic. They're rapidly building a set of arcane tools to learn about the past and restore the land, even though more traditional voices in the Reclamation object.

SCHOOL OF THE RECLAMATION (UNCOMMON)

Whether it's been lost to war, abandoned during calamity, or simply buried by the ages, there is as much important knowledge to be found in the hidden corners of the world as in the schools and libraries of the academy. Your study of magic in the service of rediscovering lost knowledge for the Sarkoris Reclamation has taught you that much that was once lost can still be found, but only if someone is willing to seek it out and retrieve it. You've focused your magic on reaching the world's hidden and forgotten places, whether they are found in a distant ruin or the depths of a lost memory, and bringing their knowledge back to the surface—whatever the cost.

Curriculum cantrips: *telekinetic hand*, *telekinetic projectile*; 1st: *fleet step*, *gust of wind*, *mending*; 2nd: *knock*, *mental map* (page 32); 3rd: *locate*, *overwhelming memory* (page 33); 4th: *bridge of vines* (page 32), *shape stone*; 5th: *mind probe*, *scouting eye*; 6th: *truesight*, *wall of force*; 7th: *restore ground* (page 33), *retroognition*; 8th: *pinpoint*, *unrelenting observation*; 9th: *metamorphosis*

School Spells initial: *grasping vine*; advanced: *unsettling knowledge*

GRASPING VINE

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MANIPULATE PLANT WIZARD WOOD

Range 60 feet; **Targets** 1 unattended object of up to 8 Bulk, or Medium or smaller creature that is currently on the ground

Defense Reflex; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute (see text)

A thick, curling vine erupts from the ground beneath you and stretches to the target, allowing you to move it around. If the target is an item, you can move it 10 feet in any direction within range when you Cast the Spell and the first time you Sustain it each round. If the target is a creature, they must attempt a Reflex save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected and the spell ends.

Success The target is grabbed until the end of your next turn unless it Escapes (the vine's Escape DC is equal to your spell DC) or destroys the vine (the vine has AC 15 and 10 Hit Points), at which point the spell ends.

Failure The target is grabbed until it Escapes or destroys the vine, at which point the spell ends. The first time each round you Sustain this spell, you can Reposition the grabbed target up to 5 feet.

Critical Failure As failure, and you can immediately Reposition the target up to 10 feet.

UNSETTLING KNOWLEDGE

FOCUS 4

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS LINGUISTIC MENTAL WOOD

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will; **Duration** varies

You share a piece of hidden knowledge with a creature that is both upsetting and intriguing. When you Cast this Spell, choose Arcana, Nature, Occultism, Religion, or Society as the focus of this knowledge. The target must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is fascinated by the knowledge you shared for 1 round.

Failure The target is fascinated by the knowledge for 1 minute. The target can end this fascination early by attempting a skill check to Recall Knowledge to understand the knowledge using the chosen skill (using your spell DC as the DC); regardless of the result, the target becomes frightened 2, but if they failed the check, they can't reduce their frightened condition below 1 for the remainder of the spell's duration.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target becomes frightened 3 if they attempt to Recall Knowledge.

RECLAMATION SPELLS

Arcane magic was practiced secretly in old Sarkoris, and few of those spells have survived to the present day. The Academy of the Reclamation instead works to develop new spells for their needs or studies spells of other traditions that could become arcane with a new approach.

BRIDGE OF VINES

SPELL 4

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE PLANT WOOD

Traditions arcane, primal

Range 60 feet

Duration 10 minutes

Vines sprout beneath your feet and extend away from you in a straight line up to 60 feet, forming a 10-foot-wide bridge that can cross over difficult terrain and low obstacles, as well as reach higher ground. The bridge has an AC equal to your spell DC, Hardness 10, and 20 Hit Points. It is immune to critical hits and precision damage. The bridge lasts either for the duration of the spell, until it is destroyed, or until you Dismiss the spell.

While the spell is active, you and your allies can use the bridge normally. If any other creatures attempt to use the bridge, the vines attempt to trip and entangle them. They must attempt a Reflex save against your spell DC.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target treats the length of the bridge as difficult terrain.

Failure As success, and the target is knocked prone.

Critical Failure As success, and the target is knocked prone and grabbed until it Escapes (with a DC equal to your spell DC) or the spell ends.

Heightened (+1) The bridge's Hit Points increase by 10.

MENTAL MAP

SPELL 2

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will; **Duration** 24 hours

You glean detailed information about a specific place visited by a creature directly from its mind, unless it fends you off with a Will save. The target can choose to fail the save.

Success The target is unaffected.

Failure You gain critical information about the place in question, granting you a +2 circumstance bonus to Survival checks while in the location and any skill checks to Recall Knowledge about the location for the next 24 hours.

Critical Failure As failure, but you can erase all knowledge of the location from the target for 24 hours if desired.

OVERWHELMING MEMORY

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE EMOTION MANIPULATE MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

You cause the target to recall a specific type of memory you choose from the list below, bringing it to the forefront of their mind with perfect clarity.

- **Gleeful** The memory makes the target laugh uncontrollably. They can't use reactions.
- **Romantic** The creature is consumed with their love for another. They are fascinated by the memory.
- **Terrifying** The creature is filled with terror and is frightened 1.
- **Tragic** The creature is overwhelmed with sorrow. They are dazzled from the tears in their eyes.

The target must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is affected by the memory until the beginning of your next turn.

Failure The target is affected by the memory until the beginning of your next turn and stupefied 2 for the spell's duration.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target is stupefied 3 for the spell's duration.

RESTORE GROUND

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE EARTH MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, primal

Range 120 feet; **Area** 30-foot burst

Duration varies

You sense that this place yearns to throw off the shackles of civilization. You attempt to restore the area within the burst to a natural state, removing all artificial objects and buildings and encouraging the growth of plants on the ground that remains. Creatures are unaffected unless caught in a structural collapse.

- **Ground** All ground within the area becomes greater difficult terrain for 1 round.
- **Objects** Any unattended object of Bulk 4 or less is destroyed, regardless of Hardness, unless it's an artifact or similarly hard to destroy.

- **Plants** Plants in the area become healthier and more fruitful for 1 year.

- **Structures** Structures within range are shaken and may collapse, as if affected by *earthquake*.

MIMIC SPELL

SPELL 8

RARE CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, occult

Trigger A creature you're aware of within range Casts a Spell of the same tradition as *mimic spell* and of the same or lower rank.

Range 120 feet

You learn the secrets of a spell just by watching someone else cast it. Attempt to counteract the spell cast by the triggering creature. If the spell would be counteracted, you instead gain the ability to Cast that Spell without expending a slot. On your next turn, you spend the same number of actions to Cast the Spell as the triggering creature, but you choose the targets (if any) and use your spell attack modifier or spell DC as appropriate. The spell is heightened to the same rank as *mimic spell*. The mimicked spell is of the same tradition as the spells you normally cast. If you don't Cast the mimicked Spell by the end of your next turn, it is lost, unless you Sustain the knowledge of it. You can Sustain this knowledge for up to 1 minute, after which it is lost.



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CAMPFIRE CHRONICLER

You follow in the footsteps of Isthralei, an old god of Sarkoris dedicated to protecting and assisting travelers in return for a story of their journey. Though tales of Isthralei himself are scarce, his gifts are still sometimes given to those who protect travelers and collect their stories.

This tradition of chronicling, relearned from the ghost of a Sarkorian storyteller, has flourished at the Academy of the Reclamation. Many students who enter the Sarkoris Scar now travel under Isthralei's name, both believing in the god's purpose and using his rediscovery as a symbol of the Reclamation's successes. Even that may be too small a scope, however, as travelers' tales come from far and wide. Many campfire chroniclers collect stories of other students who have returned to Sarkoris from afar, along with the stories of their families who were scattered following the opening of the Worldwound.

The mysterious benefactor accepts all stories with a listening ear, leading to many late night discussions among students about what truths might be hidden in tall tales and outright fabrications. Although Isthralei accepts falsehoods without comment, he places no requirement on the chroniclers to do the same. In fact, Isthralei has yet to provide guidance beyond the comforting warmth of his protection after stories are offered.



Although Sarkorian traditions don't place importance on dividing their gods by power level or origin, some at the Academy of the Reclamation have begun to dig deeper into each of the gods' individual circumstances. The question of where Isthralei came from has become a particularly popular one among students who hope that a god who so loves the stories of travelers wouldn't take offense at his own story being exposed.

Students prying into these matters have found some success using magical sources of information. Most recently, Cobyslarni's Echo Repository has revealed several tales of travelers and explorers who encountered a smiling figure far from any habitation. The reoccurring theme of weary travelers being offered a space next to the campfire in exchange for their tales has led several students to suggest that the wanderer is actually Isthralei. Unfortunately, the sightings are so vastly spread—occurring between continents, in the First World of the fey, or even on elemental planes—that they've provided little illumination of the god's origins.

At the academy, Isthralei's philosophy has expanded to include tenets to protect travelers' freedom of movement, be generous to others when possible, and seek wisdom in the experience of others. Although these aren't strictly necessary to gain or keep Isthralei's favor, it's difficult to find a teacher among the Academy of the Reclamation without agreeing to these tenets.

This philosophy of protecting travelers is generally seen to include the Convocation's guests in Nerosyan. Isthralei's campfire chroniclers are among the most obvious representatives of their academy and the Convocation as a whole. Although surviving tales of the old god inspire campfire conversations on the exhibit grounds, his followers also listen to stories in bars, cafes, and the schools' lodgings.

Additional Feats: 8th Advanced Domain (*Player Core* 117)

CAMPFIRE CHRONICLER DEDICATION

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

You've gained Isthralei's attention and can now offer stories up to him, either passing on your own stories or collecting those of travelers as he did. You become trained in Religion and Survival; for either of these skills in which you were already trained, you instead become trained in a skill of your choice. You gain the Offer Story action.

Offer Story ♦ (auditory, concentrate, divine, linguistic, mental) You share a story of your travels with a creature within 30 feet. You gain the blessing of Isthralei as a +1 status bonus to AC and Will saves until the end of your next turn. On their next turn, the creature you shared a story with can take a single action, which has the auditory, concentrate, linguistic, and mental traits, to respond with their own story to gain the same benefits until the end of the following turn.

THE DEAD TELL TALES

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

New campfire chroniclers are inundated with the stories of the ghosts below Pulura's Fall and the lessons learned there. You have resistance equal to your level to spirit and void damage caused by a haunt, spirit, or incorporeal undead. The first time you take damage from a haunt or spirit, you learn the general story of its origin (such as the type of tragedy that caused a ghost to linger or what a spirit represents).

LISTENER'S BOON

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

Isthraei has given you a gift to assist you on your journey. You gain the Domain Initiate feat (*Player Core* 113) for the domain of fire, knowledge, protection, or travel. You can Refocus by spending 10 minutes telling stories of your travels or listening to others' stories of theirs. You gain the trained proficiency rank in spell attack modifier and spell DC, increasing to expert at 11th level.

Special You can select this feat multiple times, selecting a different domain each time and gaining its domain spell.

RAGING STORIES

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

When you Offer a Story about wild chances and fighting against all odds, you can wrap yourself in spectral flame in place of the normal benefits. The action then gains the fire trait. Your melee Strikes for the duration deal 2 additional fire damage. The creature you share a story with can choose this benefit even if you did not.

The fire damage increases to 4 if you are a master of Religion and 6 if you are legendary.

COZY CAMPFIRE

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE CONSECRATION DIVINE EXPLORATION FIRE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

You spend 1 hour building a campfire in a single unoccupied square and whispering the stories of those you've met on your journeys. The campfire sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius (and dim light for the next 30 feet). The campfire can't be put out or get larger through mundane means; it instead burns out after your next daily preparations or when you use this ability again.

The first time each round a creature within the campfire's bright light performs an action with the attack trait, they must then attempt a Will save against your class DC or spell DC (whichever is higher). This is a divine curse effect, and you are aware of any attempt, although other creatures in the area are not.

Critical Success The creature is aware of the effect and can choose to disrupt their action. If they don't disrupt it, the campfire goes out.

Success The creature is aware of the effect and can choose to disrupt their action. If they don't disrupt it, they

become temporarily immune to the campfire's effects for 24 hours.

Failure The creature takes a -2 status penalty to the action's attack roll and to all other attack rolls until the beginning of their next turn.

Critical Failure The action is disrupted, and the creature takes a -2 status penalty to attack rolls until the beginning of their next turn.

ILLUMINATING STORIES

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

Stories serve as beacons in the night, illuminating valuable knowledge even if the tale itself misses the mark. When you Offer a Story about any topic, you can choose that illumination in place of the normal benefits of Offer Story. You receive a +1 status bonus on checks to Recall Knowledge for the duration and can Recall Knowledge about the topic of the story as a free action. The creature you share a story with can choose this benefit even if you did not.

The bonus increases to +2 if you are a master of Religion and +3 if you are legendary.

FLICKERING STORIES

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

Stories, like fires, can create shadows as much as they illuminate. When you Offer a Story, you can become concealed by shifting shadows for the duration instead of the normal benefits. The action then gains the shadow trait. You can't use this concealment to Hide, as normal for concealing effects that leave your location obvious. The creature you share a story with can choose this benefit even if you did not.

TALES OF THE ROAD

FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

The blessings of Isthraei connect you to the thrum of the stories that underlie all settlements. When attempting a check to Recall Knowledge about a city you have visited, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus and can use an associated Lore skill (such as Nerosyan Lore) with your level as your proficiency bonus even if you're untrained.

STORIES OF HOME

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE AUDITORY DIVINE EXPLORATION HEALING LINGUISTIC MENTAL

Prerequisites Campfire Chronicler Dedication

Frequency once per day

You share the joy of every story of long-awaited homecoming you've offered to Isthraei. You can spend 10 minutes sharing this joy with your allies within 30 feet. You and those allies regain Hit Points equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1) times their level and recover from the doomed, drained, and fatigued conditions as though they had a full night's rest (though they gain no other benefits associated with having a full night's rest).

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COBYSLARNI

But before I continue, I suppose I should introduce myself. I have many names—secret, half-remembered, and otherwise—but for the purposes of this Convocation, I am Zemnaïdé, Professor of Feysworn Pacts with Cobyslarni. Should you wish to halve the number of syllables—as your time is quite limited—Zemna is also agreeable. I’ve been with the academy for longer than most mortal memory now, but I in fact originated in the forests of Sarkoris, though it had different names in those days. The humans of the area were known as the Blackearth clan, though I do not remember what they named my forest (the mortals call it the Needleglens now). This being the case, I was pleased to hear of this gathering, as I’d always wondered what had happened to the old place. I was less pleased, of course, to learn of its recent travails, and hope we can be of assistance in mending the region.

Ah! I do apologize. Please listen to the paragraph after this one before the one above. Unfortunately, when I began writing my notes, it seemed that I had in fact already written something before my introduction. If memory serves me, some of you might struggle with un-listening and then re-listening in the correct order, so perhaps one of our mortal students can act as an interpreter.

Greetings, distinguished colleagues, and on behalf of the Traveling Academy of Cobyslarni, I would like to

extend my thanks for your kind invitation to the Six Schools’ Convocation. For those of you unfamiliar with the academy, we’re a traveling institution hosted by Cobyslarni upon his back. We primarily roam the First World, though Cobyslarni has been known to wander to other planes as our research takes us. Our faculty and students study many subjects, but our areas of focus are the formation of magical pacts and the many planes—fields of study that we believe could prove invaluable in reclaiming the Sarkoris Scar from its erstwhile demonic invasion.

From this point forward, I do believe that my words are in what locals would perceive to be chronological order; I’ve done my utmost to write them as such.

The Traveling Academy has been around for a very long time, though time being what it is in the First World, no one is certain how long. Our founder and Headmaster Emeritus, Cobyslarni, is a unique entity, in a form the Universe would call elephantine, though he’s rather larger than most elephants of this plane. Some tales say that he’s the last of his kind, while others claim he was originally another type of creature who underwent an apotheosis; Cobyslarni himself is very coy on the matter. Our charter states that he founded the academy upon his back so we’d always be free to

seek knowledge, without owing fealty to any particular location or entity. And so it has been to this day.

Though he doesn't take a direct hand in the operations of the school, leaving those duties in the hands of the Acting Headmistress Bofika Nemesan, Cobyslarni's guidance can arrive when one least expects it. Sometimes he'll gift a student, or an individual we encounter on our journeys, with witchcraft or esoteric knowledge. Even more rarely, he may call a faculty member or student to meet with him in his psychic mindscape. I've been with Cobyslarni for some time, though even I wasn't around for the academy's founding. One of the few signs of that progression, like the changing of the seasons here, is the gradual decrease in his interactions with the outside world. Such deep contemplations as his require a good deal of effort, after all, and his influence permeates our curriculum even without his intervention.

As I mentioned, our studies focus on supernaturally forged pacts. It's common for both students and faculty to form many pacts, both with one another and with outside entities, though this is by no means required—some members of our academy form no pacts whatsoever. Even a brief primer on pact-crafting is likely beyond the scope of this introduction, but suffice it to say that we are adept at forming bargains with entities both well-known and long-forgotten, which may aid Sarkoris in reclaiming its old gods. Care must be taken, however, in dealing with things of faded memory, as this makes them hungry, and a hungry bargain has teeth.

But I said I wasn't going to stray too far into the philosophical brambles, and I wouldn't wish to make a liar of myself. Since our arrival in Nerosyan, I've noticed my fellow academics' inquiries to me focus on two points. The first, often voiced in a hesitant fashion, is my own form of address, as most begin with "she" (as is the stereotype for huldras), fumble slightly while examining my features and build, adjust to "he," then second-guess themselves once again. To clarify matters, "she" and "he" are equally acceptable, and using both is preferable, as I would hate to be confined to a singular way of being.

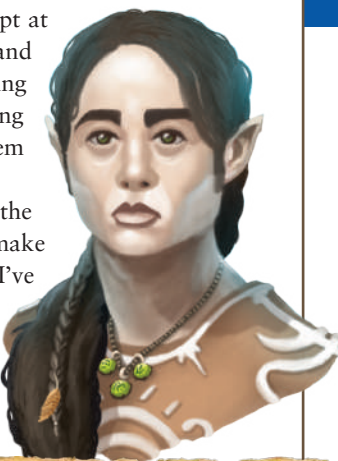
The second and more overarching question revolves around our way of life with Cobyslarni. In some ways, our learning progresses in a similar fashion to any other school. Our students attend classes in the air of our auditoriums, avoid scavengers in the libraries, and write papers to illustrate their knowledge. Our faculty teach, perform research, and author tomes within our areas of expertise. Cobyslarni has no formal system of grading; we've found such marks are often an inaccurate assessment of one's abilities and involve tedious bookkeeping. Instead, each student has a faculty mentor who agrees to help guide their studies, often—but not always—one they've sworn a pact with; obtaining a mentor is one's first step when joining Cobyslarni.

After formal enrollment, one becomes a first-eye student, the most junior level; second-eye is the next level, and third-eye the final rank at which one is considered a student. Some students complete a first-eye degree and halt there, while others continue all the way up to third-eye, taking on more responsibilities for educating their juniors and assisting professors. There's no set time frame for progression; a student's advancement is at the discretion of their mentoring professor. A student may change their mentor if requested, though this is rare, as such selections are carefully made. Most professors will set students a project or task to test their ability to move up to the next level of study, once they deem them ready. Often, this assignment



STRETCHED THIN

Although the Academy of the Reclamation are excellent hosts, I fear Cobyslarni's students are too much for even their heroic efforts. Who would think to clarify that "it's dangerous outside the walls" isn't a suggestion to scatter stones from the walls deep into the wilds? It's tempting to let them try, just to see if a ring of stones contractually bound to be a wall would actually protect the city.



ZEMNAÏDÉ

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ANOPHAEUS

Imbrex the Twins, said to serve as the literal foundation of Anophaeus, also figure in the stories of Sarkoris.

This old god—for they are only worshipped together—has predicted many ends but failed to send dreams of the fall of Sarkoris. Although some families still harbor grudges, I like to think it's because Sarkoris has not ended.

seems impossible on its face, but requires creative interpretation or a clever bargain to complete.

The First World's malleability provides a unique perspective for our students, and many learn the art of knowledge shaping, reconfiguring one's own mind to retain information as one would alter a landscape. Our travels also provide new vistas of education that are difficult to attain when one's school remains in a single location. "Travel," of course, is a flexible concept in the First World; a destination of months for one journey could be minutes for another, depending on the travelers, any opposing forces, and natural shifting of the terrain. Nothing dictates the patterns of our wanderings save for Cobyslarni himself, though if enough faculty or students lobby for a particular location, he will sometimes accede, wordlessly, to the request. As an illustrative example, I shall detail some of Cobyslarni's recent destinations, though I cannot divide these into "months," "years," or "seasons," as might be expected on this plane. Nevertheless, it should give you the sense of things.

Cobyslarni frequently visits the Scholars' Burl, the university district in the great tree of Usu. A whole new crop of first-eye students joins us each time we visit. But last time we visited, we were there for the Brightbranch Affray, a tournament in which contestants reshape their weapons, their terrain, and even themselves to gain the advantage over their opponents. To our delight, a group of our leshy students filled the upper ranks and won the Brightbranch itself. The Scholars' Burl traditionalists were *much* vexed. They even opined making a pact with the tournament itself was cheating; still, nothing in the rules said the competitors could *not* make convincing the tournament that they deserved to win part of their strategy. And, if it was, wouldn't the contest know its own rules best?

Our destination after was Anophaeus. The twins who stand over the city are a bit like Cobyslarni, I suppose, ancient and wise and dreaming, with buildings taking root where they allow. Although there's much of interest in the Statue Lords' city, I always visit the Dreamshapers' Guildhouse, dedicated to oneiromancy and deific cryptography. One of our allies within the guild's council is Jenway Nightblossom, a fey scholar who might visit in your dreams if you speak her name aloud. They say that once she studied within Cobyslarni's towers, though this was before my time, if so. Many of us—myself included—have formed pacts with Jenway to enhance our mutual talents and knowledge, and so we often meet to exchange information.

I could speak more—of the Moon Ladder of the gnomes, of the necromantic libraries of Vestige, of the ancient runes of the Thoraso Cracks—but I should ensure mention of the one destination Cobyslarni always visits, without fail, when three verdant moons align in the sky. No matter where we are or what we may be doing when this occurs, Cobyslarni turns, takes one ponderous step, and we find ourselves standing before the Palace of Seasons, Ng's abode. Upon arrival, Cobyslarni closes all three of his eyes and remains that way for some time before departing once more. Though most of us have surmised he's communicating with the Lord of the Crossroads, only Cobyslarni knows the purpose of these visits. Some say he was the first creature to whom Ng granted power, asking only that he continue his travels to seek knowledge, while others believe he and Ng both owe their positions to the same unknown entity for whom Ng watches over the Palace. So, if our school disappears suddenly, it's probably just that the headmaster was called away.

But regardless of Cobyslarni's current locale, our studies progress. It has not been lost upon us, however, that our situation is somewhat precarious. Our founder is ancient, learned, and powerful, but he is not invulnerable. Should anything happen to Cobyslarni—fate forbid—our towers, our libraries, the psychic demiplanes he carefully maintains... all

our knowledge could be lost. Hence, we hope this Convocation might provide us an opportunity to share knowledge as well as gain it, so that should the worst come to pass, Cobyslarni's wisdom will not vanish into the dark abyss of oblivion.

No sense dwelling on unhappy possibilities, however; we have a Convocation to see to. For your invitation, we thank you; to your hospitality, we assent; for your knowledge, we honor you, as you shall honor ours.

ADVISORY NOTICE TO COBYSLARNI

Students and faculty of Cobyslarni, I've been asked by Headmistress Nemesan to pass along the following cautions and expectations regarding our trip to attend the Six Schools' Convocation in Nerosyan. Please do keep in mind these points so we leave a good impression with our colleagues.

- The Universe is **not** mutable. Do not attempt to shape your surroundings unless you've consumed a *shaping sweet* beforehand, and even those changes will be extremely minor no matter your level of shaping acumen.
- Universe time moves on a strict, linear progression. You will each be issued a timepiece that tracks the hours in the local area. Please monitor this carefully to ensure you're "on time" for scheduled events. Don't sign up for multiple concurrent seminars; you will **not** be able to attend them all!
- Many of our fellow academics at the Convocation will worship deities, as these entities have much greater influence outside of the First World. Curiosity and discussion are fine, but take care to avoid disparaging or mocking a colleague's faith.
- Be advised that **death is final** here. Take extreme caution in your activities. If you are uncertain whether an activity would cause death, please consult a Universe colleague.
- Lastly, on a less serious note, Universe comestibles' flavors are rather muted; take this into account when preparing food or brewing coffee or tea. If victuals are provided to you, you may wish to add seasoning, provided you can do so without offending your host.

RIVALRIES

Though I would hate to disparage any of my learned colleagues, I don't doubt a few differences of opinion (shall we say) will make themselves known during the Convocation. The Universe produces many brilliant scholars, but the plane's fixed nature also risks leading to a certain provinciality of thought. When one's geography remains static, it's easier to get bogged down with concerns of "national interests," which I feel has hampered Kitharodian Academy. Its close ties to the Taldan Empire mean that as the empire declined, the academy was dragged with it, its academic and artistic mission muddled by its imperative to prop up a nation. (You may think this quaint of me, but I *do* miss the days of the city-states; the variety of cultures mingling in those days led to more inspired thought than a monolithic empire is capable of.) I've spotted one of their representatives, Tatiana Lesantillo, lurking around several of our specialists in knowledge shaping—seeking mental chicaneries useful in her trade, no doubt, though judging by her comments while trying to build rapport with our students, her impression of the First World is certainly very... theatrical.

The Academy of the Reclamation has similarly localized concerns, though in their case, it's more understandable given recent events. As for the University of Lepidstadt, they don't have this problem—if anything, their nation of residence looks at them askance—but it's hard to understand their fascination with death. I'm all for advancement of knowledge, of course, but several of the Lepidstadt scholars are a bit too keen on such experiments. I blame the mortal fascination with their eventual fate; it's a shame they can't just reconstitute when slain.



BLEAK MORTALITY

Although Cobyslarni's fey students avoid the Pharasmin hand-wringing so typical in our homeland, they may have actually found something more annoying. One crashed into an argument at Ancuin's Brewery, confused why someone would need artificial means to return to life. Thankfully, he stopped a step short of asking if we'd tried just not staying dead.



STIFLED ARTISTS

Even the driest classics are new to the Cobyslarni students, making them a very forgiving audience. This, unfortunately, doesn't extend to their own work. One tried to explain it to me, something like the First World being a necessary collaborator in their performances, responding to the story and the will of the audience to create something unique. I've heard Cobyslarni has a few small venues wrapped in his dreams where something similar is possible, if you know anyone who can get me an invite.

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ECHO REPOSITORY

For the benefit of the Convocation, Cobyslarni has graciously granted all attendees access to the Echo Repository, one of many extradimensional stores of knowledge he maintains. During the Convocation's duration, if you wish to explore the Echo, simply find Cobyslarni and indicate your intent, at which point he'll lower his trunk to collect you and draw you up through his third eye. Once you enter, you'll find yourself in a vast chamber, filled with bookshelves and glass-encased objects stretching as high and as far as the eye can see.

The Echo Repository has been called both a library and an archive, but while these terms convey some of its nature, they are also slightly misleading. Most such institutions seek to keep their information within their walls, granting it to visitors while the physical objects remain. The Echo's function and hope, however, is to release every fragment of knowledge from its custody. Put simply, it is a library of knowledge forgotten by those of the Universe. Books that no mortal remembers reading, nameless creatures that none now walking on any planet have seen, inventions and rituals that never saw the light of day... all these things are somehow gleaned by Cobyslarni, plucked from forgotten dreams and placed in the Echo. And there they remain, awaiting rediscovery, for the moment that a creature of

the Universe finds a piece of knowledge again, the Echo Repository releases it to the Universe's memory. It's vital at that point to pass it on to others, because Cobyslarni rarely catches the same secret twice.

Cobyslarni did not create the Echo, and if he knows who—or what—did, he hasn't said. He is merely one of its stewards, allowing in those scholars who seek it, for there is a conundrum in the Echo's existence. A creature must know what they seek to find it within the archive—but if someone in the Universe knows a piece of information in too much detail, it would not be in the Echo at all. Most seekers to the Echo are aware only in the most general terms of what they seek and may be uncertain whether it even exists. Our students from the Universe will visit without a precise purpose at all, trusting that whatever they find, it'll at least be interesting.

Research within the Echo is mediated by the librarians; a scholar requests information on a topic, and the librarians guide one toward it through riddles and metaphor. As to the librarians themselves—they are odd creatures, with too many eyes and just the right amount of teeth. Their forms are a swirling mixture of forgotten things, only settling into a single form when they can borrow one from a questioner's topic. They're generally quite harmless, no matter what form they take, although many find it helpful

to count their teeth if the shifting forms are causing nausea or distress. It also makes it obvious when they stop smiling, after which it's best to assume the suddenly clear directions will lead to a nest of gremlins.

We hope the Echo may be of assistance in restoring Sarkorian knowledge lost to demonic predations. Some of you may have general lines of inquiry in mind already, fragments of half-remembered rumor to chase down. If you seek a particular topic—lost rituals from a specific clan, for example, or the fate of a vanished historical figure—the librarians can grant you a clue as to what you seek, though parsing this clue may require some interpretation. Some research, therefore, is generally required, sifting through tomes in lost languages or mist-shrouded display cases to find the right one.

I probably don't need to tell you that such research can be dangerous. The Echo is ever-growing and many forgotten things are hazardous or even malicious. The librarians do not begrudge self-defense, thankfully, though those that unduly harm the collection will find themselves led into nests of gremlins until the librarians are willing to smile on them again. At least clearing out those exhibits helps other students. There's not much worse than completing your research and realizing there was a pugwampi hiding in the stacks.

Much that has been forgotten is contained within the Echo Repository, and some could change the Universe if returned. Should anything ever befall the Echo, it would be an immense loss, and almost no one would notice.

ECHO TOKEN

ITEM 1

RARE CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 3 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** —

Visitors to the Echo Repository always emerge with one of these silver coins, stamped with the visage of a faceless queen, somewhere on their person. An *echo token* carries a minute shard of the Echo Repository's mission to impart lost information.

Activate—Flip Coin ♦ (manipulate) **Effect** When flipped, the coin disintegrates into a glittery mist. You learn and memorize one random fact about a specific type of Lore (such as Architecture Lore, Elf Lore, Astral Plane Lore) that you didn't previously know, chosen by the GM. The next time you attempt a check to Recall Knowledge on this type of Lore within the next year, you gain a +1 status bonus on the check. You can benefit from only one *echo token* at a time in this way; if you Flip another *echo token*, the Lore skill changes. However, the memorized fact will remain perfectly in your memory forever unless magically altered or removed.

SHAPING SWEET

ITEM 2

RARE CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 6 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** —

Many inhabitants of the First World can shape their environment around them; weaker creatures can only make minor changes, while powerful entities such as the Eldest can remake entire landscapes. A *shaping sweet* is a gelatinous, fruit-flavored candy that confers a whisper of this ability on you when you eat it. For 1 hour after eating a *shaping sweet*, you can make each of the following changes to your surroundings with an Interact action. You can make each change only once.

- **Alter Weather** You create or eliminate minor precipitation in a 30-foot emanation.
- **Fairy Ring** A ring of flowers and mushrooms appears in a 10-foot burst around you, restoring 1 Hit Point at the start of each of your turns to a randomly chosen fey creature within. The ring lasts for 1 minute.
- **Foliage** Vegetation grows around you in a 10-foot radius burst, creating light undergrowth that lasts for 1 minute.
- **Terrain Shift** The ground in your space rises or falls by 5 feet, remaining at that height for 1 minute.



FADED MEMORIES

Although I encourage everyone to scour this strange library for the secrets of Sarkoris, I'd like to ask for a little time as well. Many of our texts were lost when the original monastery was destroyed and recovering even one of those would make an unimaginable difference going forward. Of course, I'm sure the other schools also have their own mysteries.

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BOFIKA NEMESAN

Dedicated female human headmistress

Our Acting Headmistress, Bofika Nemesan, plays a prominent role in Cobyslarni's contingent. Bofika, although human, has adapted to the First World quite well in her three hundred or so years with the academy—as evidenced by her life span, which I understand is unusual for a human. She's a master in the art of wizardry, although she also studies the occult magics preferred by our students, and her current research focuses on ways the two might be combined into one unified whole. I believe those of you from the Magaambya may find this somewhat familiar. Her most recent writing on the topic is detailed in the monograph *Comprehending the Incomprehensible, Mystifying the Methodical*. She's scheduled a panel discussion for the Convocation regarding how this approach might help locate and seal planar breaches.



Bofika first came to us as a young woman, already a powerful wizard, after a magical mishap transported her to the First World very nearly at Cobyslarni's feet. Fascinated by the academy, she decided to enroll as a student instead of seeking to return home. She's hinted that her peregrination to the First World may not have been *entirely* accidental, but whatever she fled doesn't seem to have caught up to her yet. She took to the study of pacts immediately, forming an intricate web of bargains that still serves her well.

When the previous Acting Headmaster retired, Cobyslarni bestowed the title on Bofika, and she's capably handled the role ever since. She not only has a brilliant intellect, but a kind heart, always making herself available for struggling students. We're brought here—in part—by her keen interest in cultural research, particularly of extinct societies or those whose traditions are disappearing. Rather than rely solely on the Echo Repository for this, she's developed several spells and rituals to help recover such lost knowledge herself, which she hopes will find some use renewing incompletely remembered Sarkorian traditions.

Her subjects find it endlessly fascinating to live a day in the memory of a grandmother's grandmother or swim through the dreams an object has featured in, trapping Bofika in her garden reviewing a mountain of heartfelt requests. Some helpful Universe colleagues have pointed out that she won't have time to finish them before the end of the Convocation, let alone perform the rituals. I've started searching for others who can cast the spells that don't depend on her network of contracts, as there are a few among the sponsors and invitees. The rituals are the real problem. One of the monks from the House of Perfection mentioned that we should hold a tournament to determine who gets her help. He laughed afterward and said it was a joke, but we can't let her research go to waste and his idea is starting to sound better than a lottery.

RECALL LEGACY ◆◆◆

SPELL 7

RARE CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range touch; **Targets** 1 willing creature

Duration Until the target's next daily preparations

You establish a mental link with the target, focusing on a piece of knowledge important to their culture, family (by birth or choice), or home settlement. Both you and the target must be aware this knowledge exists, even if you don't know the exact details. As your magic connects them to this legacy, the target gains a non-lineage ancestry feat from their ancestry. The feat must be of a level no higher than twice *recall legacy*'s rank and the target must meet any prerequisites for the feat. The target is then immune to any further castings of *recall legacy* until their next daily preparations.

MURROU

Stern male awakened emu researcher

Another Cobyslarni attendee whom I'm sure many of you will meet is Murrou, an enterprising third-eye student who adeptly balances his time between his thaumaturgical studies and teaching courses to first-eyes. His research into using magical artifacts to enhance a pact's power has made quite a splash recently; his mentor, the Professor of Relics and Remembrance, believes he's nearly ready to attempt his assessment for completion of his third-eye degree.

I suspect Murrou will be easy to spot among the Convocation; he's an awakened emu six feet in height. To ensure he doesn't get confused with the more mundane varieties of avian, he always wears a three-piece suit, so he should be easy to distinguish from any eidolons or familiars in attendance. He gained sapience after wandering into the Quickening, a strange First World region that mutates anything that sets foot there, and found his way to Cobyslarni shortly thereafter, hoping the academy might help him understand his new state of being. After discovering a taste for the academic life, he formally enrolled, proving an astute scholar in blending thaumaturgy with pactbinding.

As a third-eye, Murrou is a keen—if exacting—teacher, and most of his first-eye students admire him greatly. He's never afraid to speak his mind, though, and on occasion when a particularly heated academic dispute comes to blows, he's been known to administer few kicks to his rivals. In spite of his temper, he generally reserves these outbursts for arrogant individuals who demean or steal the work of others, or who are sloppy in their research.

Once he completes his degree, Murrou hopes to remain with Cobyslarni as a professor, provided we have a position available. We have many third-eyes, after all, and Murrou has stiff competition in this regard, including his ex-wife, Lychara, a talented cat sith witch who brags of having more pacts than she has lives. In spite of their marriage's dissolution, the two are friendly in all matters except the academic; their disputes are well-documented in a flurry of sardonic footnotes and "responses to" papers. Murrou is determined, however, and I wouldn't be surprised if he were one of the several to obtain a professorship the next time such opportunities arise.

For the Convocation, Murrou has prepared a presentation regarding methods of divining sympathy between two objects, with the intent of using Sarkorian relics as a sort of "dowsing rod" to locate mislaid examples of their kind. He's recently published his first monograph on the subject, which he'll be making available to Convocation attendees. It also led to his development of *mnemonic feathers*, crafted from his own plumage, which he's been known to gift to favored students or friends. Should you impress him, perhaps he'll grant you one as well!

MNEMONIC FEATHER

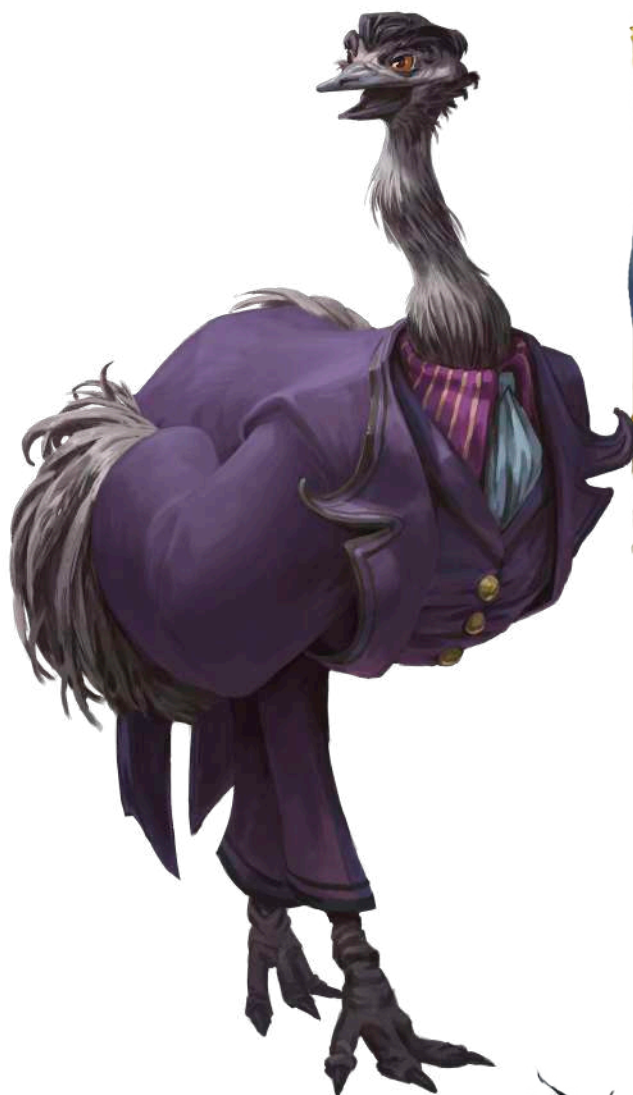
ITEM 3

RARE MAGICAL

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** —

Murrou crafted these feathers to assist in remembering information. A *mnemonic feather* is an emu feather imbued with magical energies. You can place the *mnemonic feather* in a book with an Interact action. As long as the *mnemonic feather* remains within the book, you recall information contained within that book perfectly, as if you were reading the page, as long as the book is on the same plane as you. When you attempt to Recall Knowledge about a topic contained within the book, you gain a +1 status bonus to the check.

Activate—Recite Mnemonic ⤿ (auditory, concentrate, mental) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** An ally within 30 feet attempts a Recall Knowledge check involving the topic in the *mnemonic feather's* book; **Effect** You mentally impart the book's knowledge to your ally, giving them the benefit of the *mnemonic feather*.



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COBYSLARNI WITCHES

The silent, eponymous founder of the Traveling Academy of Cobyslarni spends his time contemplating the mysteries of the cosmos, sending his mind far afield in search of greater knowledge. Through his academy and even direct patronage, he trains and shelters many witches.

Some witches are even called for a psychic conference with the founder. They return with strange knowledge or physical changes, but few will speak of what they saw inside the ancient being's mindscape. Indeed, their words and magic are generally insufficient for the task. The most favored are marked with a functioning third eye like Cobyslarni's, which is generally a sign that the chosen witch needs to begin a journey of their own.

Even witches that have not been personally chosen by the headmaster generally contract familiars in the ever-shifting realm of the First World. Many of these seem unfinished compared to mortal witches' familiars, changing appearance and abilities drastically from day to day. Among those with more set forms, tolerant students often select the unruly mockingfey and more experienced authors will bring calligraphy wyrms under their care.

Certain lessons are also passed down among the witches of Cobyslarni. Although it's said some originate from the headmaster, others represent untold time and research into the nature of oaths.

COBYSLARNI (RARE WITCH PATRON)

Though Cobyslarni doesn't often interact directly with mortals these days, your quest for wisdom has drawn his attention. You studied at his academy, encountered him on his travels throughout the planes, or responded to his strange psychic call. However your meeting occurred, Cobyslarni empowered your studies. Though Cobyslarni rarely demands anything directly from his witches, you may receive visions of danger to the academy or its students in times of dire need.



MOCKINGFEY

Most witches chosen by Cobyslarni, if they're not already students at the academy, make their way there at some point. Some who follow these nudges remain at the academy indefinitely, but most eventually move on to experience their own journeys or even establish their own schools.

Spell List occult; **Patron Skill** Occultism

Lesson of Wandering Mind Cobyslarni has taught you to keep an open mind and seek knowledge in all things, sifting through an array of facts that others would find bewildering. You gain the *information overload* hex cantrip and your familiar learns *déjà vu*^{PC2}.

Familiar of Insightful Observation Your familiar boasts a third eye upon their head or body, resembling the one set in Cobyslarni's forehead. When you Cast or Sustain a hex, your familiar can attempt a check to Recall Knowledge as a free action with any skill in which you are trained or better, using your bonus, and psychically transmit the information to you.

INFORMATION OVERLOAD ◆

CANTRIP 1

RARE CANTRIP CONCENTRATE HEX MENTAL WITCH

Patron Cobyslarni

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

You call on Cobyslarni to open the target's mind to knowledge—too much knowledge. The target's thoughts flood with irrelevant and confusing information, causing it to become stupefied 1 if it fails a Will save (or stupefied 2 on a critical failure).

CALLIGRAPHY WYRM FAMILIARS

Calligraphy wyrms are curious dragons constantly in search of new lore and writing. They make natural allies for academics of all stripes, whether remaining in the towers of Cobyslarni or heading into fieldwork like the Pathfinder Society, but are also found working with witches contracted to draconic powers or wizards who've somehow managed to impress the tiny creatures.

While knowledgeable, calligraphy wyrms can also be know-it-alls. Their chirpy, high-pitched voices make this attitude humorous to some and insufferable to others.

CALLIGRAPHY WYRM

UNCOMMON DRAGON

Access affiliation with Cobyslarni or the Pathfinder Society

Required Number of Abilities 6

Granted Abilities darkvision, flier, manual dexterity, scent, skilled (arcana, society), speech

Ink Spray ◆ (arcane) **Frequency** once per 10 minutes; **Effect**

The wyrm splatters ink in a 10-foot cone. Each creature in the area must attempt a Reflex save with a DC equal to its master's spell DC or class DC, whichever is higher.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success If the creature was invisible, it is concealed instead for 2 rounds.

Failure As success, but for 1 minute.

Critical Failure As success, but for 10 minutes. The creature is also blinded for 1 round or until it wipes the ink from its eyes using an Interact action.

Stylus Claws The wyrm has stylus-shaped claws that it can fill with its natural ink, using its claw as a pen without having to purchase ink.

MOCKINGFEY FAMILIARS

Mockingfey are tiny fey with the heads of humanoids and the bodies of colorful parrots. Though they're mischievous and unruly, mockingfey are very loyal to those they consider friends. They can speak and understand language, but typically communicate in pantomime instead, as they find verbal speech restrictive.

Some spellcasters ally with mockingfey as familiars, as they're highly curious and keen—if distractable—students. Cobyslarni students and faculty, being used to the bizarre nature of the First World, are more tolerant than most of a mockingfey's antics, and the little creatures are a common sight flitting around the school's towers. Naturally, any pranks a mockingfey pulls on a student's rivals are merely the unsanctioned work of an excitable familiar.

Cobyslarni representatives have found their familiars' antics are less appreciated by the students of other schools. In part, this is because a small or feathered student doesn't seem out of place among the Traveling Academy's student body. Even without that confusion, many Cobyslarni students are finding they must teach their mockingfey familiars the most difficult lessons of all: when not to insult people and who to leave alone.

MOCKINGFEY

UNCOMMON FEY

Access affiliation with Cobyslarni

Required Number of Abilities 4

Granted Abilities flier, independent, speech

Gibe ◆ (concentrate, illusion, mental, occult, visual)

Frequency once per round; **Effect** The mockingfey takes on the imperfect, illusory appearance of a creature it can see within 60 feet, pantomiming their mannerisms in a derisive fashion. This illusion doesn't make the mockingfey look any larger and lasts until the end of your next turn. The creature must attempt a Will save against your class DC or spell DC, whichever is higher. Regardless of the result, the creature is temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature is off-guard until the start of your next turn, as it's distracted by your familiar's taunts.

Critical Failure The creature is off-guard until the end of your next turn.

GREATER WITCH LESSONS

The following uncommon greater witch lessons are often taught at Cobyslarni or by its past students. Those who study knowledge shaping gravitate toward the lesson of memory, while those who focus on pacts often find the lesson of vows useful.

Lesson of Memory: Cobyslarni has untold years of memories, which he's learned how to shape, recalling information—or obliterating it. You gain the *unravel knowledge* hex, and your familiar learns *hypercognition*.

UNRAVEL KNOWLEDGE ◆◆

FOCUS 3

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS HEX MANIPULATE MENTAL WITCH

Lesson memory

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

Your patron reaches into the target's mind, plucking out their past training like pulling a thread from a cloth. Choose a single action, activity, or spell you know the target can use, such as from seeing it previously or identifying the creature's capabilities with a Recall Knowledge check. You could select, for example, the Strike action, the Disarm action, a dragon's breath, or the *haste* spell if you were aware the target could use them. The target attempts a Will save.

Success The target is unaffected.

Failure The target's memories of their ability grow foggy.

The first time they use the chosen ability each round, they take 3d8 mental damage. This ability is less effective if you choose an ability almost anyone can use; the target takes 3d4 mental damage instead if you choose a basic action (such as Strike, Stride, or Raise a Shield) or a skill action that can be used untrained (such as Demoralize or Hide).

Critical Failure As failure, and the target takes a -2 status penalty to any check or DC for the ability the first time they use it each round.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 1d8, or by 1d4 for a basic action or untrained skill action.

Lesson of Vows: Words have power, and those who use them to deceive should be prepared to face the consequences. You gain the *censure falsehoods* hex, and your familiar learns *ring of truth*.

CENSURE FALSEHOODS ◆◆

FOCUS 3

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE CURSE FOCUS HEX MANIPULATE WITCH

Lesson vows

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense Fortitude

You call on your patron to reprimand a creature that has attempted a Deception or Stealth check against you or an ally within the past month. You must be aware they did so. Whenever the target speaks, toads and serpents fall from their lips. The target attempts a Fortitude saving throw. The spell lasts as long as the target remains sickened by it.

Critical Success A few animals fall from their lips, but they're otherwise unaffected.

Success The target is sickened 1.

Failure The target is sickened 2 and if they perform an action that has the auditory trait or attempt to Cast a Spell, they must succeed at a DC 5 flat check, or the action is disrupted as they choke on an animal.

Critical Failure As failure, and if the target attempts a Deception or Stealth check, their sickened value increases by 1 (to a maximum of sickened 4).

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PACTBINDER FEATS

Pactbinding, often misunderstood and maligned as swearing fealty to dark forces, is a magical discipline followed by individuals in many cultures. A pactbinder knows how to bargain with strange entities, whether benevolent, malevolent, or unconcerned with morality altogether, and arrange these deals so they gain more than they pay. While a few pactbinders devote themselves to a single pact, most collect an array throughout their lifetimes, making deals with various beings as suits their needs. Magical contracts, though not formal metaphysical pacts, are also commonly used among pactbinders. Both offer benefits paired with drawbacks or obligations, and the skills required to obtain a good pact are similar to those required to negotiate an advantageous contract. Without proper training and planning, pactbinders can find themselves locked in a truly dangerous contract.

A good pactbinder views himself not as a supplicant but as a trader; they offer a skill or service of value in exchange for a boon. What's valued in this eldritch marketplace varies based on the pactbinder and the entity involved. Many pacts are quite formalized, using the language crafted over millennia of long experience to ensure a fair trade, though often the pact-makers add their own stipulations and expectations. A neophyte pactbinder, however, would be wise to stick to tried-and-true methods until they gain experience, lest they find themselves on the losing side of the deal. Being outmaneuvered is riskier in some bargains than others; a devil is much more likely to take advantage of a poorly phrased proviso than a psychopomp.

Pactbinding studies at Cobyslarni are divided by types of entities, such as fey, dragons, or psychopomps. Students are encouraged to take a variety of courses, even if they plan to focus on one particular type of pact, to give them a better grounding in pactbinding principles. Unsurprisingly, given the academy's homeland, fey pacts are popular choices, though students also often forge pacts with instructors or creatures Cobyslarni encounters in his travels. Regardless of the entity involved in a given pact, a certain fey focus on keeping the letter (if not always the spirit) of one's vows imbues the pactbinding disciplines at Cobyslarni, and students are taught to carefully consider the pacts they make, as such things should not be lightly broken.

Cobyslarni professors take the metaphysical implications of pacts to an unusual level, viewing the pact as an entity unto itself. Those who enter into a pact have their own goals, but so too does the pact once it's formed, and these goals sometimes diverge from those of the pact-makers. It's sometimes difficult to parse metaphor from literal fact in the pactbinding texts of Cobyslarni's faculty, but it's clear that tangible pact manifestations—although rare—do exist. Students whisper cautionary tales of pacts continuing after the original participants' deaths, ensnaring bypassers in Cobyslarni's twisting halls.

PACT OF HULDRA'S RENEWAL

FEAT 4

RARE ARCHETYPE PRIMAL

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication (*Pathfinder Dark Archive* 166)

You've sworn a pact with Zemnaïdé, a huldra professor at Cobyslarni, to help renew his former homeland of the Sarkoris Scar. You can cast *entangling flora* as a primal innate spell once per day. After the spell ends, the flowers and vines become mundane plants that can continue surviving if the natural environment can support them. They're no longer difficult terrain, and don't have the other effects of the spell. Fiends that fail a save against this spell or another plant spell you cast become sickened 1 in addition to the normal effects.

In exchange for her boon, Zemnaïdé requires that you never knowingly aid demons or their allies, nor despoil a natural environment. If you do either, you lose the benefits of this feat until you atone. If you comment on his bovine tail or imply the huldras are connected to trolls, Zemnaïdé revokes the benefits of this feat for 1 week or until you sincerely apologize.


OUROBORIC PACT

FEAT 8

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE OCCULT

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication; master in Occultism

You've studied pacts at Cobyslarni, or learned under someone who has, and understand them to not only create a bargain between individuals, but a separate entity altogether: the pact itself. You gain the Entreat Pact action, which you can use in association with any pact from the pactbinder archetype. For example, if you have the Pact of Draconic Fury, you could Entreat Pact to aid a skill check to obtain an item the dragon desires.

Entreat Pact  (concentrate, fortune) **Trigger** You attempt a skill check directly related to the conditions of the pact; **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** You call upon the occult energies powering your pact to help you fulfill your promise. Roll twice on the triggering check and take the better result.

Special Your pacts continually enforce themselves in a circular magical loop. You lose the ability to retrain out of any feats from the pactbinder archetype.

PACT OF THE NIGHTBLOSSOM

FEAT 10

RARE ARCHETYPE OCCULT

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

You've sworn a pact with Jenway Nightblossom of the Synod of Truth in Dreams, a talented oneiromancer and pactbinder. Through your connection to her, you're able to divine your dreams for wisdom, and they're protected from interference. You're immune to *nightmare*. During your daily preparations, if you slept and were able to dream, you learn a helpful piece of advice about your future activities, as *read omens*.

As payment, Jenway established a permanent telepathic connection to you that functions whenever you sleep or dream. Whenever you learn something significant, Jenway learns it the next time you sleep. You can withhold information, but you lose the benefits of Pact of the Nightblossom until you relent and allow Jenway to learn it.

PACT OF THE CROSSROADS

FEAT 12

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE PRIMAL

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

You've sworn a pact with Ng the Hooded, the Eldest known as the Lord of the Crossroads, though your only sign of Ng's acknowledgment is the benefits you receive. Anyone tracking you must succeed at a Survival check against the higher of your class DC and spell DC. Creatures attempting to remember your features after the first time meeting you must succeed at a Will save against the same DC. If they fail, they recall the meeting but none of your features.

In exchange, you must continue your wanderings, never settling in one place for longer than one month, or you lose the benefits of this feat until you begin your travels again. If you ever willingly tell anyone you've formed a pact with Ng, you lose the benefits of this feat permanently, though you can share vague information about the pact's effects.

PACT OF THE DEATH HUNTER

FEAT 14

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DIVINE

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

You've sworn a pact with a psychopomp bent on the destruction of all undead. You gain an imprecise deathsense that can detect undead creatures up to 60 feet away. Additionally, whenever an undead creature is destroyed within 60 feet you gain temporary Hit Points equal to its level that last for 1 minute.

In exchange, the psychopomp requires that you never aid in the creation or conquest of an undead creature. You must also seek out and put to rest any mindless or destructive undead creatures you come across.

PACT OF THE FEY PATHS

FEAT 14

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE PRIMAL

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

You've sworn a pact with a powerful fey creature that longs to see the wonders of the Universe. You gain the Fey Jump ability. In exchange, you can no longer see the moon or stars as the fey steals those wonders from your eyes, and you must gaze at the empty sky for at least 10 minutes each night. If you do not, the fey revokes your benefits for the next day. If you go a week without gazing, the fey revokes your benefits until you atone.

Fey Jump ◆ (concentrate, primal, teleportation) **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** You jump through the First World for a brief second, teleporting up 60 feet away to an empty space you can see. If this would bring another creature with you—even if you're carrying it in an extradimensional container—the action is lost.

PACT OF THE RUNE DRAGON

FEAT 16

UNCOMMON ARCANE ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

While the students of Cobyslarni are taught to make pacts with many kinds of dragons, a pact with a rune dragon is somewhat more frequent due to their interest in the accomplishments of various academies. You immediately learn 10 languages chosen from common languages,

uncommon languages, and any others the dragon has access to. Additionally, you can Identify Magic at a range of 30 feet as a single action ability with the concentrate trait.

In exchange, the rune dragon requires you to research a topic and send a detailed report each year. Year to year, the dragon may change the interest of your research as they see fit. If you fail to send an appropriately detailed report, you lose this ability unless you spend one week serving the dragon.

PACT OF THE LIVING PACT

FEAT 18

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Pactbinder Dedication

You've sworn a pact with a pact that has somehow survived long after the death of the original pactbinder. You gain the Forced Pact action. In exchange, this and any other pact you have made seek longevity. Whenever you become dying 3 or higher, all of your pacts abandon you and flee to the nearest safe space. You can sense their direction at all times, and if you find them, you regain all of your pacts.

Forced Pact ◆ (concentrate) **Frequency** once per hour;

Effect You force a temporary pact on both yourself and another creature you can see within 60 feet. Choose attack, move, manipulate, or concentrate. The target must attempt a Will saving throw.

Success The target is unaffected.

Failure If you or the target uses an action with the chosen trait within the next minute, they take 10d6 mental damage, and this pact ends for both of you.

Critical Failure As failure, except your target takes the damage if either of you uses an action with the chosen trait.



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KITHARODIAN ACADEMY

*Voices of Kith, come chant along,
In praise of Taldor, our cheers ring on!
Our hearts are strong, our words ne'er wrong,
We rise to the beat of our bardic song!*

*Voices of Kith, swelling with ardor,
In praise of Taldor, our art shall soar!
Like lions we roar, forevermore,
Now hear the cries of encore, encore!*

That's the chorus of *Voices of Kith*, our school tune. It's a catchy melody, especially when warbled with one's mates during an Oppara pub crawl, preferably when you're at least three to six pints deep. I haven't had the chance to do that in quite some time, alas, since I've been conducting rehearsals from sunup to sundown during the last several days here in Nerosyan. After basic pitch exercises at the start of each rehearsal, we like to get amped up by belting out *Voices of Kith* together in a nice show of school spirit. Frankly, I've gotten a little sick of the song by now, but I do like how we've infected a few of the students from other academies with an earworm. I swear I heard some Monastery of Unbreaking Waves fellow pass by our rehearsal the other day, watch us for a few moments and then wander off, humming "In praise

of Taldor, our art shall soar" to himself. That gave me a good chuckle.

I should introduce myself and explain what's going on, since someone's probably going to read this at some point. My name is Jarn Lesantillo, and I'm a fourth-year student at Kitharodian Academy, Taldor's grandest school for those with a penchant for the bardic arts. I'm part of a group of about 30 students in their fourth year who were selected by our head administrator, Lord Merriweather Stokes, to attend the Convocation both as representatives of Taldor and to complete our requirement for graduation—the direction and performance of a play in front of a live audience. Our play is a dramatization of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade that hopefully captures the life, death, and pathos of the battlefield, which is something that's always moved me ever since I chose Taldor's Shining Crusade as the subject matter for my third-year ballad. We've got a great production in the works, but I still find myself biting my fingernails to the quick hoping that all will be perfect on opening day. Nevertheless, I feel grateful whenever I have a few idle moments to remember where I am. I've wanted to get away from Taldor to see what else Golarion has to offer for years. When the opportunity came to apply for this Convocation exhibition, it was

the perfect way to kill two rocs with the same stone, and I thank Desna that I made my way over here.

But I digress. Instructor Celeste—my favorite teacher and our play’s main advisor—says I have an undeniable talent when it comes to putting words on paper, but she also says that when left to my own devices I tend to ramble. And so, I’m going to try my utmost to pen this record in a way that makes sense, especially because I hope to publish it one day as a backup plan just in case our contributions to the Convocation, not to mention my ensuing career, go up in smoke. Since this will probably be the start of a larger memoir that I plan to entitle *Meandering Musings of a Voice of Kith*, I’ll take the time to describe my school in detail for the uninitiated.

Kitharodian Academy trains performers in the field of classical ballads, historical dramas, and mythological epochs that Taldor’s bards are renowned for. Elaborate stage productions that retell Queen Eutropia Stavian’s ascension during the War for the Crown, songs that detail First Emperor Taldaris’s fight against the Grogrisant, pantomimes about the comical likeness of his face that Grand Prince Bafra carved into those cliffs thousands of years ago, and so on. All of these are actual subjects of songs and stories that I’ve had to memorize and regurgitate in my own style. And making sure audiences are never bored of our subject matter, even if they’ve heard it a thousand times before, is what we’re trained in. The life of a bard is one of an artistic chronicler, and the intent of Kitharodian Academy is to spread Taldor’s arts across the Inner Sea and to the continents beyond.

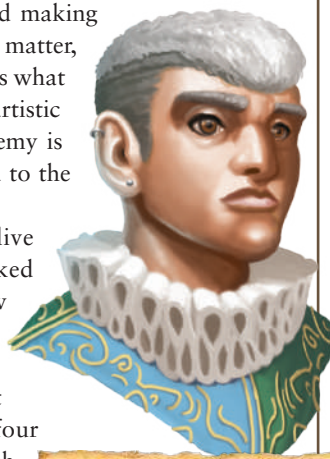
Without a doubt, it’s a staggering legacy to live up to. I’ve felt the pressure ever since I walked through the academy’s gates, and I don’t know a single peer who hasn’t passed out at some point from an all-nighter or practicing too long without water. We go through eight terms of study, usually over the course of four years, and most students take six courses each term. It’s a varied curriculum, with first-years taking courses on everything from movement techniques (Stage Kinesiology is always packed, partly because everyone has a crush on Instructor Somat) to improvisational skills (I always liked Comedic Timing 101, even if Instructor Aspalia told me I’m not as funny as I think I am). Students then choose a specific area of the arts for specialization in their second year, usually picking between acting, composition, dance, directing, and music. Third-year students need to compose a brief ballad, play, or similar dramatic work in front of their peers and the academy’s Council of Instructors, and fourth-years must produce an even longer piece for public exhibition, which is what we’re up to here at the Convocation.

Sound stressful? You bet it is. But it’s a life, and we do find ways to relax on occasion. I already mentioned how pub crawling is a student tradition, and we also take things one step further. Back home in Oppara, there’s a whole street of houses—formally named Tawny Lane, nicknamed “Tawdry Lane”—used for all the bashes that you might expect a group of stressed bardic students to throw whenever they have a spare moment. The properties on Tawdry Lane are technically off-campus housing owned by the academy, but the students who pay extra to live there are also the ones who know they’ve taken on the vitally important responsibility of providing social safe houses for their peers at the end of every Fireday and Starday. Let me tell you, Kith parties are serious affairs, since as the stereotype goes, we’re perfectionists in everything—even getting embarrassingly boozy and finding the right classmate to share the night with.



MORTAL EFFECTS

It’s fascinating to see how mortals shape their reluctant reality. Although we sometimes resort to illusions, Kitharodian has entire fields of study about replicating monsters, vistas, and even storms through purely physical means.



JARN LESANTILLO

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FORTRESS OF WORDS

"In praise of Taldor, our art shall soar." It's easy to mock a purpose so clearly stated, but it has a perfection of its own. And consider, could a single disaster have wiped away the old monastery's teachings if we'd been as dedicated at spreading our message?

I mean, who wouldn't need to blow off steam under such pressure? The academy drills us to be the best performers in the world, and when you look at how many Kith kids have made it on the stage, the page, and even the political world, it's impossible not to strive for perfection in everything you do. And yes, I did mention the political world, even though there's no *definitive* proof linking Kitharodian with the Lion Blades, Taldor's intelligence agency. Sure, the academy *allegedly* serves as a recruitment venue for the Lion Blades' so-called Shadow Schools, but there's absolutely *nothing* to suggest that Kith kids have been courted to represent Taldor's interests as secret agents. It would also be *daft* to assume that select graduates—and a fair number of talented dropouts—receive visits from Lion Blade head Dominicus Rell, and it would be just as completely *unbelievable* to assume that there's a repository called the Library of the Lion that's in the academy's basement and chock full of espionage dossiers.

Lord Merriweather Stokes has told us we shouldn't waste our time searching for it, because these connections with the Lion Blades are all just nonsense, and Lord Stokes *certainly* isn't a former Lion Blade himself. (I've noticed that he likes to point out that plenty of other schools have their own spy networks, with the Magaambya's Emerald Boughs cited as his most frequent example. I'm sure he's not deflecting.)

Open secrets aside, my sister Tatiana may be one of those graduates who won an audience with Dominicus Rell and Queen Eutropia. After a monumental stage career, she just had to be an even greater success—I mean, alleged success—as a Lion Blade agent and, by Asmodeus's hell-scorched hooves, am I used to the view from her shadow. Did I mention that she's a surprise guest here at the Convocation, and will probably be nitpicking every aspect of our play? I almost feel like Kith does it on purpose, offering spots to family members as legacy admissions so we'll chase that shadow until our feet bleed. It took the entirety of the last three years to even feel comfortable around other students, and it wasn't until I composed my third-year poem that I finally thought, "Huh, this is for me!" This year, I finally feel like I've gone one step further, participating in a play that's big and bold and undeniably mine, and then Tatiana shows up, and I'm worrying about how I'm going to look foolish in front of her. It makes me want to twist my lute into knots.

Sorry, the stress is getting to me. Once again, I really should point out that I'm grateful to be here. Mendev and Sarkoris are so different from what I'm used to—so wrought with hardship yet brimming with growth and the potential for healing. When you compare this part of the world to the Kith campus in Oppara... well, it's like comparing ornamentation to the bass line. Taldor's capital is an impressive place for sure, and at least upon first glance it really does deserve that Gilded City nickname. Our campus is gorgeous, full of color-bursting foliage and ivy-covered cathedrals designed to motivate our muses into composing the next great masterpiece of the Shining Kingdoms. And then you take a 15-minute walk beyond the campus gate and run right into streets that could be mistaken for public toilets, with dozens of folks begging for alms. I give as much coin as I can, but most of my classmates (and probably the majority of Oppara's nobility) do not give a kobold's scaly bottom about the poverty in the city. Status is all that matters, and becoming associated with Kith is a premier status symbol among Oppara's snootier residents. In fact, one of the fastest ways to advance in Opparan society is to either attend the academy yourself or have children who manage to survive the sobering audition process.



I can say all this because I'm not a native son of Oppara. I was born and raised in Kozan, and I like to think that my humble roots allow me to see things more clearly. My mum and dad still own the Kraken's Beak, a tavern down by the docks, and I suppose it was the tales I heard from our constant barrage of azarketi customers that first fueled my love of stories and songs. I know that appreciation for the arts is a vital part of me, even if it took the last three years to truly figure it out.

And, despite all the nervousness in the pit of my stomach, I can undeniably say that it's an honor to represent the academy here at the Convocation. Even though there's much talk these days of Taldor as a has-been empire (not an inaccurate description, in my eyes), we Kith kids still have much to offer the world as storytellers and spokespeople. We're not just spies in training, and the vast majority of us couldn't give a hoot about the Lion Blades, to blazes with them. We're also much more than the Oppara elitism that clouds whatever good the academy really does offer the world.

I can only hope that our play proves these claims. I wrote most of the 20 songs and spoken word poems that we'll be delivering over the course of this masterpiece's nearly three-hour runtime, and believe me, it was an ordeal that took two weeks of very little sleep and at least 30 vials of theatrical mutagen. I take heart in the knowledge that there are performances like the *Song of Silver*, so powerful they repel fiends. Obviously, I don't want any fiends to actually swoop down on Nerosyan, but it would be wonderful if my friends and I could channel some of that awe-inspiring magic and show this audience what the Voices of Kith are truly capable of. I think we can do it; after all, we've got our school melody lifting us up. *Our hearts are strong, our words never wrong, we rise to the tune of our bardic song.* We've got this.

RIVALRIES

Back in Oppara, Kith kids have frequent spats with the Rhapsodic College students across town. I like the Rhapsodics well enough, and even dated one for a while. (Francesca, if you're reading this, I still think of you from time to time and hope your gap year in Absalom is treating you well.) But most Rhapsodic residents hold a grudge against us for being the more important school in town, and I suppose the Kith tradition to crash their shows and chant "Rhapsodics ain't melodic" during intermissions hasn't helped matters much.

Here at the Convocation, though? Hmm, it's hard to tell exactly who our rivals are. Everyone I've encountered from the Academy of the Reclamation has been kind, and we have a few of them acting as consultants on our play to make sure we don't overdramatize the Fifth Crusade too much. The Monastery of Unbreaking Waves folks are also easy to get along with; they remind me of the monks from the Monastery of the Seven Forms back home. The Cobyslarni bunch, meanwhile, seem a little out of their element but always clap the hardest at our shows.

As for the Magaambya crowd, they seem like a talented crew, but some of my peers don't trust them... probably because they've listened to Lord Merriweather Stokes's words of Emerald Bough spies way too much. Who cares if they're actually spies? I personally have nothing to hide, but I'm not going to go up to them and make myself look like a buffoon by saying something like "hullo, fellow school for spies!"

And then we have the representatives from the University of Lepidstadt. I guess I could grudgingly call them rivals. The same sort of families that send performers to Kith send their surgeons to Lepidstadt, so we see each other more than you'd think given the distance. They scoff at us for being posh, we write limericks about how they're creepy. Of course, the first one I meet that isn't a total creep immediately goes on a date with my sister.



OUT OF DATE

Although they're performing some new material here instead of just the same three old plays, our College of Engineering insists their methods are embarrassingly out of date. Why shake a metal sheet to create thunder when you can get actual lightning with a Stasian coil? And why guess at the emotions of the dead when you can let them speak with a spirit-singer?



EMERALD BOUGHS

It's generally not worth rising to accusations about the Emerald Boughs, but it seems particularly egregious to compare a university's field researchers to an empire's intelligence service. They both gather information—indeed there are few of us who do not—the question is just what's done with it afterward.

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WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

So here's the deal—our play is entitled *Wrath of the Righteous* and is meant to evoke the glory of the underdog nations that stood strong against the Abyssal armies of the Worldwound. I got a little carried away with the writing, since my final output ran for almost six hours the first time we rehearsed it. Instructor Celeste convinced me to drop some of the longer background bits about the other Mendevian crusades that preceded the Fifth. This initially broke my heart. I maintain that they were excellent ballads providing vital historical context, but six hours really was pushing it, so I gave in.

The beginning of *Wrath of the Righteous* kicks off with “The Saga of Sarkoris,” a leitmotif that will recur and remix itself throughout the entire performance. It's a beautiful piece that begins with choral echoes before finally breaking into a heart-thumping percussion led by Otto, the best drummer in our year. Otto is a mind-blowing percussionist who's spent his Kith career mastering the compositions of Andreas Romung, one of the finest Taldan maestros to ever breathe and a fellow who supposedly moved Iomedae to tears with his music back when she was still a mortal. I don't know if Otto will ever help any of us ascend to godhood, but we're

hoping to elicit a similar tear-jerking effect from the audience each time they hear our ode to Sarkorian glory.

Once Otto's solo concludes, we swiftly go into one musical number after another. All of these delve into major moments experienced by the heroes of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade, and we've got all the big stuff represented, including the dragon Terendelev's untimely demise, the retaking of Drezen, the battle against Baphomet and his Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth, and of course the mighty confrontation with Deskari, Lord of the Locust Host himself. The Deskari battle medley is my favorite on multiple levels. Instructor Celeste helped us rig the stage with atmospheric effect wafers for dramatic impact, and illusory folding backdrops are set up to make it appear as if we're standing on a plateau among a cloud of swirling locusts.

And in terms of lyrical craftsmanship, our “Begone, Usher of the Apocalypse” is mostly spoken word, with rapid-fire verses from the perspective of the Crusade's biggest figures, from Irabeth Tirabade to Queen Galfrey herself. I'm doing Horgus Gwerm's bit because, while I somehow doubt that he was there during the fight against Deskari, I love the imagery of an out-of-his-depth nobleman facing a demon lord. Plus, I'm really leaning into the idea that he grew to respect people more

than money over the course of the war. I think a lot of us could take a lesson from that.

Which gets a little awkward. It turns out he's actually living in Kenabres, just a little way up the river. Plays about living people admittedly aren't our specialty, so I hope he never hears of it and, if he does, that it's all good things. Just in case, I'm working on some new lines. "With my comrades I now respect far more than gold" might be a little on the nose if he hears it, but I'll need something new to lead into his verse about the power of friendship.

We might be taking *some* artistic license with a few of our compositions. But everyone from the Academy of the Reclamation says we're doing a fine job, and I think they're deeply amused that we are pulling all-nighters to get this play right. I hope they're not disappointed! At the very least, the various clockworks and our monster suits for the demon lords really are a step above what you could normally get in Nerosyan. Whoever's taken to hiding the Baphomet costume different places backstage has given me a couple good scares already.

Our gracious hosts have also helped us with some of the quieter moments in our performance, rightfully stating that foreigners tend to obsess over the battles of the Crusades without acknowledging the people that had to endure those rotten periods of bloodshed. And so, our play ends with "Once A Wound, Now A Scar." It's one of the songs I didn't write, with the soprano herself writing it in Hallit. Although she grew up in the River Kingdoms, her accent work is coming along nicely and it's a lovely piece. It uses the metaphor of the Sarkoris Scar to explain how these lands are redefining themselves in the aftermath of war, and the song transitions into another reprise of our ever-present leitmotif, which will hopefully bring a few awed tears.

All in all, I think our play has the potential to be the best exhibition in this Convocation, even if my sister notices a thousand things we've done wrong. But we've got to rehearse all our numbers down to perfection, and there are still plenty of props and supplies to make. Oh well; I'm just hoping Noctacula smiles upon us when it comes time to part the curtains. I feel like she's partial to Kith kids, since we're all struggling artists who empathize with a good redemption story. But just in case she isn't, we've got a song called "Redeemer Queen" that's all about how she used the Fifth Crusade to achieve godhood. At least, I hope we will. I think it'll be a hidden favorite if Instructor Celeste doesn't force me to make more cuts for time.

ILLUSORY PROGRAM

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE ILLUSION MAGICAL

Price 3 gp

Bulk –

Produced to promote plays, *illusive programs* are thin pamphlets infused with minor magic. Upon opening one of these pamphlets, readers are treated to a series of tiny illusions that stand on each page, typically showcasing highlights of the performance or profiles of the cast. The magic woven into each page is of the cheap, short-lived variety, fading 24 hours after the program has been opened.

THEATER ENHANCERS

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON

Price 15 gp

Bulk –

Theater enhancers resemble a pair of opera glasses. When worn, they allow the viewer to see subtle illusions on key props or stage elements that have been cast ahead of time. For instance, a puppet of a demon might appear to project a sinister moving shadow, or a backdrop of a mountain might have snowflakes falling over it. Popular among theatergoers who want a visual experience grander than what they can see with their own eyes, *theater enhancers* are largely limited to fancy stage productions that can afford the time and money it takes to enchant a stage with them in mind.



HIGH NOTES

Hearing all the praise of Sarkoris is a little embarrassing to be honest. At least they're listening to what we're proud of rather than just making assumptions. It'd all be far easier if we could lend them a few performers, but their professors are adamant their students don't receive outside help. I do think at least a few of their students are descendants of the Diaspora, so we're seeing if there's anyone we can champion for a Sarkorian role.

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MIRCEA CELESTE

Ingenious female human instructor

Instructor Celeste teaches Theatrical Flairs, a third-year course specifically tailored for Kith students who want to amplify their stage performances with special effects. Theatrical Flairs is designed for both the magically inclined and those who struggle with the most basic cantrips, and as someone who falls into the latter group, I've always appreciated Instructor Celeste for her open-mindedness and infinite patience. Much of her course focuses on non-magical techniques to wow a crowd and add a little extra "oomph" to a display—for instance, the right moment to covertly sip a vial of theatrical mutagen to nail a particularly tricky dance number, or how to conceal vocal shells on stage to throw one's voice far and wide without needing to cast *bullhorn*.

When it comes to our dramatization of the Fifth

Mendevian Crusade, Instructor Celeste has been quite the advisor, not only giving us thoughts on song composition and the like but also helping us rig pyrotechnics and other smoke and mirrors to ensure that our demonic puppets give off the proper amount of fire and brimstone. She's the one who gave us the money we needed to purchase clockworks and suits instead of relying solely on illusions, which was our original plan. "You want that tactile feel!" she said. "And you're definitely going to need demons who don't vanish every ten minutes!"

Aside from an appreciation for puppetry, she's also helped us build the greatest stage that any batch of Kith kids have ever constructed, with multiple backdrops that project illusions around different sections of our audience. It's wild to witness in person, and we wouldn't have been able to make it if it weren't for her instructions.

I'm not entirely sure where Instructor Celeste learned her diverse skill set, as she plays her cards close to the chest. A few student sleuths discovered a while back that there had previously been a "M. Celeste" listed as one of the minds behind stage direction in Absalom's Ivy Playhouse twenty years ago, which makes a ton of sense. But Instructor Celeste is also quite young, as far as academy instructors go, and the oldest I would put her is in her late thirties, which would mean that she would've been working at the Ivy Playhouse in her teens. Possible for a prodigy, I suppose. People also say she's a former Lion Blade, which doesn't narrow things down much. Or they joke that she's an animatronic herself, which doesn't sound quite as ridiculous when she's talking to a bird in a suit.

We've tried to pry into her affairs, but she always responds in the same way: "You're more than capable of filling in the blanks without me spelling it out for you. Best to leave the dramatic romances for the stage."



VOCAL SHELLS

ITEM 3

RARE CLOCKWORK

Price 50 gp (set of two)

Bulk –

Used by more technologically inclined bards, ventriloquists, and other performers to throw their voices, this gadget consists of two button-sized conch shells, each containing a miniaturized mechanism designed to pick up and transmit sound. One of the shells is designated the sending shell and contains a tiny indentation. When this indentation is pressed and the shell is close to a source of sound (such as on an actor's necklace), any sound that reaches it is transmitted to the receiver shell. If the receiver shell is located within 20 feet, it plays the sounds captured by the sending shell at a perfect volume and pitch.

TATIANA LESANTILLO

Accomplished female human actress

Tatiana is my older sister by eight years, which means that I was barely ten when she entered the academy. From the first day that my family made the trip to Oppara to drop Tatiana off at her dormitory, I could tell that mum and dad were starstruck. I get it; they'd never expected their child to attend a famous school. But after that visit, it was a constant barrage of "Tatiana does this, Tatiana does that, it'll be easier for you to get into Kith than it was for her because you're a legacy admission and you should *do everything that Tatiana does and basically be exactly her.*" By Cayden Cailean's beer-soaked tunic, there's only so much a child can hear before he develops a complex.

Yes, my sister does have an incredibly illustrious career. Post-graduation, she served as the understudy of Chiara Rari, star of *Nights of Silk*, the scandalous play about a Taldan noblewoman and a Qadiran general who have a star-crossed affair during the Grand Campaign. Then she won the lead on *Flowers & Falcatas*, the story of a female rondelero duelist who dresses as a man to enter a fighting tournament. And when her six-year leading lady stint was over, Tatiana went to Tian Xia to serve as a Taldan representative in Linvarre, which at that time was still a Taldan colony called Amanandar. She did some shrouded-in-mystery business that she says she's not at liberty to discuss. I think it was related to statehood negotiations, since Tatiana came home suspiciously close to the date when Queen Eutropia announced that Taldor was recognizing Linvarre's independence.

Whatever her assignment was, I'm jealous that Tatiana's seen so much of the world. Aside from a few letters, I barely communicated with her while she was off accomplishing all this greatness, and our relationship is pretty darn stilted as a result. I didn't even know she'd be here at the Convocation until the last minute, when Lord Merriweather Stokes summoned me into his office to say that my sister was invited as one of the academy's most esteemed alumni. I suspect it's all just another front for spycraft, anyway.

It was better when we were children, back when she was just my big sister and the two of us would sit by the fireplace in the Kraken's Beak, listening to azarketi sailors singing songs of lands far away. We had a shared life in common then, but now, such a wide distance exists between us. Whenever Tatiana gives me advice about what I can do better as a performer, I know she probably thinks she's being helpful. But her words are just criticism from the older sister who boasts a thousand accomplishments that I'll never be able to live up to. Maybe that's not a fair way to think of things. But until one of us instigates a conversation addressing how we've both become very different people over the course of our respective Kitharodian journeys, that distance will persist.

TALENT ENVY

RARE GENERAL SKILL

Prerequisites expert in Performance, Virtuoso Performer

You give off a bedazzling glow with every performance, sparking feelings of severe envy and inadequacy in those who compare their talent to yours. Once per minute when you succeed at a check using the type of performance that you chose with Virtuoso Performer, you can attempt to Demoralize an onlooker of your choice within 60 feet as a free action. If you critically succeeded on your Performance check, improve the degree of success for your Demoralize check by one step.

FEAT 7



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PERFORMANCE ITEMS

When stage performers want to add a little visual flair to their work, they might turn to magic or alchemy. Theater has a rich history of improvised effects and magical trickery. Larger companies sometimes employ a full-time spellcaster or alchemist to produce their special effects, while others make do with items that can be purchased nearly anywhere. Hooded lanterns make good footlights on large stages, but glow rods (*GM Core* 251) make for safer illumination. Smoke balls (*GM Core* 251) are also commonly used alchemical tools. Some more reckless performers might employ lesser blasting stones (*Player Core* 2 283) to produce loud sounds.

BLOOD PACK SQUIB

ITEM 2

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 6 gp

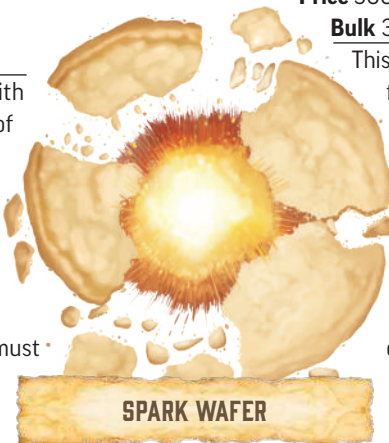
Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk –

Used by theater troupes in combination with a fake blood pack (see below), this bit of minor magic can simulate a dramatic and sudden wound. A *blood pack squib* is a small unassuming stone that is keyed to a single fake blood pack in a process that takes 1 minute.

Activate—Burst Pack ◆ (manipulate)

Requirements The *blood pack squib* must

be within 20 feet of its associated fake blood pack; **Effect** You lightly squeeze the stone and the fake blood pack dramatically bursts. The creature wearing the fake blood pack gains the benefits of a punctured fake blood pack. A single creature adjacent to the creature wearing the fake blood pack must succeed at a DC 16 Reflex save or be splattered with the fake blood, becoming dazzled until the end of their next turn. You can also activate the blood pack squib as a reaction when the fake blood pack is punctured normally.



SPARK WAFER

FAKE BLOOD PACK

ITEM 0

CONSUMABLE

Price 1 gp

Usage worn under light armor or clothes; Bulk L

Adventurers have found a number of uses for these animal blood-filled bladders, which were originally used in theatrical productions. Whenever you take slashing or piercing damage with the fake blood pack under your clothes or armor, roll a DC 11 flat check. On a success, the blood pack is punctured. You or an ally can puncture the hidden pack intentionally with an Interact action. When faking an injury, a punctured blood pack grants a +2 item bonus to relevant Deception checks, such as to Lie about being injured, for 4 hours after the pack has been punctured or until the blood is washed off, whichever comes first. Abilities that trigger when a creature deals bleed damage, that determine if a creature is bleeding, or are otherwise based on bleed damage don't trigger or apply for blood from a fake blood pack, which might mean creatures with such abilities automatically realize the ruse.

HIDDEN POCKET OUTFIT

ITEM 4

UNCOMMON

Price 75 gp

Usage worn garment; Bulk L

Usually worn by actors but also popular with anyone intent on subterfuge, this outfit resembles a normal piece of clothing, but with multiple pockets designed to conceal *blood pack squibs* and similar small items. When wearing this outfit, you automatically succeed on all relevant checks to Conceal an Object on your person as long as the object is of light or negligible Bulk. However, someone specifically searching you can still attempt a Perception check against your Stealth DC.

ILLUSORY BACKDROP

ITEM 10

RARE ILLUSION MAGICAL STRUCTURE

Price 900 gp

Bulk 3 (when not activated)

This three-panel folding backdrop measures 5 feet tall and 3 feet wide and takes 2 hands to carry when folded up. It projects a preset illusion when fully unfolded. *Illusory backdrops* are typically used by artists, bards, gallery owners, and the occasional politician, and common illusions include the tops of battlements with grand castles in the background, cozy bowers, and well-appointed rooms.

Activate—Set the Scene 1 minute (manipulate); **Effect** You unfold the *illusory backdrop*, placing it on the edge of three

contiguous 5-foot squares in a straight line. The illusion then emanates in a 15-foot cone from the center of the line, facing straight away from the panel. The illusion contains a scene that includes up to 5 discrete objects (usually foliage or pieces of furniture). The scene is static and lasts for 1 hour, though that duration restarts if the backdrop is refolded and then unfolded again. The appearance of the illusion is determined when the illusory backdrop is crafted and can't be changed.

INSPIRING SPOTLIGHT

ITEM 9+

RARE LIGHT MAGICAL

Usage mounted on a tripod or bracket; Bulk varies

An *inspiring spotlight* consists of a drum-shaped metal housing around several reflective plates. It has the capacity to cast a powerful, narrow beam of light to illuminate important moments or characters on stage. The portable version consists of an 18-inch-diameter lamp on a tripod that can be set up or broken down over the course of 10 minutes. The mounted version is typically 3 feet in diameter and affixed to a bracket above and behind the audience for indoor performances.

Activate—Light It Up ◆ (light, manipulate) **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** The *inspiring spotlight* emits a 5-foot burst of bright magical light within 120 feet. If the burst intersects with an area of magical darkness, the *inspiring spotlight* attempts to counteract the darkness with a +17 modifier. Creatures within the burst gain a +1 item bonus to saving throws and Charisma-based skill checks. The spotlight remains lit for 1 minute or until you Interact to

turn it off. During this time any creature adjacent to the spotlight can move the burst up to 20 feet from the burst's original position with an Interact action.

Type *portable inspiring spotlight*; **Level** 9; **Price** 650 gp; **Bulk** 3
Type *mounted inspiring spotlight*; **Level** 15; **Price** 6,500 gp; **Bulk** 8
The spotlight has a 240-foot range, the counteract modifier is +25, and the item bonus is +2.

MONSTER SUIT

ITEM 5

UNCOMMON

Price 80 gp

Usage worn garment; **Bulk** 2

Monster suits are used in elaborate and often tawdry performances where actors portray monstrous creatures. These shows tend to feature gratuitous special effects and culminate with the costumed actors engaging in mock battles on stage, to audiences' delight.

A monster suit is crafted to resemble a specific creature with the animal, beast, dragon, fiend, giant, plant, or undead trait. You can wear a monster suit that resembles a creature that is your size or one size larger, though this doesn't change your actual size. It takes 10 minutes to don a monster suit, and when wearing one, you take a -10-foot item penalty to your Speeds and a -4 circumstance penalty to skill checks for move actions due to the suit's unwieldy shape. However, the monster suit counts as a using a disguise kit for Impersonating the associated creature, and you gain a +2 item bonus to your Deception check and DC for the activity.

PRISMATIC DUST

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Price 1 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** –

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

This pigmented dust is often used to add color to the lights of a performance. *Prismatic dust* can be activated while you are adjacent to a source of magical bright light. When activated, the dust is sprinkled into the light, changing the light's color into the color of the dust for 1 hour. The color of the dust is determined upon the dust's creation.

SPARK WAFER

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE FIRE LIGHT

Price 3 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

These wafers contain ground-up alchemical reagents that activate shortly after being snapped. First popularized by technicians in Absalom's Ivy Playhouse, they have spread throughout Golarion as an inexpensive way to add to the visual splendor of a show without relying on magic. When you activate a spark wafer, you bend the wafer, nearly snapping it in two, and then throw it at a corner of a square within 20 feet (all part of the same manipulate action). The wafer then releases a 10-foot-high column of sparks for 1 round. The sparks shed bright light in a 5-foot burst and dim light in the next 5 feet. Any creature that begins their turn in the burst takes 1d4 fire damage (DC 14 basic Reflex save).

TALENTED TAP SHOES

ITEM 11

RARE INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 1,250 gp

Usage worn shoes; **Bulk** L

These stylish shoes were originally created by the Tappin' Toes Troupe, a group of tap-dancing Taldan bards who achieved massive popularity for their line dance routines. Notoriously lazy when it came to practicing choreography, the troupe enchanted their footwear to enhance their agility. Upon retirement, the troupe sold off their shoe designs, and *talented tap shoes* have become popular among professional dancers ever since. While wearing the shoes, you gain a +2 item bonus to Acrobatics checks to Balance and Tumble Through an enemy's space and to Performance checks using dance.

Activate—Strut Your Stuff ♦ (manipulate) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You click the toes of your *talented tap shoes* on the ground, and for the next minute, whenever you succeed or critically succeed at a Reflex save to avoid a damaging effect, you can Stride half your Speed as a reaction. However, during this time, you take a -2 item penalty to Stealth checks to Sneak.

WEAPON OF FALSE WOUNDS

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON ILLUSION MAGICAL VISUAL

Price 80 gp

Usage held in 1 or more hands; **Bulk** L

These weapons consist mostly of illusions, except in the spots where the weapon would be held. A sword, for example, would consist only of a physical handle with the permanent illusion of a blade. *Weapons of false wounds* come in all shapes and sizes to help accurately reenact both historic and theatrical combat without risk of injury. The most amazing property of these items is the fact the illusions become partially physical when interacting with other *weapons of false wounds*, allowing blades to clash and parry as they would in actual combat. As a *weapon of false wounds* is designed specifically to interact with other illusions, paying attention to subtle changes in the weapon's appearance can help alert the wielder to nearby illusions. While using this item, you gain a +1 item bonus to Perception checks to disbelieve an illusion.

WINDBORNE PLATFORM

ITEM 8

UNCOMMON AIR MAGICAL

Price 500 gp

Bulk 5

These magical platforms are used in a variety of performances. They allow performers to access high places safely, while also serving an important role before the performance even begins. They're used by various backstage crews to hang lights, curtains, and scenery above the stage. Sometimes several of these platforms are lined up to make an upper and lower stage. This large 10-foot-by-10-foot platform can be secured to a surface as a 1-minute activity. While standing on a secured platform, any creature can use the Adjust Height activation.

Activate—Adjust Height ♦ (manipulate) **Effect** The platform and all creatures and items on the platform either rise or lower up to 10 feet. This action fails if there is more than 50 Bulk on the platform.

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KITHARODIAN ACTOR (ARCHETYPE)

Some performers at Kitharodian Academy are so dedicated to method acting that they can completely disappear into roles in a manner that's almost magical. These thespians are capable of mimicking Taldor's vast array of stage-immortalized luminaries via vivid impressions, awe-inspiring vocal performances, and wild stunts that defy all expectations. The Academy's foremost instructors and senior Lion Blades agents keep a close eye on all prodigies who show a sliver of this potential, helping them harness their talents for use in both the acting world and the world of spycraft.

Through Taldor's long history, a handful of classic roles have been repeated and hammered into shape until they became icons and metaphors that define the art of Taldor. Although some of these are symbols of national strength, like First Emperor Taldaris, many are tragic or even comedic figures like Emperor Beldam I. Accepting any one of these roles in a high-profile production can be the highlight of an actor's career, but the best of the best gather these roles like trophies.

Newer roles are added to the canon very slowly, with modern figures like Grand Princess Eutropia usually alluded to with references from other roles. Many performances with Cyricas and his animal friends now feature a dog at his side, for example, as a reference to the grand princess's beloved pet.

Although the most famous internationally, Kitharodian Academy is not the sole repository of Taldor's stories. Many other schools in Taldor, like the nearby Rhapsodic College, teach the classics. But these plays and songs are such a deeply rooted part of Taldor's culture that prodigies arise from the soldiers of Zimar to the dwarven enclaves in Maheto.

KITHARODIAN ACTOR DEDICATION FEAT 2

RARE ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

Prerequisites trained in Performance

Access You are from Taldor or have attended Kitharodian Academy.

You've studied classic Taldan theater and learned to embody various roles to a sublime degree. You become trained in Society and in Theater Lore; if you were already trained in either, you become an expert in that skill instead. In addition, when you attempt a Deception or Performance check to portray a famous figure, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your check. This bonus changes to +3 at 10th level and +4 at 17th level. However, you don't gain this bonus while Impersonating a figure whose death is common knowledge (as determined by the GM).

ANIMAL ACTOR FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

You participated in a performance of *The Leaping Lion*, a play focusing on Cyricas, the animal-loving adventurer who traveled with his ape friend Mardu and remains a favorite

hero among Taldan youth. You become trained in Nature and a Lore skill related to a particular type of animal commonly used in show business (such as Canine Lore, Ursine Lore, or Primate Lore); if you were already trained in either, you become an expert in that skill instead. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks to Command an Animal and Recall Knowledge about creatures with the animal trait. You can use your chosen animal Lore to Command an Animal of that type.

HEAVEN'S STEP OFFENSE FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

Trigger Your melee Strike reduces a creature to 0 Hit Points. Your lessons from the stage find life in the storied mercy and fearlessness of Grand Prince Gennaris III. With a theatrical flourish, the Strike becomes nonlethal (*Player Core* 407), and you can Stride up to half your Speed in a straight line toward another enemy. This attention-arresting movement does not provoke reactions from enemies unless they are immune to mental effects.

CLEAN TAKE FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE FORTUNE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

Trigger You fail, but don't critically fail, a Deception or Performance check to portray a famous figure.

Thanks to many long hours of rehearsals, your acting skill is infinitely adaptable. Even when your impressions don't quite hit the mark, you're able to refine and tweak your performance on the spot. Reroll the triggering check and take the second result.

MONUMENTAL MAESTRO FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

You've studied the moving compositions of Andreas Romung, a legendary maestro whose Shining Crusade anthems live on in the music for the play *Echoes of Glory*. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Performance checks to Perform with a musical instrument or sing. If you succeed, the DCs of subsequent Diplomacy checks against any creature who observed your performance are reduced by 2 for the next 24 hours.

STUNT PERFORMER STANCE FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE STANCE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

Requirements You are unarmored.

You clear your mind, regulate your breathing, and prepare your muscles in a stance inspired by Kemen Kayton, a graduate of Zimar's Monastery of the Seven Forms. Kemen controversially shunned monastic life and instead used his martial skills as a death-defying stunt performer, winning acclaim for exhibitions that saw him survive great falls and escape deadly traps. While in this stance, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Reflex saving throws and skill checks to Escape, as well as resistance 2 to all physical damage.

SYMPATHETIC PORTRAYAL

FEAT 12

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

You portrayed Grand Prince Stavian III in *Fall of the Troubled King*, a production dedicated to the life and times of the paranoid Taldan ruler whose violent resistance to new policies on succession kicked off the War for the Crown. Your acting won rave reviews for recasting Stavian's paranoia and political machinations in a sympathetic light, and you've learned to apply these subtle techniques outside of the stage to win others over. Whenever you succeed at a Deception or Performance check to portray a famous figure, you can select one creature within 60 feet who observed your performance. As long as this creature isn't hostile, its attitude toward you automatically improves by two steps (three steps if your check was a critical success). If it's hostile, it's stupefied 2 for 1 minute as it tries to reconcile its desire to harm you with its newfound sympathy for you.

BLEAK HUMORIST

FEAT 12

ARCHETYPE | EMOTION | LINGUISTIC | MENTAL

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

Frequency once per day

Trigger You are reduced to 0 Hit Points by a creature within 30 feet, but not immediately killed

You've watched dozens of morbid comedies depicting Beldam I, Taldor's prankster emperor whose wife accidentally killed him when she struck him with a marble bust after he jumped out from behind curtains to frighten her. You are reminded of this depressing yet perversely comical tale whenever you are near death, and in your final moments of consciousness you murmur a bleak joke to the creature who reduced you to 0 Hit Points. The creature must attempt a Will save against your class DC.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is distracted by giggles and can't use reactions until the beginning of your next turn.

Failure The target laughs uncontrollably. It can't use reactions until the beginning of your next turn and is slowed 1.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target also immediately falls prone.

OF LIONS AND WYRMS

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

You starred in a war drama depicting First Emperor Taldaris's battles against the Grogrisant, a massive six-eyed lion, and Verksaris the Kingeater, a mighty dragon. To prepare for your role, you spent weeks in the wild observing and occasionally scrapping with any creature resembling Taldaris's legendary foes. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects from beasts and dragons.

RUTHLESS ORATOR

FEAT 16

ARCHETYPE | AUDITORY | EMOTIONAL | LINGUISTIC | MENTAL

Prerequisites Kitharodian Actor Dedication

Frequency once per hour

You were once cast in the role of Daronlyr XII, one of Taldor's most ambitious rulers who slew his cousin to seize the crown, yet somehow still managed to convince the entire Ulfen Guard to swear loyalty to him simply through his powers of oration. You attempt a Performance check to launch into a powerful monologue, pulling lines from Daronlyr's playbook to win respect from everyone around you, even your enemies. The DC of this check is a hard difficulty DC of your level. On a success, any hostile creatures within 20 feet take a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls and spell attack rolls that target you until the beginning of your next turn, and any allies within 20 feet are quickened until the beginning of your next turn. The additional action can be only used to Strike or Stride.



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THE MAGAAMBYA

We at the Magaambya continuously strive to spread the magical knowledge, earth-based wisdom, and boundless hope that gave birth to our school millennia ago and that have sustained us ever since. We proudly own the title of the oldest magic school in Golarion and draw on the strength of the thousands who have come before us to continue the Magaambya's mission. Their lore lives on through us—we are their living legacy, more enduring than any other monument and more powerful. We, in turn, seek to build upon the understanding and power they have gifted us, that we may then pass it on to the rising generation. In this way, our knowledge becomes immortal, passed from one generation to the next, extending memory and preserving what must never be lost.

Our halcyon magic—a blend of arcane and primal traditions—is about more than training wizards and druids, although we are certainly renowned for our rigorous teaching and in-depth curriculum. Students often spend many years before they complete their studies. They begin as initiates and, once they have demonstrated arcane mastery and engaged in a period of public service (called a *Perquisite*), they become attendants and receive a wooden mask of great significance. Each mask represents a student's true

face and is infused with a fragment of their spirit's essence. As attendants, they focus on honing their magical abilities, usually in one of our branches of study. For those attendants who show self-direction and true commitment to their studies, the school gives the designation of conversant. Those conversants who dedicate themselves to even more study and arcane mastery become lore-speakers and are often invited to join the faculty of the Magaambya (all our teachers are lore-speakers).

We have a core curriculum that every student learns. Beyond that, we broadly divide our courses of study into five branches: Cascade Bearers, Emerald Boughs, Rain-Scribes, Tempest-Sun Mages, and Uzunjati. Cascade Bearers focus on the theory of magic and are often driven by a sheer love of learning and of extending the limits of known arcana. Emerald Boughs, typically our most socially oriented students, are intrigued by the use of magic in community-oriented settings and concentrate on magic that helps them to communicate, understand, assist, and guide others. Rain-Scribes are natural explorers, often drawn to the intriguing parts of Golarion—and beyond—by a need to commune with nature and to understand the mysterious. Our bravest and often most martially inclined students

tend to favor the coursework of the Tempest-Sun Mages; they focus on the fierce magic needed to attack foes and protect the innocent and the vulnerable. But perhaps our most famous branch of study is the Uzunjati, the storytellers who develop arcane skills with which to roam the world, who gather and preserve the lore and knowledge embedded in each culture's tales. I count myself among these storytellers—indeed, I am a teacher of the Uzunjati and have worked closely with our revered lore-speaker Janatimo—so I must add that we also aim to entertain and to spread joy as well as the learning embedded in a well-wrought tale.

But whichever of these a student chooses to pursue, we faculty members insist that all study of magic be rooted in its practical side, and that our students undertake the work of supporting their chosen communities and of figuring out solutions to real-world problems—whether they be relatively minor local challenges, or complex and sinister existential threats. Such is the mission bestowed upon us from our founding, the legacy of the greatest wizard to ever live. Old-Mage Jatembe and the Ten Magic Warriors founded our school around these principles, dedicated to the transmission of great knowledge and greater responsibility.

The plight of the Sarkorians has been at the forefront of Magaambyan concern ever since the first refugees sought our aid in Nantambu. Understandably, their desire to return to their homelands has been ever-present and struck a chord with those of us who know the pain of being similarly displaced, such as those who fled from Chelaxian colonizers or those who have survived the relentless storm-driven destruction in the Sodden Lands. We consoled them as we could until circumstances shifted, and they began to whisper about the possibility of returning to the Sarkoris Scar and reestablishing their nation.

There was some suspicion at first—especially among those who, in their great aching, blamed arcane power for the destructive blight that was the Worldwound and the loss of their nation. And with our gentle persuasions and demonstrations, in conversation after conversation, slowly and widely, we built up support not just for the power of the arcane and the primal, but also for its teaching. We nurtured the seeds of thought and belief that are now coming to fruition as the Academy of the Reclamation. When magic is taught, with respect and restraint, by Sarkorians and for Sarkorians, we are certain that the people will be strengthened and sustained as they build their nation anew.

If it sounds as though I have personally been involved throughout this past century of loss and hoped-for restoration, it's because I have. I, Nsentialh, am an Ekujae elf who came to study at the Magaambya more than 150 years ago. Although I had every intention of returning to my clan to serve my people after my magical training, I found I couldn't break off my study so easily. The desire to understand nature and primal magic infused my every thought. My teachers gently coached my desire for raw knowledge into a desire to apply my knowledge in the service of the greater good. And I came to feel a need to improve the conditions of all living creatures, across all species. I think the ever-present sense among my people of history infusing the present guided me to turn, after decades, from the study of primal magic and the betterment of the natural world to the collection of lore, especially among peoples whose knowledge was in danger of being lost. So I began to learn the ways of the Uzunjati, studying under the brilliant and charming Janatimo himself. And, thanks to his



NSENTIALH

HOW DOES THIS FIT WITH STRENGTH OF THOUSANDS?

This section is written without any reference to the Strength of Thousands Adventure Path because this material is designed to apply either before or after those events. If you have played in or run that Adventure Path, you'll have a treasure trove of teachers, students, and other Mwangi Expanse characters to draw on for this delegation. Customize interactions with the Magaambyans by featuring these characters and making allusions to past encounters. Build a rivalry between the players' current characters and their old ones, or dedicate some time to extending subplots (or revisiting unresolved ones). For the Tree of Stories in the exhibition, you might add the events at the culmination of your *Strength of Thousands* adventure to the description.

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FRIENDS FROM AFAR

Although we thank everyone who has stepped forward to help rebuild our homeland, the Magaambya and the Pathfinder Society deserve special mention. Both kept our stories alive and have helped gather our scattered people. Although he wasn't able to attend the entire Convocation, the Magaambya scholar Janatimo has cared for many of our people as he's wandered collecting our stories.

influence, I also began to travel to collect these stories. Going first far and wide across Garund, I spread further and further afield, learning new customs and gathering unknown tales and their various meanings. I was therefore primed to help when the nation of Sarkoris fell, from guiding refugees to our shores to prompting them to tell their tales and keep their culture and hopes alive.

This Convocation furthers our striving, both for the Academy of the Reclamation and for the Magaambya. We've given a lot to get the nascent academy off the ground. Some of it—such as their own stories—truly belong to the Sarkorians, and we were simply the cultivators of that knowledge. Even more of this knowledge will come to light, I am certain, as the people are allowed to reconnect with the land that provides them with so much strength. In other cases, we have shared with them our own knowledge, especially the knowledge of the arcane traditions that weren't present in their cultural constellations.

But we at the Magaambya didn't set out to create a second campus for ourselves in faraway Nerosyan. The Academy of the Reclamation is Sarkorian, through and through. Truly, I suspect their curriculum will end up being quite different from ours, especially as more of the gods of old Sarkoris are rediscovered. We are not so proud that we believed we could rebuild the techniques of the god callers or provide a fair presentation of occult teachings, so this Convocation is a unique opportunity for the fledgling school to find its identity.

As much as we wish to set the stage for the Academy of the Reclamation to find opportunities and establish partnerships with schools across Golarion, we also wish to find those things ourselves. For much of our long history, we Magaambyans have focused intensely on the Mwangi Expanse and nearby lands. We haven't intentionally neglected the rest of Golarion—for one thing, wide-ranging story collectors like Janatimo and myself have been known in almost every land. We just have so much to do in our own backyard! But the time has come for us to change that emphasis and reach farther across the world. We seek to extend our knowledge, expand our influence, spread our philosophy, and offer aid.

These endeavors mean that we have to take a critical look at how we are perceived and what difficulties other cultures might have in encountering us. For it is one thing to be a single, friendly, perhaps even charismatic stranger collecting stories among a people and quite another to bring a whole host of students, teachers, and other academics so very far from home. How do we bridge so many cultural divides? Will kholos and anadis face suspicion wherever they go? Will conrasus face derision? What if leshies aren't comfortable coming indoors or stepping close to a fire pit when invited? On the other hand, will our students respect fey and ghouls in other delegations? Will they be comfortable with the high levels of servitude imposed by other institutions on their students? Will the solemn performances of others make them laugh out loud? And will they keep to the rules if they feel that justice is not being served? A good deal of my time has already been spent getting our students out of the trouble that arises from a desire to do what's right. I certainly expected to spend more time stopping them from partying too much, but that seems to be the least of our concerns.

Of all our traditions, the one that I fear will need the most explaining are our masks. This is a good example of something that is so well known throughout the Mwangi that we don't even think about it—it's almost our calling card. Not that masks are unheard of elsewhere; indeed, there are regions of the Mwangi where they're quite common, especially at ceremonies of various kinds, if not for everyday wear. So back home, there's almost never a reason that our students feel the need to explain these masks, even off campus or far from Nantambu.

Yet I know from experience that many cultures across Avistan eschew masks, even for ceremonial purposes. In fact, they go further, equating masks with a desire to deceive or overpower. So many times, I have had to negotiate the suspicion or confusion. Some people couldn't look at my mask, while others couldn't look away. I have made a practice of removing it when among such people, as it became a barrier to me learning their stories. But it feels false, like I am removing a key part of my identity, like I am betraying the magical power that courses through me and gives purpose to every fiber in my being. I certainly can't ask others of my delegation to remove their masks—the thought itself is almost painful. Nor do I wish to make them self-conscious, though we can't not talk about it.

Knowing that the other Convocation attendees might feel awkward about asking—or might make us feel awkward with their questions—we especially wanted to devote part of our exhibition to educating others about the use of masks throughout the Mwangi Expanse. We've incorporated several examples of masks into the exhibit, and when you approach them, you can learn about these traditions, about their significance in our history and their magical powers, and about the five branches of study at the Magaambya. We have also included information on the different branches of our school and the different types of magic we choose to specialize in. Those who helped me put together the exhibition have a good sense of what they might say—and what they shouldn't feel required to explain. I hope it helps!

RIVALRIES

I wish I could say that I'm above personal rivalries—I've traveled so far and wide, learned so much about cultures that in no way resemble mine, and challenged so many of my preconceptions that I really ought to see the beauty, however misshapen by misery or misinformation, in another's soul. But I've not achieved that level, apparently, for the anger I feel toward Messida Vost is nearly overwhelming. Yes, I know that she's the Dean of Summoning at the Academiae in Korvosa and therefore one of the Convocation's guests. Even just quietly walking around with that thing is quite enough, but how can she think the solution to lingering demons is releasing even worse fiends to hunt them? This is certainly not what I meant when I agreed the Academy of the Reclamation should call on other schools that specialize in summoning, but I must remind myself others can make their own choices. Still, I'm concerned those choices might end up with a fight with Msuna Elewe or our other students that aren't interested in picking apart the exact differences between a demon, an imp, and a qlipthoth.

I'm told that the mages of the University of Lepidstadt in Ustalav and of Synostosis in Geb have a mutual dislike stemming from their opposed views of the uses of magic to reanimate the dead. I can't help but feel that all such uses are an intentional corruption and misuse of the life-force that is the true basis of magic. My wide travels and intentional immersion in so many different cultures fail me in this instance, and I don't know how civil I can be to members of these schools. Though it is what we always encourage our students to do, I find myself struggling to share our knowledge or learn their ways.

There's also the question of whether the representatives from New Thassilon will ever actually show up. Janatimo was quite looking forward to hearing their tales of Sorshen when I got back, but it seems they can't be bothered to arrive on time or even tell the coordinators if they're still coming. Perhaps it's best that we're spared presentations on sin magic, but disappointing my mentor still stings.

My apologies, it seems I had more grievances than I'd realized. Let's speak of the Tree of Stories.



DISTANT HISTORY

Our invitation was communicated directly with our headmaster through an ancient pact. Common enough, certainly, but the ritual to allow others to communicate along your pact is quite interesting. Sadly, the ritual's author is not part of the Magaambya's delegation. It seems this Shifting Frog disappeared around seven thousand years ago and hasn't responded to any of the conversations along the pact.



THE SAME STORY

It's a shame that the Magaambyans traveled across the Inner Sea but still slander our research with the same accusations as our neighbors in Ustalav. You don't have to grow up in Ustalav to determine that the spirit can linger after death and the body is merely a shell. My colleagues studying corpses is no more an affront against nature than turning a fallen tree into a rocking chair.

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TREE OF STORIES

When we first sketched out our ideas for an exhibition, we assumed that we'd be outside, a reflection of our own traditions of performance and experience as the basis for sharing knowledge. This misunderstanding explains, in part, the separated nature of the Magaambyan exhibition. Inside the exhibition hall, we have endeavored to showcase the history of our school, the legacy of Old-Mage Jatembe, and the richness and variety that is our home in the Mwangi Expanse. Just past the southern entrance—symbolizing the direction that the Magaambya lies—is the Tree of Stories.

To present (and make present) the history and significance of the Magaambya, we have chosen to create an immersive illusion of the Elephant Museum. When you approach the exhibit, you find yourself among the artifacts and displays that make up the museum as it stands on campus. It's not a complete copy, of course; we couldn't begin to represent all the carvings, sculptures, magical items, and other objects of significance. And we wanted to make some of the items more informative so that both the story of the academy and our philosophy of halcyon magic comes across. When you study the objects related to Old-Mage Jatembe and each of the Ten Magic Warriors, you

hear a tale of their exploits or a part of their teachings. Naturally, Jatembe's actions in saving the world from the King of Biting Ants receives special attention. Visitors learn about the founding of our academy, the contributions of Jatembe to magic and to the world, the benefits of uniting arcane and primal traditions, and the need for practical experience to complement rote learning. Above all, we hope to emphasize the importance not only of acquiring knowledge but also of using that knowledge to serve others selflessly and improve life throughout Golarion.

To bring home the idea of our school's different branches and of the use of respectful inquiry, we've created magical twigs as gifts for visitors who thoroughly explore the exhibit.

TWIG OF KNOWLEDGE AND MEMORY

ITEM 1

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL MENTAL PLANT

Price 4 gp

Usage held in 1 hand, hung on a cord, or attached to clothing; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

This tiny magic item looks like a twig from the rare mt'ile tree with its swirls of reddish-gold veins through dark brown wood. Each one is unique and fits easily in the palm of a

Medium-sized creature's hand. When pressed to the temple or lips of a sentient creature, that creature can immediately attempt a check to Recall Knowledge about any subject using a corresponding skill (such as Society to Recall Knowledge about a humanoid); they gain a +1 status bonus on this check. This consumable is not immediately consumed on its first use, but can be used three times before it loses its power and becomes a mundane, if still beautiful, twig.

As proud as I am of this powerful showcase of our history and magical knowledge, I have even more pride in our Tree of Stories, a permanent enchantment that stands as a useful gift to the Academy of the Reclamation for generations to come. The young kapok tree does look a little out of place here in the far north, but I think that calls attention to its magical nature, as does the fact that it won't ever shed its leaves. And honestly, it's such a refreshing sight for me, such a palpable reminder of home. We've enchanted its flowers so that they smell more appealing to humanoids and enrich the air around the tree to give a sense of tranquility. We hope visitors are encouraged to relax under its canopy.

We've lined the smooth gray bark of the trunk and the branches with magical inscriptions that appear only when touched. Different days and seasons bring out different tales appropriate for the time of year. These tales come from all over the world. We took care to include some from Arcadia and Tian Xia along with the most important from among our own peoples whose stories are not widely known. But ahead of all others, we have foregrounded the stories of Sarkorians. We of the Uzunjati, in particular, have worked hard to collect these stories among the Sarkorian diaspora, and we are jubilant about the ability to bring these stories home. Some of the shorter ones are for reading, but most of them speak directly to your mind if you relax beneath the tree.

The only permanent inscription is this: "Listen, for this is a story that means something. I sing the songs of those who came before. They taught us much that we remember today, and even more that we have forgotten. Their strength and their legacies live on in me. Now they shall live on in you as well." I confess I was the one that insisted on this inscription, for these words are among my favorite that revered lore-speaker Janatimo has shared with us.

An even greater gift lies among the thick leaves in what appear to be the long, leathery, brown fruits of the tree. Each one has a small drawing magically etched on it and, when picked, imparts the word for that image in Hallit, the traditional language of Sarkoris. The drawings are simple and perhaps a little abstract as the tree tries to represent concepts like courage. If you do take a pod, we ask you share a tale or memory with the tree, whether that's about the Convocation, Sarkoris, your homeland, or the image on the pod. These stories nourish the tree, and its stewards here at the academy can see the stories and share the most inspiring.

SEED POD OF ROOTED WISDOM

ITEM 2

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL MENTAL PLANT

Price 7 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

This tiny magic item looks like a ripe brown fruit from a kapok tree. Inside the fruit are three seeds. Each magical seed releases an effect when swallowed. The first grants you a +1 status bonus on Will saves against fear effects for 10 minutes. The second makes your next 10 words comprehensible to any creature that understands any language. The third lets you recall precisely how to get from where you are to any other place you've stayed for more than an hour within the past day. Once the seeds are removed, the fruit is edible, if chewed slowly, and quite tasty, being much sweeter than the non-magical version.



HIDDEN EYES

A lot is said about the Emerald Boughs being spies, not least by Lord Stokes, but the Uzunjati seem a far better fit to me. Certainly plenty of Kith kids end up being traveling soloists and a wandering storyteller sounds even better than that. Still, I'm here to put on a play, not provide espionage advice.



CALM IN THE STORM

The Tree of Stories must be one of the highlights of the Convocation, murmuring its endless stream of stories to anyone who sits beneath its branches. Although the Magaambyans insist there's no deeper meaning to its placement, it's made even better by being a place of calm that you can only reach by pushing through the crush of the exhibit hall.

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MSUNA ELEWE

Female human demon hunter

While it's hard to say who is the most eager to accompany me to the Convocation, Msuna Elewe is a top contender. Arriving at the Magaambya only ten years ago, she has had a meteoric rise within the Tempest-Sun Mages and is now popular among all the other students who value battle magic or swordplay. On top of that, her boldness, outgoing personality, and generally optimistic air attracts almost everyone.

While the Tempest-Sun Mages are dedicated to the protection of the city of Nantambu, the Magaambya has turned its eye toward sharing their battle techniques with distant allies in recent years. This suits Msuna well, as she is not one to sit patiently and wait! She's always out on some excursion into the jungle or sharing an evening of storytelling. She's also started a few initiatives to get real-world defense practice for the students, though this involves risks to their safety that have many of the

faculty alarmed. Here, she's volunteered to judge contests sponsored by the Convocation—and it'll be hard to keep her from participating in the demon hunt itself.

Her interest in attending the Convocation is more than academic, certainly. Her great-grandparents fled this country as the Worldwound swallowed their lands and devastated their culture. I led them to Nantambu those years ago, welcomed there along with other Sarkorian exiles. I understand that the transition from their life in the cold wilds to the bustling city was rough for the whole family, several of whom disappeared in the jungle or left for the high seas. And while some of her family still hunts in the jungle, others have become educators, merchants, and Chime-Ringers (Nantambu's city guards). She even has cousins that fought for Vidrian's independence.

But Msuna grew up in Nantambu, so her adjustment is the reverse, trading the sweltering city for the vast expanses of a demon-ravaged ancestral land. And that is what she is perhaps the keenest to do. Other than her powerful frame and glossy black hair, her inheritance is a hatred of demons so intense that, once sparked, it fills her eyes and pulses from every pore. Certainly, demon-hunting is on her Convocation agenda.

Sarkoris has welcomed us with open arms, yet I worry Msuna measures herself too much against the nation's pain. Though her family bears a connection to this land, it is distant enough that others struggle to see it in her. How then is she to prove her devotion, but through action? The lingering demons of Sarkoris are a problem all our professors combined could not wipe away, let alone one student. Yet she's unbearably frustrated by the early successes of the small Acadamae delegation. I don't think she's that brash, but she may not make it to everything she signed up to judge. More than that, I ask anyone heading into the Scar to keep a keen eye.

DEMON-HUNTING BANDS

ITEM 3

RARE CONSUMABLE DIVINE HOLY TALISMAN

Price 10 gp

Usage affixed to armor; Bulk –

Activate ♦ (concentrate) Trigger You Stride.

These strips of supple leather, typically about 2 inches wide and 3 feet long, feature sigils, runes, and divine marks that reflect family lineage and beliefs in the old gods of Sarkoris. When activated, the band's holy patterns surround you as you move, preventing your movement from triggering reactions from demons. The holy patterns scour nearby demons; any demons you pass adjacent to during the triggering movement take damage equal to their weakness to holy effects. You can activate the bands when you Burrow, Climb, Fly, or Swim (instead of Stride) if you have the corresponding movement type.



AZIMBYE BAADURLO

Nonbinary Taralu dwarf professor of folklore

As many fans as Msuna Elewe has, Azimbye Baadurlo, a prominent member of Magaambya's faculty for many years, isn't among them. I'd like to think it's a simple clash of personalities, for the calm, thoughtful demeanor of Azimbye couldn't be further from Msuna's brash liveliness. What Azimbye sees as cautious, Msuna considers cowardly, and when Azimbye goes about making plans carefully, Msuna gets impatient and frustrated. She usually yields to Azimbye's wisdom out of respect for her elder, but it's clearly a struggle for her.

Meanwhile, I suspect that, for all their experience, Azimbye is jealous of Msuna. The two aren't direct rivals in any sense—Azimbye is among the highest-ranking Uzunjati whereas Msuna primarily studies among other Tempest-Sun Mages. Furthermore, Azimbye's fame outside of the Magaambya is second only to Janatimo's, for Azimbye has published books in Absalom and often gives lectures at far-away academies. But at the Magaambya, they have a reputation for being too cerebral and even pedantic. And they aren't interested in being involved much in the life of the campus outside of the classroom.

My hope is that the Convocation helps Azimbye both resolve their issues with Msuna Elewe and create some true connections to delegations from other schools. Azimbye has such a keen interest in the stories and cultures of Golarion, and they have traveled and experienced so much of them, that forming those connections would seem to be a natural outcome. With that robust knowledge, they could certainly coach us all into how to interact with those whose cultures, languages, and even selves are an utter mystery to us. Their true investment in the tales and storytelling methods of Sarkoris—which is their primary motivation for participating in the Convocation—makes them a welcome addition to so many discussions and excursions.

Talk among the teachers is that Azimbye has an old flame among another delegation, although voices are split on whether it's the Unbreaking Waves delegation or the Arcanamirium delegation from Absalom. Azimbye's former relationships are just one part of a mysterious past, one that they don't share lightly, if at all. Their eyes shine brightly when deep into a tale of star-crossed love or desperate survival. Try to steer the conversation toward their past, and the fire dies as Azimbye pulls back, shying away from the attention and changing the subject. I've heard rumors of all kinds, from running weapons for the Firebrands to having been one of the dauntless Bright Lions, but I have yet to see Azimbye allow anyone at the Magaambya to truly get to know them.

Hopefully during this Convocation, they give someone a chance, even if it's someone from half a world away.

UZUNJATI STORYTELLING AMULET

ITEM 5

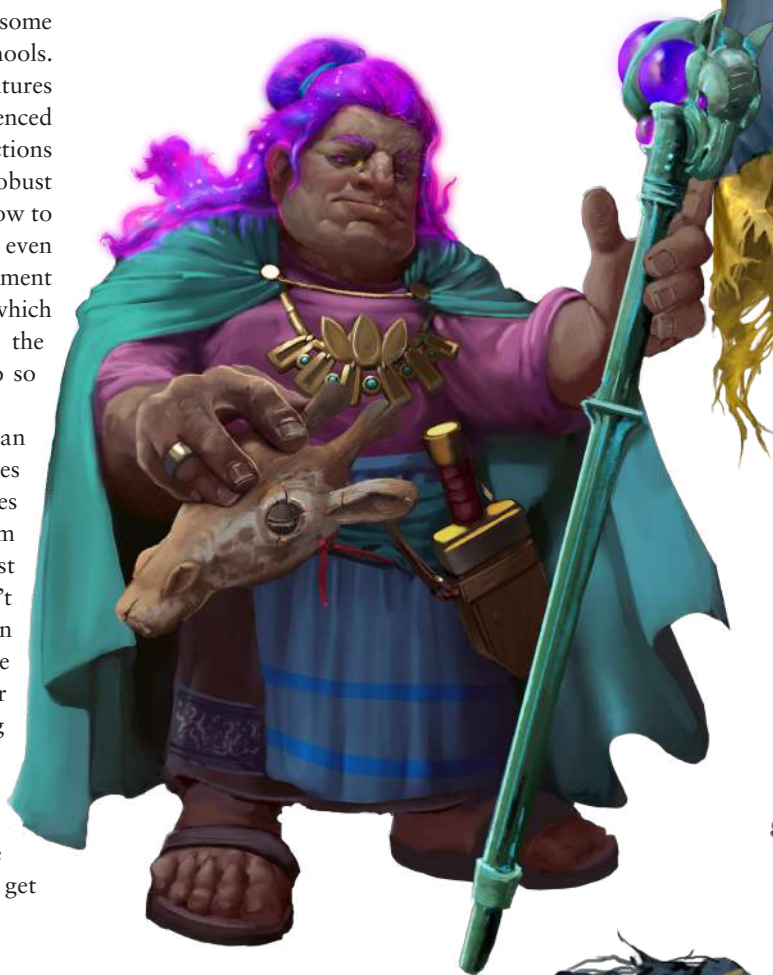
RARE INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 145 gp

Usage worn; Bulk —

This round, flat amulet can be made of metal, clay, or leather and is usually highly personalized with runes, sigils, lines of poetry, or a depiction of a storyteller at work. In Azimbye's case, their gold-rimmed metal amulet boasts fine dwarven workmanship, and bears lines from one of the oldest epic poems of the legendary folk hero Kgalaserke on one side and a stylized portrait of a storytelling event in Ranage's Circle on the other. While wearing the amulet, you gain a +1 item bonus to Performance checks.

Activate—Enamoring Story ◆ (concentrate) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** The perfect anecdote or story to impress your interlocutor comes floating to your memory. You attempt to Make an Impression or Request, using a Performance check instead of a Diplomacy check.



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MAGAAMBYAN WIZARDS

As the oldest school of magic in Golarion, the Magaambya has had centuries to grow and evolve, ever widening its understanding and extending its reach. As a result, the school presents a wide array of courses of study encompassing much of the wisdom of both the arcane and the primal traditions of magic.

Magic is like a giant tree that has lived for centuries, its branches spread up and out in an enormous canopy, yet all connected back to the same base and the same roots. Just as such a tree exhibits endless variation—from the thick, straight rod-like branches near the base to the filigree tendrils at the top—so does the Magaambya’s curriculum allow for variation and customization, yet all of it is rooted in the same base of magical wisdom.

Magaambyan students refer to this core curriculum of spells as “the trunk” to which they add their specific “branch” of study. While almost all students at the Magaambya study at least one of these five branches, they can study other arcane schools as well. This option tends to appeal to those students who come from outside the Mwangi Expanse to study at the Magaambya as well as to those who stay at the school after completing their usual coursework. Of the established arcane schools in other traditions, the School of Civic Wizardry is the most commonly studied at the Magaambya, followed by the School of Battle Magic and the School of the Boundary.

SCHOOL OF ROOTED WISDOM (UNCOMMON)

You’ve studied at the Magaambya or under one of its traveling professors, learning the ancient magic of Golarion’s oldest academy. Your curriculum is self-directed, allowing you to choose a branch of study and personalize your learning. If you choose the School of Rooted Wisdom, you gain the below curriculum and school spells. This is your primary trunk of study, to which you add one of the following five secondary branches, granting you additional curriculum spells.

Curriculum cantrips: *detect magic*; 1st: *alarm*; 2nd: *dispel magic*; 3rd: *safe passage*; 4th: *mountain resilience*; 5th: *control water*; 6th: *truesight*; 7th: *energy aegis*; 8th: *quandary*; 9th: –

School Spells initial: *halcyon mists*; advanced: *call the ten*

HALCYON MISTS ◆◆

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MANIPULATE WATER

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 willing living creature

In a moment of dire need, you call upon ancestral power to strengthen and sustain. A soothing mist gathers around the target, granting 1d8 temporary Hit Points and ending one source of persistent acid, bleed, fire, poison, or void damage affecting it. If the creature has persistent damage from more than one of these sources, you choose the one that ends. The mists linger around the target, making them concealed until the beginning of their next turn, though this obvious concealment can’t be used to Hide.

Heightened (+1) The temporary Hit Points increase by 1d8.

CALL THE TEN ◆◆◆

FOCUS 4

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MANIPULATE

Range 30 feet; **Target** up to 10 creatures, including yourself

The Ten Magic Warriors were the first of the Magaambya’s students, and they come to your aid even now. An indistinct spirit appears near each target, each wearing a different mask of the Ten Magic Warriors. The spirits then either strike their designated targets with magical energy, dealing each one 4d6 spirit damage with a basic Fortitude save, or shield them, granting their target resistance 3 to physical and spirit damage until the beginning of your next turn. You designate which targets are attacked and which are shielded.

Heightened (+2) The amount of damage increases by 1d6 and the amount of resistance increases by 2.

CASCADE BEARERS

Cascade Bearers spend considerable time studying the qualities of magic itself as they seek to advance magical theory. They prize imagination and often bring a sense of playful curiosity to what would otherwise be intense inquiries at the borders of known magic. Of all the branches, these students are most likely to become teachers and to continue their research after graduation. In fact, some Cascade Bearers never leave the Magaambya, whether or not they attain an official teaching or research post. Their coursework draws broadly across the uses of magic, including attacking, protecting, manipulating objects, and seeing through matter.

Additional Curriculum cantrips: *telekinetic projectile*; 1st: *force barrage*, *mystic armor*; 2nd: *telekinetic maneuver*; 3rd: *levitate*; 4th: *flicker*; 5th: *telekinetic haul*; 6th: *cursed metamorphosis*; 7th: *contingency*, *project image*; 8th: *pinpoint*^U; 9th: *detonate magic*^U

EMERALD BOUGHS

Emerald Boughs value the societies and natural communities of the present day, seeking to understand the world as it is and how magic operates therein. Emphasizing camaraderie and sociality, these students tend to be the ones that most eagerly embrace the Magaambya’s “practical magic” curriculum where they leave campus and work within communities. While some of these students have been accused of spying for the school, espionage is not an official part of their curriculum. Magic that can serve or sway others—as well as magic that reveals knowledge or allows access to it—is, instead, at the heart of this curriculum.

Additional Curriculum cantrips: *summon instrument*; 1st: *charm*, *disguise magic*; 2nd: *revealing light*; 3rd: *hypnotize*; 4th: *confusion*; 5th: *scouting eye*; 6th: *scrying*^U; 7th: *true target*; 8th: *disappearance*; 9th: *foresight*

RAIN-SCRIBES

Rain-Scribes, who seek to explore the world and especially its unknown corners, draw the closest of all the branches to primal magic in their study of the arcane. They also embrace the “practical magic” schooling that takes them off of campus, often into

the wilds of the Mwangi Expanse but sometimes beyond to other continents on Golarion or even onto distant planes. Their course of magical study includes connecting with and understanding nature, working with the elements, summoning animals, and providing for their own survival.

Additional Curriculum cantrips: *light*; 1st: *mending*, *summon animal*; 2nd: *shape wood*; 3rd: *cozy cabin*; 4th: *liminal doorway*^U, *unfettered movement*; 5th: *magic passage*^U, *summon dragon*; 6th: *chain lightning*; 7th: *planar palace*^U; 8th: *earthquake*; 9th: *metamorphosis*

TEMPEST-SUN MAGES

Tempest-Sun Mages prize physical courage as well as intellectual bravery. They feel called to defend against threats of all kinds, from tyranny and invasion to intellectual subversion and bullying. Generally having a keen sense of justice, they stand up for the downtrodden and step up whenever danger presents itself. Their classes often feature heated debates that occasionally spill over into rivalries and duels outside of class. Seeing themselves as the direct heirs to the power that the Ten Magic Warriors used to transform the world, Tempest-Sun Mages tend to see magic as a fundamental power in the service of a larger purpose to extend justice and create a better world, focusing on magic that invokes the power of the sun and strengthens their own resolve.

Additional Curriculum cantrips: *ignition*; 1st: *breathe fire*, *fleet step*; 2nd: *blazing bolt*; 3rd: *fireball*; 4th: *fly*; 5th: *elemental form*; 6th: *wall of force*; 7th: *fiery body*; 8th: *monstrosity form*; 9th: *implosion*

UZUNJATI

Uzunjati are perhaps the most iconic Magaambyans, and certainly the best known beyond the Mwangi Expanse, because they are the storytellers who roam across Golarion gathering knowledge embedded in oral traditions and folklore. While they often travel as widely as Rain-Scribes, their focus is substantially different, for their exploration is always in service to collecting and preserving the spoken knowledge of community and culture. In addition to the magic of their own stories, they emphasize magic that protects and that affects others' minds.

Additional Curriculum cantrips: *daze*; 1st: *mindlink*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd: *Kgalaserke's axes* (page 71); 3rd: *ibex's harvest* (page 70), 4th: *telepathy*; 5th: *mind probe*^U, *truespeech*^U; 6th: *mislead*; 7th: *retrocognition*; 8th: *hidden mind*^U; 9th: *phantasmagoria*

ATTENDANTS' MASKS

When a student at the Magaambya advances to the rank of attendant, they craft a mask during their First Masking ceremony. Beginning with a blank wooden mask, decorations and magic combine to shape the mask

into something that represents each student's experiences and aspiration.

Attendants generally keep the same mask throughout their career, whether they update the enchantment constantly or keep it for its symbolic value. As a reflection of an attendant's spiritual self, a few masks have historically become relics (*GM Core* 308).

BRANCH ATTENDANT'S MASK

ITEM 2

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 25 gp

Usage worn; Bulk –

Although not all attendants' masks are enchanted, many apply a first enchantment to celebrate their acceptance into a branch of the academy. While you wear the mask or have it as your bonded item, add the associated cantrip to your prepared cantrips. This has no effect if you do not prepare cantrips from the arcane or primal lists.

- **Cascade Bearers** *read aura*
- **Emerald Boughs** *root reading* (*Rage of Elements* 197)
- **Rain-Scribes** *deep breath* (*Rage of Elements* 70)
- **Tempest-Sun Mages** *electric arc*
- **Uzunjati** *prestidigitation*



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STORYTELLING SPELLS

Drawing on our generations-old traditions of storytelling, we Magaambyans have developed magic that skillfully weaves arcane power from narrative as the caster tells a tale. While the skills of a single expert storyteller can enthrall listeners for hours, these spells condense the meaning and morals of their tales into a few choice words brimming with magic. Storytelling mages draw their targets into the tale, which can impart similar experiences to the heroes and villains. Though storytelling can be done through dance, song, or sign language, this magic does require speech and that the targets understand the storyteller. Some teachers are working on ways around this restriction, as the themes of most stories are universal.

The Magaambya has records of a multitude of tales from the Mwangi Expanse, carefully studied and even broken up into different lessons to impart on listeners. But one story they've brought is of special note: a tale of old Sarkoris that was entrusted to the Magaambya by the last member of the family who'd passed it down. In accordance with the family's wishes, the story is now being returned to Sarkoris.



DOMORA'S DEFENSE

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE WATER

Traditions arcane, divine, primal

Range 120 feet; **Targets** up to 3 creatures

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

Domora Hume is considered by most to be the first god caller, conjuring a god from the Plane of Water named Dyad to protect his town from Mammoth Lord raiders. A lost story of this defense claims that Dyad appeared to be in three places at once, blocking the raiders' spears, swords, and torches. The intended lesson is that Dyad will overcome any barrier to protect the people of Sarkoris. This spell gives that intention physical form, allowing the caster to protect their people.

When you Cast this Spell, a watery replica of the eidolon Dyad appears in front of each of the targets, granting them a +1 circumstance bonus to AC and fire resistance 5. While the replica persists, a target can use the Shield Block reaction with the replica. The replica has Hardness 15 (or Hardness 20 against fire damage). They can use this reaction to reduce damage from any spell or magical effect, even if it doesn't deal physical damage. After a target uses Shield Block, the replica dissipates. The spell ends when you no longer Sustain it or if all three replicas have dissipated, whichever happens first.

THE FOUR HUNTERS

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE

Traditions occult, primal

Range varies; **Targets** 1 or more creatures

This is a story of four evenly matched hunters who sought to capture a falling star. Each hunter was known by the region they came from, and this spell focuses on one of their attributes. When you cast this spell, you must choose East, North, South, or West.

- **East** was steady and optimistic. The target gains 5 temporary Hit Points and a +1 status bonus to Athletics for 1 round.
 - **North** was careful and cautious. The target can Step as a free action and gains a +1 status bonus to Survival for 1 round.
 - **South** was clever and cunning. The target becomes concealed and gains a +1 status bonus to Stealth for 1 round.
 - **West** was bold and competitive. The target gains a +10-foot status bonus to their land Speed and a +1 status bonus to Acrobatics for 1 round.
- ❖ You quickly remind yourself of the story, granting only yourself the benefit.
- ❖❖ You tell a trusted ally within 30 feet this story, granting them the benefit.
- ❖❖❖ You impart this tale on all of your allies within 30 feet, granting them the benefit.

IBEX'S HARVEST

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, primal

Range varies; **Targets** 1 or more creatures

In the tale “Ibex’s Harvest,” Ibex turns from the path of a warrior to the path of a farmer, building up their community by working hard and sharing a bountiful harvest not just with their humanoid neighbors but also with their animal neighbors. Ibex initially focuses on distributing equally among the animals but learns that true equality requires knowing what each being needs. The number of actions you spend when Casting this Spell and telling the story determine its targets and effects.

- ❖ You give a brief description of Ibex’s first bounty. One willing target you can touch gains 10 temporary Hit Points that last 1 minute.
- ❖❖ You tell the tale of how Ibex shared their harvest equally between Hippo and Ant. Two willing targets within 20 feet each gain 10 temporary Hit Points that last 1 minute.
- ❖❖❖ You impart Ibex’s lesson about how to prevent others from taking advantage of generosity. All creatures within a 10-foot emanation are affected by the tale. Choose one creature in the emanation to take 2d8 mental damage (basic Will save), while each other creature in the emanation gains 5 temporary Hit Points that last 1 minute.

Heightened (+1) The temporary Hit Points increase by 3 and the mental damage for the 3-action version increases by 1d8.

KGALASERKE’S AXES ❖ TO ❖❖❖ SPELL 2

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, occult

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Duration 1 minute

The folklore and tales surrounding the legendary hero Kgalaserke are so widespread and well known that a hundred lifetimes would not be enough to have accomplished everything she is reputed to have done. Nevertheless, the stories all contain a unifying theme of her martial prowess despite the odds being stacked against her.

- ❖ You briefly describe Kgalaserke’s signature axes and how she came to receive them. The target gains a +1 status bonus to attack rolls for the spell’s duration.
- ❖❖ You revel in a tale of Kgalaserke striking down a foe after a struggle. For the spell’s duration, when the target is damaged by a creature’s attack, the target gains a +2 circumstance bonus to damage against that target for 1 round.

THE PARROT’S WHISPER ❖❖❖ SPELL 2

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions divine, occult

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense Will

You call forth an echo of the gossiping parrot from the tale of the Witch and the Weaver to whisper the secrets of a creature you can see within range. The garrulous parrot is known to chatter on for some time while deciphering the information you seek. The target must attempt a Will saving throw.

Critical Success The parrot chatters about various random topics for 1 round and reveals no relevant information.

Success The parrot tells you the target’s highest weakness at the start of your next turn. In the meantime, the parrot chatters about various random topics.

Failure The parrot tells you the target’s highest weakness immediately, but sticks around for 1 round to chatter.

Critical Failure The parrot tells you the target’s highest weakness immediately, and you can ask the parrot one question. You might need to collaborate with the GM to narrow down the question. At the start of your next turn, the parrot answers the question truthfully.

THE QUEEN’S RAINBOW ❖❖❖ SPELL 2

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, occult, primal

Area 60-foot line

Defense Fortitude; **Duration** 1 minute

You tell the story of the Queen of Bees and her retinue trying to pass through a rainbow on their way to visit the King of Spiders. You conjure forth a large, transparent rainbow. Creatures who enter or begin their turn in the rainbow’s space must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or become dazzled for 1 round (or blinded for 1 round on a critical failure).

RANAGE’S CIRCLE ❖❖❖ SPELL 4

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE EARTH LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE

PLANT WOOD

Traditions arcane, primal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense Fortitude; **Duration** varies

Many stories tell of a clearing deep in the Mwangi jungle, surrounded by ancient cypress trees. At the center stands an ancient baobab tree growing around a large sphere of black basalt. Legends say that two spirit brothers, Ranage and Golokango, dwelled there long ago until Golokango’s evil ways forced the virtuous Ranage to encase his brother in stone. Ranage then transformed himself into a tree to surround and protect the rock for all time. By telling this tale, you condemn an enemy to a stony fate similar to Golokango’s and summon plants to surround them.

When you Cast this Spell, every square adjacent to the target becomes difficult terrain from the sudden eruption of plant life for 1 minute. The target also attempts a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is clumsy 1 as their feet are bound within stone. This condition lasts until they move from their current position.

Failure The target is clumsy 2 and immobilized as their legs are encased in rock. The clumsy condition lasts until they move from their current position, and they can Escape from being immobilized with a check against your spell DC.

Critical Failure The target is clumsy 2 and restrained as nearly their entire body is covered in basalt. The clumsy condition lasts until they move from their current position, and they can Escape from being restrained with a successful check against your spell DC.

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MONASTERY OF THE UNBREAKING WAVES

Hello there! Please step closer. You're welcome here; this is a visitor's booth, after all. If you have questions about the Monastery of Unbreaking Waves, this is the place to ask! You must have seen our second-year students' very, ahem, enthusiastic demonstrations of our monastery's elemental arts. Impressive, no? And tireless, to boot—our students have been performing weapon dances in the arena for nearly an hour! I'm glad I'm not on arena duty today. It's not just that I'm too old for such high-energy displays, you know. I just very much prefer chatting with fellow researchers and teachers, prospective students, or curious members of the public.

When the monastery's teachings reached me, I suppose I had already missed the best age to begin my training. Our institution is something of a contradiction, a tradition with thousands of years of history but so much of it only recently recovered. A tsunami, created by the wayward student of another House of Perfection, wiped away the old monastery. Its secrets were hidden among the waves until the undines of Wavebreak Haven rediscovered them. It took almost 20 years before those of us on the surface learned of it.

The rest of us, including instructors like me, learned from those undine teachers like Grandmaster Remendi. However, there is another sort of instruction occurring at

the House of Unbreaking Waves, as faydhaans test new students and fill in gaps in our fragmented understanding of the old teachings.

Each House of Perfection receives some guidance from the genies who walk the same path. The Monastery of Unblinking Flames learns strength and cunning from ifrits, while we learn flexibility and tenacity from faydhaans—the wisest and most powerful of genies. I would say that, of course, but it's also the truth.

Perhaps it would help to hear a story of their wisdom from my infancy. Years before our monastery's resurgence, I was a child in Niswan's Harbor District, born to poor fishers who performed the taxing, yet necessary, work of gutting, cleaning, and selling their catch. When the purity-obsessed Curse Shepherds abducted me because I bore a rakshasa's influence, they ignored my family's cries and locked me away on Gho Vella.

In my cell, the distant beauty of Jalmeray became like rotten flowers to my eyes, a decaying garland wrapped in gilt and safflower as I waited years for a rescue that would not come. The seeds of my rakshasa lineage might have borne fruit, watered by resentment and cosmic irony. Instead, there came a single drop of water from a fig leaf, carrying the wisdom of faydhaans and the teachings of the Master of Masters.

The faydhaan sage Uppagut had offended the Maurya-Rahm, the nation's ruling council, with what they considered his misappropriation of national resources: using his wishes to succor Jalmeray's downtrodden instead of adding to the councilors' coffers. When the Curse Shepherds came for him, Uppagut did not resist or protest he was not cursed, instead thanking them for allowing him to fulfill his karma. In that place, he turned many of us away onto new paths. He set us to the duty of continuing that legacy, of helping others attain release from demons and defilement.

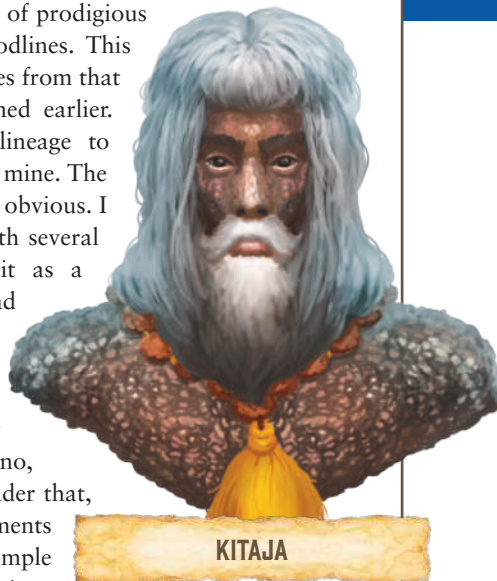
Those of us who escaped from Gho Vella found different paths. When Uppagut visited the resurgent monastery, I stayed to teach and to learn. Even now, he returns thrice a year to prepare each batch of new applicants, his tests helping show them the path to perfection.

Since those students won't be speaking so soon—I think they have another few minutes to go—that leaves me the duty of genteel conversation with esteemed visitors. I am Kitaja, an instructor for the Monastery of Unbreaking Waves, one of Jalmeray's four Houses of Perfection. I have no grand title or clan name, as I am possessed neither of prodigious merits nor born from prestigious bloodlines. This chitinous sheen to my skin you see comes from that touch of rakshasa influence I mentioned earlier. Although some families trace their lineage to rakshasas, it would be quite a shock to mine. The Curse Shepherds' views are presumably obvious. I see myself as a janavata. It's a term with several meanings, but you can understand it as a rakshasa who's abandoned their duty and been reincarnated in mortal form.

You might be wondering why I am so frank with you about my ontology? Is this some kind of subtle rakshasa plot to lie with the truth? If I told you yes or no, would you believe me? And if you wonder that, and are familiar with the magical attainments attributed to rakshasas, is it not a simple matter for me to cloak my form in illusions more pleasing to your eye?

I suppose, on the more practical level, if you were to later discover my quirk of heritage, it might prejudice you against everything I've said and done, and undo whatever amity we might have enjoyed through our conversation. And it would of course also portray the monastery in a bad light. The so-called unholy—especially in this Convocation, on this very land!—have an understandably, and justifiably, negative reputation. Any attempt at discretion about my heritage would likely be seen as deliberate deception, which would confirm the worst stereotypes and fears of many and undermine my academy's attempts at building new bridges.

On a more philosophical level, the Unbreaking Waves teaches persistence, resurgence, looking beyond the surface to understand the depths. If I am indeed a "fallen" rakshasa, would that not mean that I once eschewed my part in the grand cosmic play of good and evil? Did I reject the concept of corruption, and in doing so, did I perhaps ascend? Can the austerities allow me to transcend my incarnation, so I may reach a deeper, greater state of spiritual liberation? Through contemplation of this possible contradictory nature, I perceive and accept more clearly the transience of my non-essence. My human peers are not as blessed with my loneliness, my pains, my inconsistencies; so comfortable with families, nations, reputations, castes, they have many more fetters to hold on to. In a way, the grandmaster hopes my presence will demonstrate how our precepts can uplift even one bound to rakshasas' karma.



MATTERS OF APPEARANCE

Although there anyone who appears even slightly demonic will draw some fearful gazes in the city, minds have opened a little as more nephilim appear marked by the heroes of the Fifth Crusade. Not long ago, I fear that even the undine students of the Unbreaking Waves would have been suspect.

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NEATHHOLM

Kitaja isn't the only one who's attempted to reach out to the descendants of early crusaders dwelling beneath the city. Although it's said they're corrupted by exposure to the energy of the Outer Rifts, the few I've seen have changes much more drastic than seen in nephilim, more in line with the Nexian practice of fleshwarping. I doubt we'll know more unless one volunteers for exploratory surgery.

On a personal level, by standing here in plain sight, I hope to encourage any of a similarly affected bloodline to seek me out. I volunteered for this assignment, as I wished to visit a land healing from the demonic wars of the past. These struggles have left the taint of fiendish corruption upon these peoples, but it is often the fiend-marked children who suffer the sins and prejudices of the previous generation. I possess little knowledge about local nephilim who bear the mark of the Outer Rifts, but if my own adolescence provides any comparison, most will not lead easy lives. And, from rumors of the "tunnel people" dwelling underneath Nerosyan, I imagine they're seen as easy scapegoats for the Worldwound's traumas. While I recognize I cannot really impact any lasting changes for them during my short time in this Convocation, I believe I can open the way for other fiend-marked individuals to find purpose and peace within my monastery's teachings.

TEACHINGS

And that brings us to the next point: What exactly are our monastery's teachings?

While we disagree on what perfection is, all Houses of Perfection take the same starting position, rooted in Vudran elementalism, that the body's elements are resonant with the Universe's elements. Going beyond the material, if the body's microcosmos are symmetrical with the Elemental Planes' ordered macrocosmos (ah... but this is predicated on the assumption these Planes are orderly, no? Faydhaan teachers, who hail from the Plane of Water, tell quite a different story!), a practitioner will not only achieve superhuman physicality, but also attain numinous perfection.

Other Houses might approach perfection broadly as enlightenment, or apotheosis, or invincibility. For us? Perfection is expressed most clearly as change, and also the challenges posed by change. Grandmaster Remedi distilled my idiosyncratic glimpses of perfection into threefold lessons: persistence in the face of metacosmic uncertainty, transformation through the wake of unspeakable destruction, gentleness amid the grasp of inconsolable loss.

How, though, can this be said to be perfection? How or why should we endure, adapt, show tenderness? Are those not the virtues of the vanquished? Would it not be preferable to align perfection toward conquest or victory?

Indeed, these are the virtues of the defeated. Perhaps our House once understood perfection differently, but we are also the only House that has known defeat in such an intimate manner. Beyond defeat, we have returned and been restored, even as we have changed and been changed. That resurgence, that potential and actualization of change, is the key to our perfection.

As reminders of change, we have broken the chain of victor and loser; victory cannot exist for one without another's loss. Perhaps that was the lesson hidden in the last Challenge of Sky and Heaven? If no one can truly lose, then what value is the winner's claim? After all, the conqueror cannot sit on the throne without a foundation of corpses and the cowed. Jalmeray was founded by a Vudran maharajah, whose soldiers, scholars, and sailors established hierarchies of benefactors, enforcers, and sycophants to preserve his indulgent whim as imperial will. Change in this hierarchy could mean losing your position, your caste, your comfort, your name, your tradition; the possibility of change that every thakur and zamindar assiduously denies, then privately dreads.

In such a brittle world, we have died, become obscure, penniless, prevailed over. An unthinkable kismet. Yet after more than a thousand years, we have been rejuvenated and remade. An even more unthinkable karma. Jalmeray attempts both to embrace and sublimate us, so they do not have to think too much on the changes we have experienced, or the changes we portend.

We were forgotten as reminders of death. Now we are celebrated as reminders of resurgence. Many pretend nothing has changed, so we find ourselves reseated firmly among the august Houses of Perfection, invited to the Challenge of Sky and Heaven like the past millennium had signified nothing, like four Houses of Perfection had not suddenly been reduced to three, then again returned to four.

And with the recent resurgence of the Planes of Metal and Wood, who knows? In the coming years there might also arise two new schools, totaling six.

Many scoff at such ideas, clutching to carefully curated orthodoxies, preferring to pretend change is inconsequential. The last Challenge, in which all were disqualified, shook Jalmeri society; this upset was perhaps the Universe forcing us to acknowledge our pretenses, to remind us of death, humiliation, the limits to (and lack of) our control over the elements, and—most terrifying to so many clinging to glory or gold—the constancy of change.

Anyway, nobody pretends all the time. Those beggared by life's changes come to us, to cheat death, to transcend fate, to recover from tragedy... to simultaneously accept, and persist amid, change. The indebted, doubtful, frail, those driven to despair with nowhere to go, those who remain optimistic with no right to be; so many come, and so many also go, failing our order's harsh trials. But are they transformed by their strivings, even if they do not attain the position of postulant within the Unbreaking Waves? I am glad to witness that many have changed, and most for the better. Perhaps that, too, is part of our perfection.

Those who achieve candidacy with our monastery usually undergo the austerities of monkhood, where they learn to channel occult energies and divine miracles through sutras and mudras, yantras and mantras. We teach how to chant and meditate on nonattachment, even as we unveil iddhis of elemental pugilism and liquid swordplay. A bit of punching is like sugar in bitter medicine; it helps the philosophy, reflection, and emotional work all go down easier. For more cerebral students, we provide instruction in the magus's path—my specialty is the Resurgent Maelstrom. I'll personally demonstrate some techniques later, if you're interested? My art is fraught with contradiction and sacrifice. It holds that all things are weapons but demands such weapons be destroyed to unleash your true power. Still interested? Most lose interest when they hear that. Yes? Good, you might have potential!

RIVALRIES

Our greatest rivalry is with the Monastery of Untwisting Iron, the most powerful and prominent among the Houses of Perfection. I've said we are about resurgence, but what exactly are we resurging from?

The answer can be found in the thousand-year feud of an Untwisting Iron monk whom I shall not name, to spare his House the shame of his folly. This fatuous monk, displeased at losing to an Unbreaking Waves practitioner, used forbidden geokinetic techniques to level our original monastery. Several years ago, undines (including our present leader, Grandmaster Remendi) discovered the ruins, restored lost techniques, raised our school from the seafloor, and recruited students like myself. That's how we're resurgent, you see.

Today, both Houses are on good terms again. Untwisting Iron wholeheartedly supported our rebuilding, and their leader Rajni Ayasa provides Grandmaster Remendi with invaluable counsel. However, some of our students harbor some bitterness. It's pretty foolish, since this was ancient history before they were even born, but their insecurities become understandable, if no less banal, when you gauge the gulf between our Houses' wealth and prestige.

Among those present in this Convocation, I suppose we have some history of minor tensions with the Magaambya. We've never actually clashed, but when Khiben-Sald sailed from Vudra to eastern Garund with his 101 ships and deployed armies and genies to colonize and terraform Jalmeray into climates more pleasing to his palatial tastes, the Magaambya sent the Jalmeray courts several strongly worded letters recommending they show a greater respect for Garundi landscapes, peoples, and traditions. Nothing concrete came out of that correspondence, but it's quite telling the lordly maharajah supposedly ventured no further into Garund ever since. The Magaambya delegates all seem friendly enough, but I can't shake the feeling we're all still on probation somehow.

Vil Seral from the Academy of the Reclamation has also been reaching out in the spirit of friendly competition. Although some of our students take such



DEADLY DANCE

Swordplay is so often referred to as a dance that it loses its poetic meaning, although our choreographers would certainly insist it still has a practical application for fight scenes. With the Unbreaking Waves, though, it feels like it's really just a dance that happens to have swords. Perhaps that's just an actor's impression of unarmed combat.



LIGHT STEPS

Some of the Unbreaking Waves initiates walk quietly around us, as though they think we're watching them. I hope they're just shy, because that story about the Emerald Boughs trying to steal techniques from the Monastery of Unblinking Fire was really overblown. We're all just here to learn from each other.

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things entirely too seriously, I've been encouraging them to take up any opportunity to learn from and compete with the Sarkorian students while we're here. As much as the other Houses of Perfection are our peers, it's so rare to meet cousins on the same journey.

DANCE OF PERFECTION

Now, I'm not so egotistical to think you came here to speak with me in particular. Everyone wants to ask our students about their techniques, but given how they are still clashing mid-air, swords in hand, I gather you couldn't quite find the opportunity to do so?

Our students don't intend to be rude; they are just, shall I say, focused. Extremely focused. The secret behind these young folks' inexhaustible energy is the Unbreaking Waves' foundational practice: our core discipline is based upon breath control. For example, Tuṣhār there has been trained to hold and circulate a single breath throughout his body for as long as possible. This technique is not dissimilar to the circular breathing practiced by mystics and musicians across Golarion, but greatly enhanced by the ancient teachings of the Unbreaking Waves and the elemental knowledge of faydhaans. With repeated, diligent practice, our students gain extraordinary reserves of stamina and explosive bursts of strength, as they move

that breath throughout their body, even from deep within their blood and bones. So, unlike most martial artists, we don't shout war cries to release our power, as that would also expel our breath from our bodies. That's rather dangerous, if you happen to be fighting underwater and can only breathe air—like Tuṣhār or myself. I cannot really recommend drowning as an effective combat strategy.

So, mmm, as a logical consequence, you won't be hearing much from those second-years channeling water blasts through their swords—sorry, please watch out! Shirani, bless your scales, be careful! I know you're trying to show off to your cousins from Nagajor, but please don't deflect Ahmed's blast so close to the booth, I'm talking to a guest here! Ahmed, for the love of—! Don't indulge Shirani, please. I'm so sorry, did you get caught in the splash? I apologize for our students' exuberance. Here's a towel if you need one. We have plenty.

So, Tuṣhār, Shirani, Ahmed, and everyone in this contingent can't stop to speak during their performance, because that would cause them to lose that singular breath we were discussing. While it won't kill them out here above water, that would defeat our exhibition's entire point, to show how our monastery fights even to our very last breath, with the persistence of the (wait for it, here it comes) the Unbreaking Waves! Ha-ha! Very

funny, no? I was inspired listening to the Kitharodians' rehearsals. They really like their jokes and quips. Catchy songs, too.

Hm. Then, perhaps, if you are interested, it is time to approach perfection on your own terms?

All this talk of perfection, and yet we often forget what perfection is for most people. For the sick, perfection might appear to be health; for the hungry, perhaps it is a warm meal. When you are struggling in this world, the demands of perfection often appear too remote and abstract. I have met no shortage of monks, pampered and highborn, who think themselves closer to perfection for skipping some meals. If starvation is a mark of holiness, then let the poor flood Nirvana's gates!

Perfection has to exist for everyone, even the poor, even the fiends. My teaching techniques, in fact, work best for those who have seen some suffering. Those already used to the world bending to their will often miss the subtle responses of perfection.

When we teach students to strike with the force of a tsunami or the ferocity of thundering monsoons, perfection forms the basis of all these techniques, allowing you to sense elemental flows within your body and use them to affect the elements around you. These localized fluctuations of energy are similar to what kineticists refer to as gates. Our monastic disciplines prepare our minds and bodies to perceive and attune with these energies, allowing us to condense and control the Inner Sphere's power into tangible manifestations in the Universe—our Perfected techniques.

This conditioning requires significant austerities. Orthodox regimens train students for months, if not years, before they begin to work with elemental forces. Unfortunately, we do not have the luxury of such time; this Convocation would end long before anyone could master such rudimentary preparations. Thankfully, our monastery does not restrict itself to orthodoxy; if our school, collapsed for over a thousand years, was to depend purely upon such traditional methods, we would not have been able to rebuild so swiftly within a few short years.

I have prepared certain written provocations, incomplete sutras to prod your consciousness across past and future lives, to allow your various incarnations' wisdom to appear immediately within your presence like a sudden rain; like the ensuing dew, though, such wisdom will swiftly evaporate. Orthodoxy derides the validity of such iddhis; what good are they, if their impermanence is measured in seconds rather than decades? Yet I find them excellent for motivating students, along with outreach like this!

Please accept the gift of this sutra; if you ever use it, remember this is your own hidden power, the promise and persistence of perfection. Not all of us, during our lifetimes or incarnations, might be able to pursue perfection, but that does not mean perfection is out of reach. If you feel and experience a unity between your physical form and the elemental forces, reach out with your own senses to perceive and grasp this non-dualistic reality... even if this insight is fleeting, it forms the indelible first step of your own journey to perfection.

PERFECTION'S FIRST STEP

ITEM 5

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MENTAL OCCULT WATER

Price 23 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** —

Activate ◆ (concentrate)

This palm-leaf manuscript contains an incomplete philosophical treatise about perfection, which you must complete and provide written commentaries upon before you can activate it. This activity takes 10 minutes, but can occur at any time before you activate the treatise.

When you activate *perfection's first step*, you cast *unbreaking wave advance* (*Pathfinder Lost Omens World Guide* 83) with a save DC of 19. You are then temporarily immune to benefiting from further copies of *perfection's first step* until your next daily preparations.



FIRST STEP

These palm scripts they're handing out are incredible. The basis is similar to our contracts, but pulling power from past and future incarnations of the user rather than an external source. It's a fascinating idea and one that can only bear full fruit among mortals.

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SWORDMASTER GANHIL

Sagacious male Vudran human Visionary of the Blade

Take a look to the arena again, you don't want to miss this. That wild-haired warrior who's just stepped in, with eyes like blazing flecks of ice, him in the gold-red kurta and wave-dappled dupatta? That's Swordmaster Ganhil, the originator of our students' arts. He's only 25 but has already invented a new style of weapon techniques and forms for our monastery!

How did Ganhil attain such mastery? Ganhil and I were among Grandmaster Remendi's first students in 4718. When the school was restored, we quickly enrolled, and our monastery was invited to the Challenge of Sky and Heaven. Few dared to represent our school, as we had only reopened in the same year, and our skills weren't as polished, but Ganhil wouldn't have any of that. He wanted so badly to beat the reigning Irons at their own game, and committed to intensive swordplay training so he could face the famed Iron weapon masters

on equal terms. When Ganhil was finally selected as an Unbreaking Waves representative, he was ecstatic, even though he was on the reserve team.

But on the actual day of the challenge, the legendary quadruple disqualification occurred, ending the Challenge for all the Houses before Ganhil could take even a single step onto the proving grounds. All his training, for naught? Many would have been crushed by disappointment, but not our Ganhil. In that moment, Ganhil beheld the perfection of the Unbreaking Waves, adapting to these dispiriting changes while maintaining his original course.

Day in, day out, tide in, tide out, Ganhil continued practicing his self-taught arts by the rivers and the rains. It has been no more than seven years, but Ganhil's steps toward perfection could fill seven decades. Today, Ganhil's private meditations upon swordplay have already become our academy's standard curricula of weapon arts and are popular with the entire generation of students. Some talented fighters have even chosen not to enroll with the Untwisting Iron, instead seeking us out to learn Ganhil's style. I am so proud of my friend, I really am. From a single stream, he has carved a river to perfection, and then all these tributaries to the infinite sea.



RETREAT AMONG THE RAINS

RITUAL 4

RARE **MENTAL** **WATER**

Cast 1 day; **Cost** at least 5 drops of water from a naturally occurring source (such as rainfall, rivers, or the seas) placed on the primary caster's face; **Secondary Casters** 1

Primary Check Nature (master) or Occultism (master);

Secondary Checks Cooking Lore, Survival

Ganhil developed this ritual to emulate the epiphanies and flowing mental states he experienced during 4718's Challenge of Sky and Heaven: intense focus, emotional acceptance, dilated perceptions, and growing awareness of elemental perfection.

During the casting of this ritual, your thoughts enter a mindscape whose subjective flow of time is different, allowing you to perform retraining that would take at least a week of downtime. Your physical body still requires food or shelter during this time, so the secondary caster must nourish you with milk porridge or protect you from the elements with a raised parasol or similar item.

Critical Success At the end of the ritual, you can retrain a class feature, feat, or skill.

Success At the end of the ritual, you can retrain a feat or skill.

Failure At the end of the ritual, you gain the fatigued condition.

Critical Failure As failure, and you also suffer from starvation and thirst as if you hadn't eaten for a week, taking 10d4+7 damage that cannot be healed until you eat and drink.

ABHAYA THE RETURNER

Dauntless female Vudran undine Surveyor of the Seas

What's that? You're curious about what *really* went down at that quadruple disqualification? Everyone's account differs, so please take mine with a pinch of salt. You see that professor with the turquoise braids, with the abacus of coral and cowrie shells? That's Abhaya. We call her the Returner, because she always comes back safely, even from the most hazardous of journeys. She's an oceanographer by profession. She surveys the waterways of the Universe and the Plane of Water, mapping the changing waters of the cosmos and presenting lectures on her findings.

But Abhaya wasn't always so academically inclined. In 4718, she was, like Ganhil, representing the Unbreaking Waves in the Challenge of Sky and Heaven. During the Challenge, she attempted to force all she'd learned into one devastating attack: she took on a form of pure water, then used her understanding of perfection to expand that power outward as she launched herself into the fray with a modified technique from the Sky and Heaven Stance. That unorthodox cascade unleashed an unending torrent of seawater that knocked all four Houses' representatives out of the proving grounds... leading to the unprecedented, and by now infamous, quadruple disqualification.

Abhaya was aghast. Although she displayed amazing power, melding different elements into a supernal blossom of martial violence, she had broken a tradition lasting over 4,000 years. The Challenge was incomplete, and for the first time in Jalmeri history, there was—and is—no ascendant House of Perfection. Even the technique was unstable, more often harming Abhaya than approaching its torrential display. Abhaya withdrew from her martial pursuits and ventured deep within Golarion's oceans to explore their connections with the Plane of Water, eventually settling into her current role as a researcher and instructor.

Her last series of monographs detailed her journeys beyond the Plane of Water, mapping its links to the adjacent Planes of Metal and Wood; her studies have also found wider audiences as they were jointly published by the Pathfinder Society's Concordance of Elements. With the guidance of my faydhaan teacher, Abhaya is currently synthesizing a theory on how the returning planes reflect a change to our Universe's elemental balance. She's also attempting to understand how Metal and Wood's proximity to Water might have caused her fateful surge of power back in 4718. At Ganhil's request, she's also investigating how his techniques might have been inspired by Metal and Wood's resurgence, to see how they might already incorporate Metal's stridency and Wood's viridity into Water's fluidity.

Usage affixed to armor; **Bulk** –

Activate ◆ (concentrate)

Abhaya's tireless years of study have allowed her to reproduce, at some level, the unconscious melding of elements she experienced during the last Challenge of Sky and Heaven. A single drop of water in a crystalline container is the simplest application of her research.

When you activate this talisman, a watery echo of one of your limbs emerges from the container. Make a Strike with your fist or an unarmed attack from your ancestry. This attack gains the magical, reach, and water traits, retains any benefits from appropriate weapon fundamental runes (but not of weapon property runes), and takes no penalties for being used underwater. You can perform this Strike even if you're in a stance or under a polymorph effect that restricts your Strikes.



DROP OF CONVERGENT WATERS

ITEM 2

RARE **CONSUMABLE** **MAGICAL** **TALISMAN** **WATER**

Price 7 gp

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UNBREAKING WAVES MONK FEATS

Before even entering the monastery, each applicant is submerged into countless faydhaan tests, each one transgressing simple categorization. Riddles are interspersed with physical attacks that flow into the steps of a dance, and again into the telling of a tale, confounding assumptions and honing sensitivities.

The elemental martial arts of the Unbreaking Waves emphasize mastery of breathing, not only for its obvious utility in underwater combat, but also for its practical benefits in conditioning the body. Through skillfully circulating one's breath, a monk can manipulate water and blood.

Due to bitterness against the Monastery of Untwisting Iron for their role in the Unbreaking Waves' millennium-long downfall, new swordplay techniques have also arisen to challenge the Untwisting Iron's supremacy in weapon arts. Innovated by Swordmaster Ganhil and his students, the techniques are built to encourage movement and overrun stationary foes.

FLOOD STANCE

FEAT 1

UNCOMMON MONK STANCE WATER

The lessons of the flood teach a stance that distributes and circulates a single breath through the body and allows your punches to contain the focused power of a torrent of water. While in this stance, you hold your breath (*Player Core* 437) for up to 10 minutes and leave the stance if you stop holding your breath. You do not lose additional air if you attack, are critically hit, or critically fail a save. You still lose all remaining air if you speak, including to Cast a Spell. The only Strikes you can make are flooded river unarmed attacks. These deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage; are in the brawling group; have the nonlethal, trip, unarmed, and water traits; and don't take the normal penalty for being used underwater. They also gain the forceful trait while you're underwater.

REFLECTIVE RIPPLE STANCE

FEAT 1

MONK STANCE WATER

Requirements You're unarmored.

You enter a stance of fluid grace as small amounts of water flow with your movements and attacks. You can make flowing wave attacks that deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage. They are in the brawling group and have the agile, disarm, finesse, nonlethal, trip, unarmed, and water traits.

While in Reflective Ripple Stance, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Athletics checks to Disarm, Swim, or Trip, and you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your Reflex DC to avoid being Disarmed and Tripped.

Special This feat gains your choice of either the divine or occult trait, matching your qi spell tradition if possible.

STUDENT OF WATER

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON MONK WATER

Following your studies of water, your qi stirs the water of the natural world. If you're underwater, you have cover

against creatures outside of the water. As soon as you meet the prerequisites for Underwater Marauder and Water Sprint (*Player Core* 2 235), you gain those feats.

WATERFOWL STANCE

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON MONK STANCE WATER

Prerequisites Monastic Weaponry (*Player Core* 2 118)

In your hands, swords dance like rainfall over the waves; who can tell where the storm ends and the sea begins? Developed by Swordmaster Ganhil to compete with the House of Untwisting Iron, this stance integrates fluid swordplay into even the simplest movements.

While in Waterfowl Stance, the dandpatta, scimitar, talwar, and zulfikar gain the monk trait for you. When you Tumble Through a creature's space or Leap over a creature while wielding one of these weapons, you can deal that creature 1d6 slashing damage. This damage is increased to 2d6 if the weapon has a *greater striking rune* and 3d6 if it has a *major striking rune*.

Special You gain access to the dandpatta, talwar, and zulfikar (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Impossible Lands* 220–221).

DIVERT STREAMFLOW

FEAT 4

UNCOMMON MONK

Trigger You're damaged by a melee Strike by a creature in your reach.

With a brief gesture, you adapt swiftly to an attack like a flowing stream. Attempt an Athletics check to Reposition the creature who dealt the triggering damage. If you're successful, you can Step as a free action.

TRIBUTARY CIRCULATION OR

FEAT 4

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MONK OCCULT WATER

Never distant from water's succoring presence, your refined breathing techniques focus your awareness and control of water inward. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Will saves and saves against poison until the beginning of your next turn. If you spent two actions on Tributary Circulation, you can also attempt a flat check to end persistent poison damage you're suffering, reducing the DC to 10 as if you had gained the benefits of assisted recovery (*Player Core* 445).

CULVERT'S COLLAPSE

FEAT 6

UNCOMMON MONK WATER

Prerequisites Flood Stance

Requirements You are in Flood Stance and were damaged by an enemy since your previous turn.

Under your foes' onslaught, the water within your violent blood stirs. Your killing intent swells, your agonies marshaling your inevitable resurgence. Make a flooded river Strike against the enemy who dealt damage to you since your previous turn. That Strike deals an additional 1d8 persistent bleed damage.

RIPLING SPIN

FEAT 8

FLOURISH MONK OCCULT WATER

Prerequisites Reflective Ripple Stance

Trigger You're hit by a physical melee attack by an attacker you can see that's in reach.

Requirements You're in Reflective Ripple Stance.

After the triggering attack is done, Step. You must end this Step within the attacker's reach. Then, you can attempt an Athletics check to Disarm or Trip the attacker.

Snakebird's Shadow

FEAT 8

UNCOMMON FLOURISH MONK OCCULT WATER

Prerequisites Waterfowl Stance

Requirements You are in Waterfowl Stance and are wielding a monk weapon from the sword group.

Ganhil developed this technique through observing the sharp-beaked darters fishing Prada Hanam's waters, seeking to match their speed and suppleness with the elemental flash of his blade. Make a melee Strike with the required weapon against each enemy in a 15-foot line as razor-sharp shadows of water surge from your blade. Each attack counts toward your multiple attack penalty, but you do not increase your penalty until you have made all your attacks.

Wake to Strife

FEAT 8

UNCOMMON MONK OCCULT WATER

Requirements A creature within your reach is prone or swimming.

You summon the explosive power of a geyser beneath a foe. The required creature must attempt a Fortitude save against your class DC as elemental water confounds their senses; if the creature is prone, they can Stand as a free action.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is sickened 1.

Failure The target is sickened 2. If you have a free hand and they are not larger than you, you can attempt an Athletics check to Grapple them as a free action.

Critical Failure As failure, but if you succeed at the Athletics check to Grapple them, you get a critical success instead.

Lessons of Flux

FEAT 10

UNCOMMON FORTUNE MONK

Frequency once per hour

Trigger You fail a skill check to Grab, Reposition, Shove, Trip, or Tumble Through.

You apply the persistence and permutation taught by faydhaans to your failures. You reroll the check and take the second result. If it still fails or critically fails, you can ask a question about the creature you were attempting to Grab, Reposition, Shove, Trip, or Tumble Through as if you had succeeded at a check to Recall Knowledge.

Wave Dashes Rocks

FEAT 10

UNCOMMON MONK WATER

Requirements You have a creature grabbed or restrained. You slam an unlucky foe with the tremendous power of a plunging wave. Make a melee Strike against the required creature, after which they are no longer grabbed or restrained by you. This Strike must be made with an

unarmed attack or a monk weapon. If you deal damage with this Strike, the target is knocked prone and is clumsy 1 and enfeebled 1 until the end of its next turn.

Wave Spiral

FEAT 12

FLOURISH MONK OCCULT WATER

Prerequisites Reflective Ripple Stance

Frequency once per minute

Requirements You're in Reflective Ripple Stance.

You dip and spin, unleashing a wide whirlpool of water. Make an Athletics check to Trip each creature standing on the ground in a 10-foot emanation. These attacks all count toward your multiple attack penalty, but the penalty doesn't increase until after you make all the attacks.



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RESURGENT MAELSTROM MAGUS

Although ancient texts from the original Monastery of Unbreaking Waves have been discovered, many techniques were passed down from master to student or required physical experience to explain. However, faydhaans were able to share their teachings based on the same ancient traditions. The resurgent maelstrom hybrid study is one example of this collaboration, with specialized arcane techniques that allow a magus to turn any item at hand into a weapon.

RESURGENT MAELSTROM HYBRID STUDY (UNCOMMON)

While fate may conspire to strip you of your armaments, you're never helpless. For you, anything can be a dangerous weapon, bolstered by the might of towering waves and crushing tides. You know these tools are transient, and so you think nothing of shattering and reforming them with your magic.

Your attacks with improvised weapons do not take the normal -2 item penalty. While you wield an improvised weapon, streams of water flow from your limbs to surround the weapon, granting it the water trait. These improvised weapons have a minimum damage die of 1d6, or 1d4 if the improvised weapon is agile.

Effects that apply runes to your unarmed attacks, like *runic body* and *handwraps of might blows*, also apply those runes to your non-magical improvised weapons. The improvised weapon also gains an additional trait, depending on how many hands it takes to wield. A one-handed improvised weapon gains the backstabber trait; if it would already have the backstabber trait, double the amount of additional precision damage. A two-handed improvised weapon gains the forceful trait; if it would already have the forceful trait, treat the number of weapon damage dice the weapon has as 1 higher for the purpose of calculating the additional damage.

While you're in Arcane Cascade stance, you can manipulate the water around your improvised weapon, making it cut like a knife or bash with the force of falling rocks. The weapon gains the versatile traits for the types of damage that it doesn't normally deal. For instance, an improvised weapon that normally deals bludgeoning damage gains the versatile P and versatile S traits.

Conflux Spell *turbulent tide*

Studious Spells 7th: *water walk*, 11th: *aqueous orb*, 13th: *unfettered movement*

TURBULENT TIDE ◆

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MAGUS WATER

Requirements You're wielding an improvised weapon.

You cause the sheath of water and the improvised weapon it surrounds to surge outward with stupendous force as you attack. Make a melee Strike with your improvised weapon. The weapon then breaks, and each creature adjacent to you must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw against your spell DC or be pushed 5 feet away from you (10 feet on a critical failure). You can Stride after the target of your Strike if they are pushed but you must move the same distance and in the same direction.

If the item has a Hardness greater than your level, or if it's an artifact, cursed item, or other item that's difficult to break or destroy, it doesn't break and adjacent creatures don't need to attempt Fortitude saves.

MAGUS FEATS

Between old secrets and the teachings of faydhaan scholars, the magi of the Unbreaking Waves have a number of specialized techniques. Only a few of these are formally integrated into the resurgent maelstrom study, while the others are fragments that have less than coalesced into a consistent path.

CONVERGENT TIDES

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON MAGUS WATER

Prerequisites Arcane Cascade

Your footwork is like the convergence of tides, granting your body supernatural power and fluidity. While you're in Arcane Cascade stance, you ignore difficult terrain caused by water, such as walking along a flooded path or swimming in rough water.

SHATTERING SPELLSTRIKE

FEAT 4

UNCOMMON FORCE MAGUS

Prerequisites resurgent maelstrom hybrid study, Spellstrike
Requirements You're in Arcane Cascade stance and wielding an improvised weapon.

You intentionally channel a rampaging cascade of magic through your weapon, breaking it to deal more damage. Make a Spellstrike against a target with your improvised weapon. If the attack hits, it deals an additional 2d6 force damage as your improvised weapon breaks. If the spell used with the Spellstrike wasn't a cantrip or focus spell, increase this additional damage by the spell's rank.

If the item has a Hardness greater than your level, or if it's an artifact, cursed item, or other item that's difficult to break or destroy, it doesn't break and you don't deal additional damage.

SURFACE TENSION

FEAT 6

UNCOMMON MAGUS WATER

Prerequisites resurgent maelstrom hybrid study
Requirements You're wielding a broken weapon.

You encase the pieces of your broken weapon together with water you pull from the surrounding environment. The weapon's broken condition is temporarily suppressed, and the weapon deals an additional amount of bludgeoning damage equal to twice the number of weapon damage dice; this damage can't be changed to any other type. The weapon also gains the deadly d8 trait; if the weapon already had the deadly trait, the damage die increases by one step or to d8, whichever is higher. The first time you use this weapon to Spellstrike or get a critical success on an attack with it, the weapon is completely destroyed.

If the weapon has a Hardness greater than your level, or if it's an artifact, cursed item, or other item that's difficult to break or destroy, it is not destroyed, and this ability only lasts until the end of your turn.

CROSSCURRENT COUNTER

FEAT 8

UNCOMMON MAGUS WATER

Trigger You become grabbed or restrained by a creature.
You counter the creature with the power of elemental water, a tendril of it encasing your limb or weapon. You attempt an Athletics check to Grapple the triggering creature, even if it's outside your reach or you don't have a free hand. If you succeed, you also remove the triggering condition, and the tendril of water pulls the creature adjacent to you before dissipating.

WHIRLPOOL'S PULL

FEAT 8

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MAGUS

Prerequisites resurgent maelstrom hybrid study
You briefly conjure a tendril of water that allows you to grab an improvised weapon and then subsume that water to power your magic. You Interact to pick up an unattended object within 15 feet you could use as an improvised weapon and then Cast a Spell that is a cantrip or conflux spell that takes 1 action to cast.

MAELSTROM FLOW

FEAT 10

UNCOMMON MAGUS

Prerequisites resurgent maelstrom hybrid study

Frequency once per hour

Requirements You're wielding an improvised weapon.

You pour energy into an improvised weapon, speeding its destruction to grant it power. The overloaded energy grants your improvised weapon the effect of the *astral*, *corrosive*, *extending*, or *frost* rune for 1 minute, after which the item is destroyed. If the item has a Hardness greater than your level, or if it's an artifact, cursed item, or other item that's difficult to break or destroy, it is not destroyed, and this ability only lasts until the end of your turn.

This effect doesn't count against the number of property runes a weapon can have based on its potency rune, but a given weapon can only have one application of Maelstrom Flow at a time.

FAYDHAAN SPELLS

Developed by faydhaan genies on the Plane of Water, these spells are not exclusive to the Monastery of Unbreaking Waves. However, they are widely used by those studying the resurging maelstrom.

THREEFOLD LIMB

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON ATTACK CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE MORPH WATER

Traditions arcane, primal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Defense AC

You temporarily transform one of your limbs into water, taking the form of ice, liquid water, or steam as you desire. Make a melee spell attack roll. On a hit, the target takes 2d6 damage; the type of damage dealt and any additional effect depends on the form you choose. On a critical hit, double the damage.

- **Ice** The limb deals cold damage, and the target takes a -10-foot status penalty to its Speeds until the start of your next turn. This spell gains the cold trait.
- **Liquid Water** The limb deals bludgeoning damage and you can Reposition the target up to 10 feet.
- **Steam** The limb deals fire damage and steam clings to the target, making all creatures concealed to them until the start of your next turn or they perform an Interact action to wave the steam away. This spell gains the fire trait.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 2d6.

UNBROKEN PANOPLY

SPELL 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE NONLETHAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range touch; **Targets** 1 broken weapon that is unattended or held by a willing creature

Duration 1 hour

As tools of violence undone by violence, broken weapons contain potent symbolic magic that faydhaans often call upon when forming alliances. Images of similar legendary weapons overlay the target, and the weapon's broken condition is suppressed for the duration. The weapon gains the nonlethal trait during this time. The weapon's wielder can apply the weapon's item bonus to attack rolls, if any, to their Diplomacy checks.

If the weapon would be damaged or broken again, this spell ends.

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UNIVERSITY OF LEPIDSTADT

Right, introductions. How do you do, hail and well met, all that. Name's Kateriyana de Rijene. Kat to my friends, and long as you're buying the drinks, we're friends. Yes, of *those* de Rijenens... at least I'd say that at Lepidstadt. The Rijene School of Medicine at the University of Lepidstadt is named after my great-grandfather. The one I'm technically a graduate student at. I'll talk about him later.

University of Lepidstadt. What's there to say about the place? It was founded... oh, longer ago than even I want to think about. The Treyes brothers, Liron and Cadamon, explored this old Kellid grave mound not far from the city, in a place called Kalexcourt. Found a heap of ancient Kellid treasures, plenty of historical artifacts, things like that. Melting them down offended their sense of scholarship, so did selling them. Putting them back was not exactly an option—undead or something. So, they went to Lepidstadt and founded the university.

The university started out as a place to study antiquities, history, and magic, but soon they learned that, guess what, history and antiquities don't actually pay. And magic, well, magic pays, but all the real wizards go south anyway. In the endless quest to keep putting food on the table and books in the library (honestly, the books had priority; these are scholars we're talking about), the university started expanding. Medicine proved a moneymaker, and once it

got a reputation the School of Letters became *the* place to send aspiring young aristocratic sprouts.

These days, the university has about a half-dozen main schools. The School of Arts does antiquities, magic, and somehow, actual art. Don't ask me how that happened. The School of Letters does literature, philosophy, and foreign languages. The School of Science is, well, science. Biology, alchemy, astronomy, all those good things. I take classes there sometimes. The School of Theology trains Pharasmin priests and exorcists, because they need to learn that stuff somewhere and Lepidstadt is the least extreme place in Ustalav to do so. They still hate us in Medicine, though, because they think we're blaspheming against the natural order by trying to raise the dead. We hate them because we don't like to admit how close they are to being right.

The School of Medicine is one of the big ones. If someone is going to be rooting around your insides, you want them to have good training, a sharp knife, and plenty of alcohol handy for drinking and disinfecting. The medical school takes things seriously, and we put out what are, without a doubt, the best doctors in the Inner Sea. Don't agree? Who's better? Magaambyans? Please. If you ever need a kidney or a spleen taken out, get a Lepidstadt surgeon, we'll have it out before you even notice. Bring all the magic in afterward to patch you up.

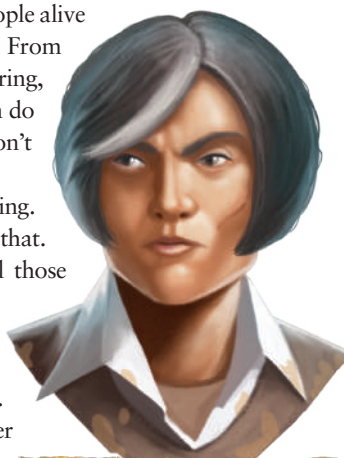
Of course, we're not always popular with the regular folk. So, here's the thing. Before they let you cut open a live person, it's a good idea to practice on some dead ones first. You know, so you can get past the "what's this green squishy bit" phase. Those are not words you want to hear while you're being cut open, trust me. But Ustalav is... let's call it understandably paranoid about people mucking around with dead bodies. So officially, we get the bodies of any criminals executed in Lepidstadt. That's about enough to train two doctors a year. For the rest, we have to improvise. And by improvise, I mean a few students every year get caught out in a graveyard with a shovel and a wheelbarrow. Not that any of us have plans to do that here, of course.

If occasionally cutting up Aunt Muriel without permission wasn't enough, there's also—look, you spend enough time around dead bodies, and you hear some of the things going on over the border, and you remember the stories. Undead are abominations, we get that, but there are plenty of ways to get a spark of new life without relying on the Void. You can take a syringe or a Stasian coil and make someone's liver live again. Years of life and who cares if their liver's technically a homunculus now? It's a liver. What's it going to do?

We also use magic to preserve things, keep people alive while you're cutting out some hideous tumor. From there, though, it's not a long jump to wondering, "Can we can keep them alive forever?" You can do it. There are ways. I won't say it's right and I won't say I've done it, but I've seen it and I get it.

The last school is the School of Engineering. They're the bright new sparks, and I mean just that. They were part of the School of Science until those Stasian coils started getting smuggled in from Irrisen—I'm not totally clear on how they work, not my field, but near as I can tell it's something to do with galvanism and violet light.

People get up to some terrifying things over there. Ever heard a spirit-singer? You take two metal rods, hook them up to a box with a Stasian coil, and they start this warbling wail in response to spirit energy nearby. You can make music, this eerie humming, without touching them. But the ghosts can too. I went to a spirit-singer concert once at the Ventriloquist's Pulpit... so, I might be skipping the School of Arts' performances here.



KATERIYANA DE RIJIENE

THE CAMPUS

The university's found in the south of Lepidstadt, right up against the old city walls. There was a big fire, oh, a hundred, two hundred years ago, so most of the buildings are if not exactly new then at least new-adjacent. They built them in the Revival style, so lots of high, vaulted ceilings, tall narrow windows, flying buttresses, things like that. The place is an absolute demon to heat, so all of us students that live in the dorms wear like six layers of night clothes. Uncle Arvhur said it built character, but he said the same thing about midnight chats with strangers in the cemetery, so I'm skeptical.

The main administrative building is Vighkeir Hall, though they've also got an auditorium there, the dining hall, and anything else they didn't know where else to put. It's absolutely huge, pretty near impossible to miss. Just look for the stone ravens. See, the architect wanted gargoyles, but Dean Vighkeir, back in the day, he had a thing for ravens. Also crows, magpies, all of that. So he told the architect, nothing but stone ravens. Vighkeir Hall has two hundred twenty-seven giant stone ravens—I know because I was bored one day and counted. It's sort of a rite of passage. Mostly they're on the outer facade, but they loom over a few of the inner halls, and there's at least a dozen in the dining hall. Funny thing though, when I helped an incoming



CROSSING LINES

Although I try to be forgiving and not assume the worst, Lepidstadt covers their unethical experiments with the flimsiest of veils. It's not even just the graverobbing, although I know that's considered disrespectful even by others in Ustalav. The incoming students are expected to help test medicines on their elders, and the local poor get roped in as well for a few coppers or a loaf of bread.

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DISSONANCE

Everyone seems constantly concerned with Lepidstadt's dull clothing and blurring the boundary of life and death, but I feel like not nearly enough people are talking about their music.

It's like chewing on cold iron! The other human schools do just fine, so what's Lepidstadt's problem?

student count last year, there were only two hundred twenty-four. It's fine, though; arguing about the number is part of the whole experience.

The Treyes Museum of Antiquities is where the Treyes brothers stuck those weird Kellid relics they found back in the day—not in *this* actual building, but one of its predecessors. It doesn't look like much but, like a tomb, all the interesting bits are underground. It's got archives and basements and storerooms underneath like one of those weeds that has a pretty flower on top and then root systems clear to Caliphas. No one actually knows what's in all of those storerooms. People keep donating stuff to us, old boxes full of Granddad's things, and we smile and take them and promise to catalog them just as soon as we get the budget for more archivists, perhaps sometime within the next century. There are rooms down there that are just plain lost. I once found a storeroom full of pinned moths and butterflies, including one enormous thing with a wingspan like an eagle. Never could find that room again.

The Rijiene School of Medicine was built by my great-grandfather, Theobald de Rijiene. I don't mean just that he funded it, though he did that too. See, old Theo came from Sarkoris—he wasn't always called Theo, though I don't know what his name was. I have no doubt the trail is cold after a hundred years, but it would be nice to learn some more about him. All I really know is that he got out of Sarkoris just a step ahead of the demons, and he brought a chest of gold with him. His condition for funding the School of Medicine was that he'd get to design it. The university wasn't going to let all that money walk away, so they agreed. I wonder about his architecture background as well. The place is an utter maze, a labyrinth that you can get lost in for days, and it smells musty no matter what.

Interesting fact number one: Theo died right after it was finished, no surprise since he was pushing ninety by then, but other students insist he's buried in the walls and his grave is empty. Weird to hear after years putting flowers on it. Interesting fact number two: Rijiene Hall is the unluckiest building on campus, with someone dying in it most years. Last year, a student managed to open an artery by accident during a dissection and bled out before anyone could help him. The year before that, someone's homunculus got loose in the School of Science next door and decided to move into our supply closet.

Laurelgauge Library is the oldest building on campus, since it's one of the few places that survived the fire back in the day. It's one of my favorite places on campus, this old building. It used to be a church, with shelves to the ceiling all around the nave. I'd go up to the mezzanine level, find a quiet corner, and curl up with a book. The librarians are friendly as well, though they're strict about making sure everyone leaves before curfew. No one wanders the library at night.

THE FACULTY AND STUDENT BODY

There are three sorts of students that end up at the University of Lepidstadt.

First, you've got the townies. They're not all from Lepidstadt, though plenty of them are, but they're basically what passes for normal around there. Mostly the children of doctors, lawyers, merchants, the better class of priest, and the like—enough money to be posh, but still work for a living. They tend to study law or theology or medicine, keep their heads down, and then graduate and go work somewhere in Ustalav or the surrounding countries. For a lawyer or a doctor, a degree from Lepidstadt means quality, so it's worth paying for. They're maybe half, two-thirds of the student body.

Then you've got the rich kids. They're mostly aristocratic sorts from the other counties, but we get people up from Brevoir or Varisia or even the River Kingdoms. See, if you're just an aristocrat, people might start thinking you've got more money than brains. But if you've been through Lepidstadt, spent some time in the Schools of Arts or Letters, then you've got polish, class. You can quote poetry, debate philosophy, speak a couple of extra languages, that sort of thing. Plenty of them still have more money than brains, but they can fake it, and that's worth paying for too. Others, though—for some of the aristocratic types, this is the first time in their lives they've been really challenged intellectually, and they

love it. Eat it up. It's a challenge, and they get good at it, obsessed sometimes. Count Haserton Lowls IV, heard of him? Used to be the Count of Versex until... you know? He was one of those. You can always find the rich kids in the dueling clubs—townies don't go in for that sort of thing.

What's a dueling club? Alright, this'll take a minute to explain. It's a particular brand of absurd that only happens in a country that hasn't been to war recently, I think. No sign of them stopping because of the Whispering Tyrant, though, so maybe I'm wrong. Anyway, there's a bunch of these special societies at the university, named things like the Malkenclaw or the Gateguard. They say they're all about the art and honor of the blade, and they'll teach you how to use a sword if you ask—that's how I learned—but the real thing is getting the scar.

Here's how it works. First, you learn the strikes. It's formalized and standardized to hell and back; you can do them with your eyes closed. Then they fit you out with enough armor and padding to immobilize an elk, except on the face. You stand there, and you start waving your swords at each other until one of you cuts the other. If you're lucky, you get a neat little scar like I've got. If you're really unlucky, you lose an eye. It's not really about the swordplay. It's about showing grit, showing courage. It's about not flinching. You see an aristocrat anywhere near Ustalav with a scar like this, you know that they might be a rich nitwit, but when the gauntlet's down they're not afraid of their own blood.

The last group of students, they're the obsessives. They come to the university and they're hungry for something. Hungry for meaning, for value, for knowing what the universe is really about. They're the ones you see reading the really special books at Laurelgaue or testing out some kind of unholy device at Fort Cindercairn. They're usually quiet, sometimes even friendly, until you get a really good look at their eyes. There's a light there and it's not a healthy one.

The faculty are a lot like the students, just more so. Some of them are just working the job. They've found a good spot, they're fed and out of the rain, and all they need to do is ramble about pre-Palatinat Lozeri short stories for a few hours a day. Good living if you can get it. Some of them are empire-builders. It's not about research, it's about power for them, and status. They're the ones that are always fighting with the Church of Pharamasma, or publishing editorials in the broadsheets, or giving speeches about the advancement of science. A lot of them look friendly, but they'll stab you in the back if you're getting in the way of getting a bigger office or a better dinner engagement—usually just metaphorically. Usually. There *was* Professor Domicci.

And then there's the faculty who are just the grown-up obsessives. Basically, some students hang around Lepidstadt so long, reading things that turn their brains crinkly and strange, that after a while the university just gives them a little office and a stipend and makes them teach students once in a blue moon to keep up appearances. You end up with one of those, you're in for an interesting time.

RIVALRIES

Let's be honest, no one likes the University of Lepidstadt all that much. We like to flatter ourselves that it's because we're so brilliant, but really, it's because we're a school of rich snobs, weird obsessives, and occasionally rich, weird obsessives.

We've had a bit of a feud with the Kitharodian Academy since Aroden was a baby. We're probably the most prestigious center of learning in the north of Avistan; they're probably the most prestigious center of learning in the south of Avistan. It doesn't help that they're all pretty and sociable and we're... mostly not. We don't hate each other or anything, but no proper Lepidstadter will ever pass up a chance to put those Kith kids in their place. That said, it's the kind of rivalry where it's us against the Kith, and us and the Kith against the world.

By world, we might mean the Magaambyans. Don't get me wrong, they're great, everybody loves them, but they're also a bit old-fashioned in their morality, if you get my drift. You know, they get a bit screechy when they see you meddling with life and death, studying things mortals were not meant to know, that kind of thing. Tere and I try to keep them away from Professor Nefritius-Sincoth.



LOST NAMES

Kateriyana's lost history is sadly common among the children of those who fled Sarkoris. Ustalav was particularly unwelcoming, so it's not surprising her ancestor abandoned his old name. It was similar in Mendeve during the Third Crusade, when every new face was seen as a potential demon.



DUELING

Although rigidly ritualized during practice, their sword techniques shine in the ring. They haven't brought anyone who can match Swordmaster Ganhil, but his students have found good sparring partners within the dueling clubs.

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We *really* try to keep them away from Dr. Ushernacht's machine. Easier for everybody that way, trust me.

Not that Tere isn't causing me a headache on his own. Apparently, he and that fancy actress from the Kith, Tatiana Lesantillo, were making sparks. This lasted almost a full week, and then she slapped him this morning and told him never to speak to her again. Knowing Tere, he probably deserved it, but it still makes things awkward.

THE ASTONISHING ENGINE

Behold, Dr. Ushernacht's Astonishing Engine! The wonder of the age! A marvel of modern Stasian technology and occult science! It's... okay, so it's a big cabinet. A fancy cabinet, I guess, silver inlay and rowan paneling over an iron core, some coils of wires, but let's be honest. It's a box. It isn't exciting. At least until you turn it on.

The interior of the engine is extremely sensitive, so we keep it sealed up. Even I can't get in there, just a few of Ushernacht's assistants in charge of making sure it keeps working. Not that I'd be able to help anyway; it's mostly full of liquid. That also means it's even heavier than it looks. But the assistants keep it topped off and replace the coils when they burn out. Don't get me wrong—they probably do other stuff too. Wires just work a lot differently than veins, so it's not my area.

Here's how it works, to my understanding. If you're not sure it's on, it definitely isn't. There'll be lightning crackling in coils and probably making something like a face. Then you can ask it a question. It can hear you sometimes, but I suggest writing it on a little piece of paper and slipping it into the slot there. It's smart. Smarter than you, smarter than me, smarter than basically anybody. Do you want to know how much money you can earn on Druman silk at one and four ninths compound interest per lunar cycle in four years, after accounting for Andoran tariff changes? It can do that. Find the most efficient way to feed a village of seventy-eight using just nine acres of land? It can do that too. It's best at math—Dr. Ushernacht's still working out some of the kinks with other answers. It's not that it can't answer with stuff other than numbers. It's just... creepy.

The answer comes back in about a minute. The face in the lightning I mentioned, it's always changing and doesn't exactly talk... but it will stare at you while the coils drone out the answer. The talking is a relatively recent addition; it used to spit your paper back with an answer scrawled on it. It still will sometimes, but it doesn't help. Its handwriting is even harder to understand than its voice.

Still, that's mostly not why it's creepy. For starters, the reason I said to stick to math? When you ask it a question that isn't forty-seven times the square root of nineteen,

sometimes it gives you good, well-reasoned information. Sometimes it gives you gibberish. And sometimes it gives you anguished gibberish that makes you bleed and wake with screaming nightmares for weeks. I think they fixed that issue, but I stopped letting Dr. Ushernacht test the thing on me after that.

Thankfully, there's no compulsion to act on its advice—it just reinforces everyone's ideas about us. The Pharasmins from our school are bad enough, let alone with the Magaambyans and everybody else getting on our case. People will get upset and everyone will be shouting and absolutely nothing useful is going to get done anywhere.

The process was explained to me as being like asking a couple of hundred people that question, all of whom give it their best faith effort, discuss, and debate ideas. And we're not talking the wisdom of the tavern here either. It's like asking professors and authors, experts in their fields. Only the discussion stops before your tea gets cold and you actually get an answer at the end.

Some of our more religious students were convinced the whole box was full of bound spirits. Which... we don't see eye to eye all the time, but I can't fault them for that. They snuck out one night on the way here and tried to exorcise it. That I'll fault them for, especially because if they'd been right there would be hundreds of ghosts everywhere, but nothing happened. It's what Ushernacht said: a scientific and occult marvel, rather than one built out of undead. So, if you'd pass along that we already checked and it isn't haunted, that would be a huge help.

Speaking of traveling, one more interesting thing the engine can do: you can tap into its knowledge from range with some of this ink. The alchemists are still working on the smell, but it's not like you have to drink it. Just write out a question and it'll scrawl an answer with all the wisdom it can borrow from the engine.

The doctor's been thinking about leaving this one in Nerosyan if people here want it. I think it's safe to say that's an open question. He's already working on a bigger one in Lepidstadt and keeps trying to convince other countries to fund more research.

DR. USHERNACHT'S ASTONISHING INK

ITEM 3+

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate 10 minutes (manipulate)

This syrupy ink smells organic and faintly spoiled. It's tied to one of Ushernacht's engines, created with a sample of the fluid from inside the engine. If the associated engine stops functioning, all ink linked with it can no longer be activated, including freshly created ink.

When you write a question on a sheet of paper using the astonishing ink, handwriting scrawls over the paper after 10 minutes, answering with the knowledge it can draw from its engine. The astonishing ink has all Lore skills and attempts a Recall Knowledge check to answer the question using the listed bonus. At the GM's discretion, the astonishing ink takes a -4 circumstance penalty to the check if the question relates to advice, emotions, opinions, or other subjective topics.

If the astonishing ink fails (but not critically fails) the check to Recall Knowledge, the writing turns blood-red as it forms disturbing words. Anyone reading these words must succeed at a Will save at the listed DC or become stupefied 1 until they get a full night's rest. The bloody message may also carry valuable or misleading information at the GM's discretion.

You can use a vial of astonishing ink to ask 5 questions before it's used up.

Type minor; **Level** 3; **Price** 10 gp

The ink has a +10 modifier, and the Will DC is 18.

Type moderate; **Level** 10; **Price** 160 gp

The ink has a +19 modifier, and the Will DC is 27.

Type major; **Level** 17; **Price** 2,250 gp

The ink has a +28 modifier, and the Will DC is 36.



OLD TIES

People keep asking us if we know what Lepidstadt is keeping inside that machine of theirs, like they're expecting there's a brain but they can't say it. Kith and the Lepidstadters have a lot of history, so let me clear it up: if all that's in there is a brain, we should count ourselves lucky.

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CHERIS NEFRITIUS-SINCOTH

Shy male human occultist

It's easy to overlook Professor Nefritius-Sincoth. You wouldn't think so, given his fashion habits. He's the one over there in the searing magenta frock coat. That's his least offensive outfit, by the way. I helped him pick it out and everything. Consider that a token of Lepidstadt's friendship to the rest of the world, because you do not want to see the bright chartreuse ensemble. We're still taking bets on whether the professor is colorblind and at the mercy of a truly sadistic tailor, or if he actually dresses this way intentionally.

Now that you see him, you're probably wondering how you ever missed him. Well, it's not that the professor is unobtrusive, exactly—clothing aside, he's over six feet tall and has the most striking violet eyes you've ever seen—but he's shy. He cringes in on himself. He's quiet. He doesn't want to make a fuss. If you talk to him, he doesn't meet your eyes and he stutters and he's just painfully awkward.

Until, that is, you get him talking about history. Particularly the weird sort of history. I'm not sure how to explain it better. You ask most professors in the history department, and they'll talk to you about Kellid burial practices or Taldan dynastic politics. You ask Nefritius-Sincoth, and he'll tell you about the connection between ancient Osirian architecture and the astronomical movements of Aucturn. Or the influence of deep-sea fish on ancient Azlant. Or who *really* founded Thrushmoor, and why. I'm about two-thirds convinced that he's reading Caliphas tabloids down there, but he's persuasive, and I always have this funny feeling that he's telling the truth. Maybe more truth than most people want to hear.

Where does he get it? Plenty of it is because the professor reads. You and I are out here talking and drinking like your average person likes to do, right? The professor doesn't do that. He reads, day, night, and if I'm going to be entirely honest, I'm not convinced he sleeps. The University of Lepidstadt has a lot of books, and it's safe to say some of those books have things in them that most people don't know. Laurelgauge Library doesn't like to share those books, but he's a professor, so he can get them. Some of it might be because he's in the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye, and they always know more than they say. But some of it is because the professor is a good listener, and things talk to him.

And I do mean things, not people. Sometimes when you're speaking to him, he gets a faraway look in his eye—most people assume he's zoning out or shutting down, but then he'll say the most disturbing thing you've ever heard with a confidence you've never seen in him before. Most students who experience that learn to stay away, but I've never been most people. So once, when I was in the labs late, I saw the professor going out, and I figured I'd follow. I'm nosy, I admit it. He walked out to the old university cemetery, sat down on a tombstone, and started munching on an apple. I hid behind a tree, and I was just about to start feeling exceedingly silly when something showed up, just congealed out of the mist. Like a person but wrong. You know, proportions that didn't quite fit and too many arms? No face, though, just a blank space. Nefritius-Sincoth gave it an apple and, while they both watched it wither, he took some notes like he was listening to a lecture, even though the thing never said a word. Then it was just gone and what was left of the apple blew away. The professor gave me his hiding spot that awkward little wave he uses when you run into him in the library and headed back inside.

ANNUNCIATION OF THE OUTER

GATE

SPELL 3

RARE **AUDITORY** **CONCENTRATE** **MENTAL**

Traditions divine, occult

Area 30-foot emanation

Defense Will; Duration 10 minutes (see text)

You announce yourself in the name of certain grim pacts that predate mortal life. This is not a compulsion, but rather an invitation of sorts.

The invitation is understood by creatures in the area with telepathy and any who understand Aklo, Chthonian, Empyrean, Fey, or Utopian.

Those who accept the invitation cannot take hostile action against others who agreed until 10 minutes pass and can communicate telepathically with them during that time. This effect ends immediately if any hostile action is taken against a creature that agreed.

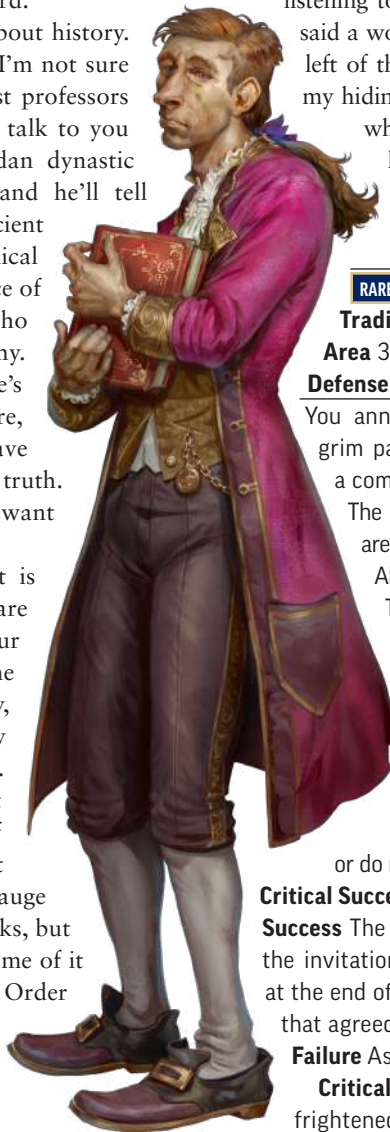
Those creatures who decline the choice or do not understand it must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success Nothing happens.

Success The creature is frightened 1. If it understood the invitation, its frightened status doesn't decrease at the end of any turn in which it damaged a creature that agreed to the invitation.

Failure As success, but the creature is frightened 2.

Critical Failure As success, but the creature is frightened 3.



TERE ATHLANERE

Contradictory male human magician

Three things you need to know about Tere. First, he is really, *really* pretty. Something about that relaxed, too-cool-for-life attitude combined with those blue eyes just makes bad ideas seem surprisingly reasonable. Second, he's quite possibly the most irritating individual I have ever met in my life—we dated for almost three months and by the second month I was seriously considering bashing his head in with a shovel. Third, I'd trust him with my life, so I'm mostly glad he came.

Tere comes from some tiny place out in the River Kingdoms, not really sure where, might be out toward Iobaria even. He doesn't really talk about it, but reading between the lines it's pretty clear that his life wasn't sunshine and roses, and he lost somebody important when he was a kid—maybe a parent, maybe a sibling. Not my business. At any rate, he came to Lepidstadt to study medicine, make sure that whatever it was that happened doesn't ever happen again. And Tere's good at it. He's got nimble fingers and iron nerves, and that's what you want in a surgeon, plus he's smart enough to learn a bit of magic at that.

It comes in handy for his other job too. Problem—every copper that Tere's village had was just about enough for three semesters' worth of studies. So to pay the bills, Tere works as a magician. Not a wizard, but a magician, you know, the sort that puts on shows, does tricks with cards, makes live doves go poof, things like that. Tere the Magnificent mostly does street performances in front of the Council House or the Pharasmin cathedral. Most of Lepidstadt knows him as a showman first, and only those of us at the university know he's a medical student.

It suits him, really. Thing with Tere is that he loves annoying people. It can be subtle—he's always friendly in that relaxed, world-weary way he's got, but he likes to wind people up. He'll act silly or cynical, he'll cause trouble, he'll get people worked up and then stand back and watch the fun. Worse yet, he can be shockingly moral, which *really* gets people yelling. He'd never try to hurt or bully anyone, but I can't say he doesn't do it by accident sometimes. He's a natural at getting under people's skin; it's gotten him slapped plenty of times and even challenged to a couple duels.

That said, when things get serious, then Tere shuts up and gets to work. You invite Tere out to coffee and your nerves are going to be scraped raw by the end of the hour. But you knock on his door at three in the morning and tell him someone got mauled by a demon that came over the river, then he'll grab his doctor's bag and you won't hear a word until the crisis's passed. Just don't expect that reliable behavior at the school formal or you'll end up hating him like that posh Kith actress.

PERFORMER'S TREATMENT

FEAT 2

RARE GENERAL SKILL

Prerequisites expert in Medicine, expert in Performance

With your experience as a performer, you can keep a set of medical tools handy at all times. You can wear a healer's toolkit (*Player Core* 288) as part of any costume or disguise. Creatures will generally only notice the toolkit if they use a Seek action and succeed at a Perception check against your Performance DC.

In addition, you can realize at the last moment when you should just be pretending to avoid doing any lasting harm. When you critically fail a Medicine check to Administer First Aid, Treat Disease, Treat Poison, or Treat Wounds, you can attempt a Performance check against the patient's Perception DC. On a success, your critical failure at the Medicine check becomes a failure.



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LEPIDSTADT GADGETS

The University of Lepidstadt's School of Science has a well-deserved reputation for creating all manner of strange and otherworldly devices. Their progress took a leap forward when Stasian coils were smuggled in from Irrisen, opening the way for the School of Engineering to split off. Now, it seems like every student with the resources is finding novel uses for the technology.

One major breakthrough has been in the treatment of glass. Although resistant to the coils' arcing electricity, it accumulates subtler occult energies. With the glass usable by students who don't have direct access to the coils, it's created another burst of innovation.

Gadgets are consumable technological innovations, as described on page 66 of *Guns & Gears*.

AETHERIC IRRITANT

ITEM 1+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE GADGET SONIC

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

An aetheric irritant is a chime that can emit a subsonic frequency that otherworldly beings find unpleasant. When you Activate an aetheric irritant, you sound the chime and place it on the ground in a square within your reach. Creatures with the fey, spirit, or undead traits must attempt a Will save when they enter the affected area and at the beginning of every turn they are in the affected area. Those who fail the save treat the area as difficult terrain until the beginning of their next turn. A creature that critically succeeds at the save is immune to all aetheric irritants for 24 hours. An aetheric irritant continues to hum until it shakes itself to pieces after 10 minutes of being activated or it is moved, whichever comes first.

Type lesser; **Level** 1; **Price** 4 gp

The aetheric irritant affects an area in a 10-foot emanation and the Will DC is 15.

Type moderate; **Level** 3; **Price** 11 gp

The aetheric irritant affects an area in a 15-foot emanation and the Will DC is 18.

Type greater; **Level** 11; **Price** 275 gp

The aetheric irritant affects an area in a 20-foot emanation and the Will DC is 28.

Type major; **Level** 17; **Price** 2,750 gp

The aetheric irritant affects an area in a 30-foot emanation and the Will DC is 36.

KRASOVNATYPE

ITEM 4

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE GADGET

Price 15 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

A krasovnatype (named after Dr. Krasovna Gerenevich) consists of a carefully prepared silvered glass plate charged by

a Stasian coil. When you touch the front of the glass or hold it near a living creature within your reach, an image of that creature's aura is imprinted on the glass. Once a krasovnatype has an image on it, you can't use the glass plate on another creature. If you are trained in Occultism, you can look at the image and learn if the associated creature has innate, prepared, or spontaneous spellcasting, along with the tradition of that casting and the highest rank of spells they can cast. Referencing the image grants a +1 item bonus to any Recall Knowledge check regarding the creature.

MAELSTROMIC DESTABILIZER

ITEM 2+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE GADGET SPIRIT

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

A maelstromic destabilizer is a whirling gyroscope of burnished bronze and glass. It strengthens the bonds that hold a creature to this world by weakening those same bonds to every other nearby creature. When activated, the destabilizer emits a constant pleasant chime as it spins. For the next minute, the creature holding the gadget gains the listed resistance to spirit damage, while all creatures not immune to spirit damage in a 10-foot emanation gain the listed weakness to spirit damage.

Type lesser; **Level** 2; **Price** 6 gp

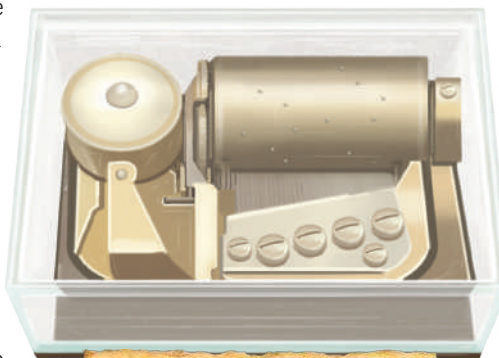
The value for the spirit resistance and weakness is 2.

Type moderate; **Level** 7; **Price** 65 gp

The value for the spirit resistance and weakness is 5.

Type major; **Level** 17; **Price** 2,750 gp

The value for the spirit resistance and weakness is 10.



AETHERIC IRRITANT

MORITYPE

ITEM 10+

RARE CONSUMABLE GADGET VOID

Usage used in 2 hands; **Bulk** 1

Activate ◆ (manipulate)

This plate of smoky glass is a variation on Dr. Krasovna Gerenevich's krasovnatype that is imprinted with void energies. Creating the plate requires a living thing to die as part of its electrical charging; most creators use insects or lab mice. The moritype creates an image in the same way as a krasovnatype, but also siphons off part of that aura. If used on a living creature, that creature must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success If the creature has any innate, prepared, or spontaneous spells, they're unable to Cast a Spell of their highest-ranked slot for 1 round. Cantrips and focus spells are unaffected.

Failure As success, except they can't cast the 2 highest ranks they have available.

Critical Failure As success, except they can't cast any spells other than cantrips and focus spells.

Type moritype; **Level** 10; **Price** 200 gp

The Will DC is 27.

Type greater moritype; **Level** 16; **Price** 2,000 gp

The Will DC is 35.

PORTABLE SEAL

ITEM 6+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE GADGET MAGICAL

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** 1

Activate ♦♦ (manipulate)

A portable seal is a stiff framework of copper wires and strategically placed hinges, so that when the device is snapped open it forms an instant geometric design. A tiny Stasian coil is attached, which when activated runs a mixture of occult energy and high-voltage electricity through the wire. The design covers a 5-foot burst when unfolded and must be unfolded into an area free of major obstructions such as rocks or hostile creatures. When a creature with the summoned trait attempts to enter the seal's area or make a melee Strike against a creature in that area, the summoned creature must attempt a Will save.

Success The action occurs normally, and the creature is immune to the effects of this portable seal this round.

Failure The movement or Strike is disrupted, but the creature is immune to further effects of the portable seal this round.

Critical Failure The movement or Strike is disrupted.

Type lesser; **Level** 6; **Price** 45 gp

The Will DC is 20.

Type moderate; **Level** 12; **Price** 400 gp

The Will DC is 28.

Type major; **Level** 18; **Price** 5,000 gp

The Will DC is 36.

QUARTZ-COIL RAIL TRANSPORT

ITEM 4+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE ELECTRICITY GADGET TELEPORTATION

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦♦ (manipulate)

This odd metal rod is often misinterpreted as a mechanical wand of some kind. Any gadgeteer or mage will be able to elaborate on the fact that magic wands do not need to be thoroughly covered in a copper wire coil and that the pointed quartz crystal at its tip thrums with electricity, not magic. When activated, electricity courses through you, allowing you to move through the voltage that arcs through the air. You instantly transport yourself and any items you're wearing and holding from your current space to an unoccupied space up to 20 feet away that you can see. If this would bring another creature with you—even if you're carrying it in an extradimensional container—the teleportation fails. You and all creatures in a line between your original location and your destination take 2 electricity damage.

Type lesser; **Level** 4; **Price** 20 gp

Type moderate; **Level** 9; **Price** 150 gp

The distance you can teleport increases to 40 feet, and the electricity damage increases to 4.

Type greater; **Level** 14; **Price** 650 gp

The distance you can teleport increases to 60 feet, and the electricity damage increases to 6.

Type major; **Level** 19; **Price** 8,000 gp

The distance you can teleport increases to 80 feet, and the electricity damage increases to 8.

STATIC-MUSCULAR RELAY

ITEM 10

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE ELECTRICITY GADGET

Price 180 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

This glass orb has a Stasian coil in the center, allowing visible electricity to be safely seen within the glass. The electricity that dances within this orb can be transferred to the user of this gadget, allowing their muscles to react and respond much quicker. When activated, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Reflex saves and AC for 1 minute, or until you are hit by an attack or fail a Reflex saving throw, whichever happens first.

TANGIBILITY RESONATOR

ITEM 5+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE GADGET SONIC

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

One of the stranger devices to come out of the University of Lepidstadt is a twisted glass contraption that hums with electricity. This vibration is harmless to most but is massively disruptive to the locomotion of incorporeal creatures. When activated, one incorporeal creature within 15 feet must attempt a DC 19 Fortitude saving throw. Once used, the vibrations cause the glass to shatter.

Success The target is unaffected.

Failure The target is immobilized for 1 round.

Critical Failure The target is immobilized and off-guard for 1 round.

Type lesser; **Level** 5; **Price** 25 gp

Type moderate; **Level** 11; **Price** 300 gp

The Fortitude DC is 27.

Type major; **Level** 17; **Price** 2,500 gp

The Fortitude DC is 35.

VANISHING SHOCKER

ITEM 7+

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE ELECTRICITY GADGET ILLUSION MAGICAL

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

The vanishing shocker is a cube with extruding spikes at each corner. This inscrutable device channels occult energy through the electricity it produces, creating the result of invisible lighting. When activated, the cube floats above your head, creating a field of invisible electricity in a 10-foot emanation that lasts for 1 round. You and creatures within the emanation are concealed. Creatures that enter or start their turn within the area must attempt a DC 22 Reflex save.

Success The target is unaffected.

Failure The target is off-guard for 1 round.

Critical Failure The target is clumsy 1 and off-guard for 1 round.

Type lesser; **Level** 7; **Price** 70 gp

Type moderate; **Level** 11; **Price** 300 gp

The Reflex DC is 27.

Type greater; **Level** 15; **Price** 1,300 gp

The Reflex DC is 33.

Type major; **Level** 19; **Price** 8,000 gp

The Reflex DC is 38.



MAELSTROMIC DESTABILIZER

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LEPIDSTADT SURGEON

To be a surgeon is to be akin to a god. In your hands is the power of life and death. With a flick of a knife, you can excise a tumor. With another, you can sever an artery. Everything comes down to your skill, to the steadiness of your hand, the keenness of your eye, and the knowledge of your mind. Little wonder, then, that in Lepidstadt, surrounded by powers and temptations, surgeons sometimes go a few steps further. With the right reagents, with the proper equipment, even death is only a temporary inconvenience, a shadow to be chased from the door with kicks and shouts. Just imagine the possibilities.

Additional Feats: 6th No, No, I Created You! (*Pathfinder Guns & Gears* 25)

LEPIDSTADT SURGEON DEDICATION

FEAT 2

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

Prerequisites trained in Medicine, attended the University of Lepidstadt

Before everything else, before the blood and the monsters and the Stasian technology and the horror, you are a



doctor. You are, in fact, an exceptionally good doctor. You become an expert in Medicine. When you successfully Administer First Aid to stabilize a dying creature that doesn't yet have the wounded condition, it regains 2d8 Hit Points; this healing increases by 10 when you are a master of Medicine and by another 10 when you are legendary in Medicine. When you successfully Administer First Aid to stop bleeding, the target rolls the flat check (with lowered DC for an assisted recovery) twice and takes the better result; this is a fortune effect.

IN LIGHTNING, LIFE

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE CONCENTRATE ELECTRICITY HEALING MANIPULATE

Prerequisites Lepidstadt Surgeon Dedication

Frequency once per 10 minutes

Requirements You're wearing or holding a healer's toolkit.

"In lightning, there is life." This lesson is whispered throughout Lepidstadt, and you can put it to practical use. You have integrated a miniature Stasian coil into your healer's toolkit. You use the coil to gently shock a willing or unconscious ally within your reach, who gains 2d4 temporary Hit Points from the jolt. These temporary Hit Points last for 1 minute. These temporary Hit Points increase by 1d4 at 8th level and every 4 levels thereafter.

A creature that has resistance or immunity to electricity is immune to this ability, and a creature that received temporary Hit Points from In Lightning, Life is temporarily immune to it for 24 hours.

RISE, MY CREATURE!

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Lepidstadt Surgeon Dedication

You have created life! You have usurped the power of the gods themselves! You gain a prototype construct companion (*Guns & Gears* 32) pieced together from corpses and animated by chemicals or Stasian technology. You use Medicine in place of Crafting to Repair your construct or rebuild it if it's been destroyed.

Your creation has an affinity for the lightning that brought it to life. When your construct companion takes electricity damage, it gains a +1 circumstance bonus to its Athletics skill checks until the end of its next turn.

Although the coils or alchemical residue make it obvious to you and those with similar training that your creation is not undead, others must generally succeed at a DC 15 Crafting, Medicine, or Religion check to verify those claims with Recall Knowledge.

ARTERY MAP

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Lepidstadt Surgeon Dedication

While you've learned all the places a scalpel can cause extensive bleeding to avoid disasters in surgery, such knowledge can serve other purposes. When you Strike an off-guard creature with a weapon from the knife group, you deal 1d6 persistent bleed damage. The damage increases to 1d10 when you are legendary in Medicine.

LET MY CREATURE LIVE!

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Rise, My Creature!

You continue to tinker with your creation's muscles and rudimentary mind, granting it a limited form of autonomy. Your construct companion becomes an advanced construct companion (*Guns & Gears* 33). During an encounter, even if you don't use the Command a Minion action, your construct companion can still use 1 action on your turn that round to Stride or Strike.

BEAUTIFUL KNIFEWORX

FEAT 7

ARCHETYPE | EXPLORATION | MANIPULATE | SKILL

Prerequisite Lepidstadt Surgeon Dedication, master in Medicine

You perform surgical adjustments to disguise a willing ally or your construct companion. This counts as preparing a disguise to Impersonate (*Player Core* 238), taking 10 minutes and requiring a healer's toolkit instead of a disguise kit. The DC to see through the deception with Seek is your Medicine DC unless the disguised character's Deception DC is higher. If the target directly interacts with someone while disguised, they gain a +2 circumstance bonus to their Deception check.

You can reverse this effect with another 10-minute surgery. The disguised character can also end it as a free action when they receive any healing effect.

BEHOLD MY CREATION!

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Let My Creature Live!

You have rebuilt your creation once more. It is greater now, more than it once was. Soon, it shall be greater still. Your construct companion becomes an incredible construct companion (*Guns & Gears* 33).

STASIAN CHARGE

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites In Lightning, Life

Charging a living body with electricity may seem like a bad idea, but you know better. When a creature gains temporary Hit Points from your In Lightning, Life, they gain the quickened condition until the end of their next turn. They can use the extra action only for Stride and Strike actions.

STAND BACK, I'M A DOCTOR! ♦♦

FEAT 12

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Lepidstadt Surgeon Dedication, master in Medicine

Requirements You are holding healer's tools, or you are wearing them and have a hand free; a creature with the dying condition is in your reach.

You have mastered techniques to aid those at the brink of death, even if they use dangerous Stasian technology. Attempt a Medicine check on the dying creature as you deliver it a powerful shock. The DC is usually a standard-difficulty DC of a level equal to the target. On a success, the creature's dying condition is reduced by 1 (or 2 on a critical success); if this reduces the value of the dying condition to 0, the creature regains 2d8+10 Hit Points, its wounded condition doesn't increase, and it can Stand as a free action. Each creature except you adjacent to the target takes 8d6 electricity damage (basic Reflex save against your class DC or spell DC); instead of attempting this save, a creature can Step as a free action and if they end this movement not adjacent to the target, they take no damage.

A MIRACLE OF SCIENCE!

FEAT 14

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisite Behold My Creation!

Once, you dreamed of creating life. Now you know that merely creating life lacks ambition. No, you have taken life and improved upon it. Your construct companion becomes a paragon construct companion (*Guns & Gears* 33).

TO LIVE

Although the Lepidstadt surgeon archetype's construct companion often resemble charnel creations (*Monster Core* 61), more experimental designs resemble a larger homunculus (*Monster Core* 300) instead. Unlike such mindless constructs, the companions have at least an animalistic intelligence.

The flesh and blood used to create the companion often carry a few quirks that shine through. Although a favored food or remembered snippet of music might move the construct to tears, they remain fundamentally loyal to their creator.

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INVITEES

From the earliest days of planning for the Convocation, we sought to bring as many schools as possible from every part of Golarion. After all, if the Magaambyans and a House of Perfection are interested in traveling so far, why should we assume that a particular school's representatives wouldn't be willing to make the trip, no matter how remote this troubled piece of world might be for them? The ideals that this Convocation stands for—the preservation of the magical and cultural knowledge that, as we have learned so painfully, might be wiped out in almost the blink of an eye—should appeal to anyone who has studied the past. From Earthfall to the destruction of Lastwall by the Whispering Tyrant, the many peoples of this world have withstood cataclysm after cataclysm. Our aim in this Convocation is to make these varied traditions as sturdy and steadfast. If the traditions remain, then we shall remain as well.

And, perhaps selfishly, the project of reclaiming our lands is no simple thing. Who is to say what obscure library or distant corner of our world holds the solution to each part of that puzzle?

So, with the aid of the Magaambyans and their network of contacts, we identified and sent invitations far and wide. From those who responded early and enthusiastically, we drew the other sponsors and began

planning the event itself. All the while, we felt that the Convocation wouldn't truly achieve its aims unless we had more schools involved. So we redoubled our efforts, both to contact schools and to prepare more room to accommodate them, should they venture here. We reassured them that Nerosyan is quite safe and that venturing into the wilds of Mendev or the Sarkorian Scar would be optional. We emphasized how much they have to gain from sharing their knowledge and forming connections. We assured them that they would have access to the comforts that they enjoy at home—this has definitely been the most difficult promise to keep!

It always seems to be the case, when attempting to achieve consensus and unity of any kind among a gathering of souls, that discord too stalks our endeavors. We knew from the beginning that, in casting so wide a net, we were bound to create some friction. How could so many different peoples, cultures, and approaches jammed into our small city be always in harmony? Rivalries are only intensified by being brought so close together, and the Academy of the Reclamation can only handle so many of these disputes while also trying to run the events and achieve their goals. In general, though, the cooperative spirit predominates, and we look forward to each new day's adventure.

AESRA FLEETHOOF

Many schools are here because they accepted our invitations, and a great many more are not among us because they declined. I'll admit to a little sadness and even surprise over the schools that refused us, but the biggest surprise of all is the delegation from the Halls of Revelation in Iblydos. This school is distant and largely outside the Convocation's expertise—its focus is divine magic, many of its teachers are cyclopes, and its studies still concern the future despite the changing of the age. Because of this, we never thought to invite them—yet here they are. **Aesra Fleethoof** (page 100) and the rest aren't exactly unwelcome, but we don't really know how to fit them in. Scrambling to find accommodations was a headache, although they were able to set something up in the incomplete astronomy building. The headache has continued with complaints from the more legalistic representatives, like Chiral and Messida Vost.

ALAMYRA JADWIGA

Closer to our home and to our own traditions of god calling are schools that focus on using magic to summon powerful beings and call on them for aid. In our traditions, these beings are drawn from the many gods that provide guidance to all parts of the world, big and small. Foreign traditions distinguish their eidolons, claiming they're summoned from many different origins. Even if they lack the reverence for a god or the simple respect for a partner, their arts are akin to ours.

So, although these traditions approach their summoning differently, there is still much that our Sarkorian god callers can learn from them. Take **Alamyra Jadwiga** (page 101), for example. She hails from Irrisen, a frozen land where winter reigns supreme throughout the year. Her Bloodstone Conservatory hews close to the magical traditions of mighty witches with no less a lineage than Baba Yaga herself. She has studied for years among an alliance of humans, goblins, fey, and more elusive spirits. Their wisdom has become an integral part of her magical repertoire, enriching her understanding of the intricate dance between the natural and supernatural. She uses all of these perspectives and magical backgrounds to complement her summoning talents, not unlike this Convocation.

The school is tiny and exclusive, so small—they explained—that they couldn't be sponsors of the Convocation. Though no one has said so, I suspect that they were also limited by their resources, which might be stretched as thin as ours. Their lectures are well-attended, and the powerful beings that accompany them, such as whatever lives inside Alamyra Jadwiga's doll and a striking being of ice that resembles a witchwarg, attract no small amount of attention. But the Irriseni tend to be somewhat aloof otherwise, and I rarely see them participating in festivals and games—except in the Basilisk league, which enjoys their fullest support. Their players are certainly dedicated and might even be called fierce.

INVITEES BY SCHOOL

School	Invitee
Acadamae	Messida
Academy of the Sublime	Chiral
Arcanamirium	Venorium
Bloodstone Conservatory	Alamyra
Dacilane Academy	J Dacilane
Divine Conservatory of Magic	Veasna
Hall of Lambent Oaths	Ehmik
Halls of Revelation	Aesara
Indraracha Institute	Thanom
Kimanéz University	Nochtli
Proving Grounds	Gaprak
Synostosis Academy	Zenda

CHIRAL

I am delighted to report that our efforts to bring a wide range of knowledge and perspectives to the Convocation have not disappointed. Some have even come from beyond Golarion, as **Chiral** (page 102) responded to Cobyslarni's call, joining us from the Academy of the Sublime, a school in an extraplanar city of pure order called Axis. I have learned that they are—as impossible as this might sound—a sentient being of pure math, with the ability to take humanoid form. These axiomites are apparently distant kin to the conrasu that attend the Magaambya, which doesn't help clarify matters much. Their city is a metropolis so vast that it fills an entire plane of existence (truly, it surpasses my understanding) and is home to many gods whose actions support the operation of the entire universe. Chiral has offered quite unorthodox ideas on how to begin rebuilding our nation—certainly, there are perspectives that we never would've considered!

EHMIK NARUUJ

Like our own Academy of the Reclamation, the Hall of Lambent Oaths has been recently founded on historical roots, and they are eager to build their reputation and their networks. Their nation of Thuvia is best known for the single alchemist who brews the highly desirable sun orchid elixir which grants youth. **Ehmik Naruuj** (page 103) and the others at the school want something more for their nation. They've dug into their past, at even more arduous depths than ours, in a quest to rediscover the magic used to create the powerful constructs that served their ancestors in ages past. Although such creations are perhaps closer to Lepidstadt's expertise, the techniques used to recover the knowledge certainly interest me!

GAZRYN NU'DARGA

Although another newly founded school, the Proving Grounds of the hobgoblin nation of Oprak is carving a new path along with their nation. The students there do keep a militaristic regimen that is at odds with the general tone of the Convocation, but the complaints so far are largely restricted to what hours they choose

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to drill. I must admit their appreciation for cultural aspects of the Convocation are muted and they really can't dance. But they are enthusiastic lecturers as well as powerful Basilisk contenders—everyone is eager to see their teams match up against the Bloodstone Conservatory. Their primarch **Gazryn Nu'Darga** (page 104) also seems genuinely interested in forming partnerships with schools beyond Oprak's borders, even if his intensity and military focus make that difficult.

J DACILANE

The group I worry about the most comes to us from Dacilane Academy, a school named for its benefactor, **J Dacilane** (page 105). Unlike the other schools attending, this institution teaches exclusively children. But because the school is affiliated with the Pathfinder Society—indeed, its students are mostly the children of Society members—they were keen to be a part of our Convocation. For how could they not participate in a gathering intent on preserving knowledge, fostering alliances, and setting up explorations? It's at the heart of all they undertake.

So far, they've been good about keeping their students from harm, but it's no small thing to be chaperoning children amid the bustle and energy of the Convocation's myriad events.

MESSIDA VOST

As intimidating as the Irriseni and the Opraki can be, they are nowhere near as difficult to approach as **Messida Vost** (page 106). She's the Dean of Summoning at the Acadamae, perhaps the world's greatest expert on summoning. She'll tell you as much. Setting aside the many complaints about her imperious demeanor and overbearing opinions, her solutions to our problems are as unorthodox as Chiral's.

In this case, I have more than just academic doubts, as she seeks to summon the denizens of the Outer Rifts to fight against their own! She calls the type she summons qliphoths and several independent sources have verified that they hate demons even more than they hate mortals. But her claim that training a strike force of qliphoth summoners would be the best way to rid the Sarkoris Scar and Mendev of their remaining demons? I'm not at all sure to what extent she's put this into practice, but it seems to me a dangerous and foolhardy plan that could easily add to the demonic hordes.

It's definitely the case that her students summon imps—again not demons on a technicality; they claim the ones that wrecked so much of the Kitharodian exhibit were local wild imps. Although Dean Vost and her students have returned enough demon heads from the wastes to keep the balance in their favor for now, the chances for the Academy of the Reclamation building a true partnership with Acadamae are slim, and that fact doesn't upset me.

NOCHTLI TLATOA

Many schools have claims to rich histories, even those outside our normal knowledge. Magaambya's vast network of contacts and Cobyslarni's travels were vital in helping us invite schools like Kimanéz University. They're a school of magical botanists from the Arcadian nation of Xopatl, where traditions of powerful magic wielded by hero-gods sound, to me, quite a bit like our Sarkorian ones. As might be expected with the distance and their nation's traditional isolate, their customs and pastimes are quite different from ours—they are utterly unfamiliar with the games of Basilisk and drouge, for example. But they pick them up quickly, while their games seem rather opaque to the students here, games of light and growth that call on the widespread magic of the homeland. Thankfully, the love of dance and music surpasses simple distance. And their fervor for demon-hunting matches our own, which I suppose speaks to the tragedy that brought them such great distances to help.

Out of the invitees, they certainly have the proposals that excite me most. If you can get **Nochtli Tlatoa** (page 107) to slow down and explain her actual plans, her strange plants and fungus somewhat resemble the Dolok trees that have helped regrow the Forest of Embers. With so much magic here and so many with the skills to gather samples of the plants that withstood our homeland's changes, her contribution might continue long after she returns to Arcadia.

THANOM

Perhaps the Indraracha Institute could help as well, although I confess that's just my impression from **Thanom** (page 108) having brought samples of herbs and even a tree from Tang Mai. He's quite a skilled healer and alchemist, but the other attendees from Indraracha are having a little more trouble adjusting. Their entire approach to magic seems focused around determining what the student has waiting in their blood rather than depending on the knowledge of years of arcane study. They've attracted some attention from those who wish to see Sarkoris rebuilt without a hint of wizardry. Sadly, the same lost records that vex us when reconstructing family histories make their insights difficult to put into practice.

VEASNA

No less intriguing is the delegation that traveled with the Indraracha Institute from another school in Tian Xia, this one the Divine Conservatory of Magic from their neighbors in Nagajor. When we invited the Nagajor school, we knew only that they were well-regarded for their enlightened teaching styles—the Magaambyans themselves admitted to knowing little more, which for them is reason enough to extend an invitation. Imagine our surprise when the delegation is led by the naga **Veasna** (page 109). The entire school apparently exists to carry out the sacred duty

of the awakener nagas, properly called vicharamuni, to guide and nurture mortals. Although Veasna's serpentine appearance has frightened many students from schools like Kitharodian that expect guidance to come in a humanoid form, her patience has endeared her even to the children of the Dacilane Academy.

VENORIUM BLOOM

Located in Absalom like the Dacilane Academy, the Arcanamirium is the oldest and most influential wizarding school in that city. Because it was founded by the Arclords of Nex, the school has a pedigree almost as impressive as the Magaambya, and the lists of its famous graduates are scribed in history. Given their reputation and reach, I was honestly quite surprised that they declined our invitation to become a sponsoring school. In fact, they initially seemed reluctant to participate at all, and even now their delegates seem to treat visiting our event as some unfortunate chore. The head of the Arcanamirium, Spell Lord Darchana, specializes in teleportation magic and her students have helped switch out the delegation frequently.

One of the only faces that's stayed familiar is **Venorium Bloom** (page 110), the rather unfortunate student being barraged by requests to find or create magical items. I've heard that the Arcanamirium's abilities to craft such things are unparalleled—and that such services are hot commodities here at the Convocation, quite overwhelming the young man who seems to have few contacts within his own school.

ZENDA MODIC

Lastly, I should address our emissaries from Geb, specifically the Synostosis. **Zenda Modic** (page 111) and the other undead are polite enough and deeply knowledgeable about rebuilding on wartorn lands, but their presence is chilling even once you get to know them. When Lepidstadt extended invitations to several schools in Geb, we assumed they wanted some kindred spirits to make their own students stand out less. Curiously, it's also religious students from Lepidstadt that have raised the most strenuous objections to the school's presence, but we must remember that no school here is a monolith.

In defense of Synostosis, I can see that their approach to techniques for shaping bone could turn the remains of scores of defeated demons into impressive, if horrifying, fortifications.

I'll even grudgingly admit that this could be potentially helpful to our nation's defenses. They put a curious emphasis on their compliance with our rules to let Sarkorian and crusader remains rest, entirely too much emphasis for comfort, but perhaps it's understandable with the hostility they've been met with. At any rate, the bigger problems have come with their constant bickering with Lepidstadt students and the occasional sabotage—on both sides—of their demonstrations.



DOLOK TREE

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AESARA FLEETHOOF

Watchful female centaur astrologer

*"Tell me, O Stars, of a pearl-washed island and its shining towers,
Of marble halls where shades of prophecy linger,
And ancients move among us, speaking myth into being—"*

Ah! I did not perceive you there as I sang. I am Aesara Fleethoof, and may the stars smile on our meeting.

What is this tale, you ask? It is a song of my home and place of study, the Halls of Revelation in far-off Ibydos where the hero-gods dwell. Finer singers than I have told of the fall of Ghol-gan and the rise of the hero-gods, of drowned temples and monster-swallowed islands. Let me speak to you now of the Halls where the myth-speakers and our wisdom-crowned chief, the cyclops Phimater,

peer into the mists of the future. Let me conjure visions of embers in gold braziers leaping into flame as we students learn the strange art of pyromancy. Let me weave for you a tapestry of nights passed gazing at jewel-bright stars as we learn to chart them and entreat them for guidance. Ever do we contemplate the Sphinx, wisest of all constellations, and highly esteemed by Phimater!

It may seem strange to you that all students in our Halls are oracles. Yet the myth-speakers tell us that our universe is too vast to be understood through rigid devotion to gods or by the might of arcane magics alone. Great power flows from the deep mysteries into us—great power, at a great price. Every student in the Halls, whether centaur, human, or minotaur, charts the possibilities and limits of their powers under Phimater's watch. She and the other myth-speakers teach us to tend the gifts of the mysteries through devotion to fire and water and the heavens, through cartomancy, geomancy, and numerology.

Thank you for indulging me as I speak of my home. Seldom since I arrived have strangers been so willing to listen to my tales. Many here are reluctant to join me in song or in stargazing, and none more so than Messida Vost of Acadamae, who rebuked me for my presence here! Yet the Sphinx portends that Messida's own ambitions may prove perilous to this gathering.

At any rate, I suspect I am not welcome because my presence here is unexpected. You may have heard that the Halls of Revelation were not summoned to this convocation. We keep no secret of it! Yet the omens urging us to join were clear in the heavens for all to read. Phimater herself discerned them and insisted that someone from the Halls should journey here. Why? Friends, the stars do not reveal all their mysteries to us! It was enough for Phimater to know that there is something very important about this place and this time, and that is also enough for me. This is why I have been sent: to watch, to wait, to learn why the stars told us to journey here.



BESEECH THE SPHINX

SPELL 1

RARE CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions divine, occult

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature other than yourself

Duration 10 minutes

You look to the great Sphinx constellation, wisest of all cosmic guides and favored of Phimater, asking them to lend their insight to the target. Choose one skill and one type of saving throw (Fortitude, Reflex, or Will). The target gains a +1 status bonus to those skill checks and saving throws for the duration.

Heightened (4th) The status bonus increases to +2.

Heightened (7th) The status bonus increases to +3.

ALAMYRA JADWIGA

Proud female human summoner

Greetings, esteemed colleagues. I am Alamyra, a direct descendant of the great Baba Yaga through our first queen, a Winter Witch, and a summoner, hailing from the frost-kissed lands of Irrisen. At a young age, I discovered a profound connection with the spirits of other planes. From elder witches, I learned the art of carving wooden dolls. These seemingly simple creations harbor potent magic of the four essences: not just Matter and Spirit, but Life and Mind as well. I have taken this art to new heights by forming a permanent bond with a spirit and giving it connection to physically enter our world. Meet Babusya. She is my idolon and confidante with whom I share a telepathic link that transcends mere words. With her help and the Bloodstone Conservatory's training and resources, I have discovered a way to free wrongfully wielded spirits to empower my dolls. I am sure you would like a demonstration, yes?

Although our school is too exclusive for word to have spread beyond Irrisen, a few scholars here have a general description of our frost-kissed grounds. Yet, only masters are allowed within the heart of the conservatory, where the Bloodstone resides. The Bloodstone is not a singular gem, but rather a conglomeration of crimson fragments, each pulsing with strong magical energy from across the planes. Those who succumb to its whispered promises of untold power become another shard added to the Bloodstone.

I share this because summoning is not a parlor trick, nor a spell to be brandished like a trophy. It is a deep understanding of the harmonies and the boundless potential for alliances across realms. Our understanding comes not from rote incantations and blood-soaked circles, but from empathy, wit, and respect for planes and kinds beyond our own.

I'd hoped for more opportunity to compare notes with the god callers of Sarkoris. Their understanding is said to match our own, but I'm uncertain a single other attendee could pass the trials of the Bloodstone Conservatory.

BLOODSTONE DOLL

ITEM 4+

RARE CONSUMABLE MAGICAL

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ⤿ (concentrate, manipulate) **Trigger** A creature within 60 feet casts a summon spell; **Requirements** You have a free hand.

This small doll has been carved from a fragment of Bloodstone. When you Activate a *bloodstone doll* in response to another's magic, you Interact to take it in hand and hold it up toward the triggering creature. Attempt a counteract check (*Player Core* 431) against the triggering spell at the listed bonus and rank.

If the spell would be counteracted, the *bloodstone doll* instead influences the summoned creature. You gain control of the summoned creature and can dictate its 2 actions for that

turn. The triggering creature then regains control of their summoned creature, but the summoned creature takes a -2 status penalty to attack rolls against you. Your *bloodstone doll* shatters when the summon spell ends.

Type minor; **Level** 4; **Price** 15 gp

The *bloodstone doll* has a counteract modifier of +9 and a counteract rank of 2.

Type moderate; **Level** 10; **Price** 180 gp

The *bloodstone doll* has a counteract modifier of +17 and a counteract rank of 5.

Type major; **Level** 16; **Price** 1,800 gp

The *bloodstone doll* has a counteract modifier of +25 and a counteract rank of 8.

Craft Requirements You have a fragment of the Bloodstone at the heart of the Bloodstone Conservatory.



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CHIRAL, CHANCELLOR OF INTERDISCIPLINARIA

Determined agender axiomite professor

My greetings to you! I am the Chancellor of Interdisciplinaria at Academy of the Sublime in the Perfect City of Axis. Call me Chancellor Chiral—my name in the Utopian language gives this plane's residents some difficulty (they are hopeless with the honorific tone-declensions befitting my rank).

My colleagues were reluctant to send me. Ours is a hallowed institution, predating the other institutions here at this Convocation—with the possible exception of Cobyslarni—by millennia. This repute, I fear, has fostered among our faculty a myopic regard for other schools. But never fear, I do not share their attitude. By nature, Interdisciplinaria seeks out parallel methodologies and points of conjunction! I would cut a foolish figure of a Chancellor were I to eschew such a fundamental philosophy

of my own Sphere! You see, unlike venerable Theoretica, or ancient Practica, Interdisciplinaria as a Sphere is but a few centuries old. While this fact lowers my esteem among my peers, it nevertheless grants me a more forward-thinking mindset. I hold that our individual institutions conform ultimately to a similar geometry. Mutual cooperation would not only benefit each school, but would also demonstrate that collaboration is worthwhile!

You want to know more about the Academy, of course! Within the Perfect City of Axis, our mission is comprised of studying the logics and mathematics that govern the planes. Students have written dissertations on a diversity of subjects, from the temporal topologies of divination spells to equations modeling the Elemental Plane of Water's fluid dynamics!

Our Zenith Library spreads out over the surface of an extradimensional bottle. In the Probability Gardens, the fundamental likelihood of coincidences has been tweaked. And once in the Gardens, you will likely stumble upon the Imaginary Fountain, which... it is hard to describe in Taldane! You shall have to see it for yourself!

The closest to our work you can see here is that statue on the exhibition grounds, although I am hesitant to claim it. Axiomites rarely work in stone like that, and it has certainly been left out in the elements, yet I am sure it was a fair approximation of one of our constructs at some point.

My research? I study the swarming behavior of eusocial insects, as a framework for population-level transmogrification. But more pressing is my project to diversify the student body. As one of the three leaders of our institution, it is my duty to pay attention to such matters. My Sphere recently admitted a trio of promising tripkee clerics! Moreover, we are actively trying to expand our scope. In fact, I am keep an eye out for trustworthy adventurers who might help with a project to map the overlapping geometries within the layers of Hell...



BUZZING SERVANTS ◆◆◆

SPELL 2

RARE CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions arcane, divine, primal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** one unoccupied 5-foot square

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

You summon a swarm of bees from the city of Axis that rapidly constructs geometric shapes from wax. The bees appear in an unoccupied square, building a structure of hexagons, squares, and decagons that fill the space. The wax shape has a Hardness of 10 and 40 Hit Points but also decays over 24 hours.

When you Sustain the spell, you can choose another unoccupied square in range that the bees move to and fill with wax shapes. Any amount of area or splash damage to the square they're present in kills the bees, ending further construction.

EHMIK NAARUJ

Driven male catfolk oathwright

Slow hand and warm words. I am First Oathwright Ehmik Naaruj, of the Hall of Lambent Oaths. We are youngest of beautiful Thuvia's many wonders and, we hope, a great promise for its future.

Ah! Done with the formal introduction. What have you heard of our Oathworks? Precious little, I imagine! Our promise to Thuvia is a Thuvian confederation. Each element within our borders, each city, each people, mutually bound by agreed-upon oaths. Commerce, travel, defense. The very basics of diplomacy, but with oathwork these bonds gain orichalcum strength, the vitality of green and flexible things.

The universe *notices* an oath, you see. A simple statement of intent or two minds reach an agreement. A promise to... ha! Let us say I promise my son that finally, this time, I will remember to deliver the robe he made for grandfather; the universe moves an infinitesimal bead on an abacus of incomprehensible scale. A head of household pledges support at the next gathering; higher stakes, more beads. And so on. Oathwork's clever little trick is that to alter the abacus is to create a tiny spark of power. More sparks, more power. The ancient Jistka Imperium sparked oaths beneath our sands, and an automaton's promise of eternal life is terrible, brittle, and deeply powerful.

Oathwork can achieve more with less pride. Ever-cool roads between our cities, vibrant cropland. This is simple in concept, but complicated in execution. By way of demonstration, look here—an oathlamp!

I work this oath for myself, and for you, and for others—I will always do what I think is best and kindest for my homeland.

There! A wonder and a glory, each and every time, a vital radiance like the birth of a child. An oathlamp is kindled by an oath, and its light does not wane until that oath does. That is a singular promise, but humbler oaths are their own treasures. They spark if they move the soul even a fraction. They need an emotional component, a sense of weight or import. Ha, the stories to tell sourcing such things! Everyone wants a civic infrastructure project tapping into their personal lives. Heart work.

Work that brings me to the Convocation. Nsentiah from the Magaambya and I have already spoken of the considerable overlap between our institutions' missions. And as fickle as the fey are, they know their promises, and the faculty of Cobyslarni are experts in such matters.

Then there is the... more difficult matter. You've seen the gear-marked statue at the Exhibition Grounds? It is Thuvian. An exact match of a construct stolen by dragon's avarice ages ago, now petrified and dormant. I strive to be kind, but... it belongs to us. I will see what keys it holds to a bright Thuvian future.

One day we will light great and glorious lamps with the fires of our hearts, and that will be a promise vast and kind. May it be so.

OATHLAMP OF ACCORD


ITEM 3

RARE LIGHT MAGICAL MENTAL

Price 50 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

This hooded lantern takes the form of a translucent prism. It functions as a normal hooded lantern (*Player Core* 288), except that it isn't fueled by oil, but by oaths. While you're holding the lantern, you gain a +1 item bonus to Diplomacy checks.

Activate—Announce Oath  (light, mental) **Trigger** You make a promise in good faith; **Effect** The *oathlamp of accord* sheds light without consuming fuel until the promise you made is broken or fulfilled. The GM adjudicates whether a spoken promise is broken or fulfilled. This light and the shutters to conceal it work as normal for a hooded lantern. Any creature in the light of the oathlamp becomes aware of the contents of the oath, along with who made it and how long ago.



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GAZRYN NU'DARGA

Strict male hobgoblin trainer

The Ironfang Legion has received your generous offer to participate in the Sarkorian Convocation. While normally we prefer that our pedagogy remain closed to outsiders, our glorious and wise leader, the great general Azaersi, has deemed that attending would be a worthy educational pursuit.

I am titled Nu'Darga the Ironhanded, and Primarch of the Proving Grounds, Oprak's most illustrious academy of war and technology. I will be representing the school and chaperoning the students on their journey. My background, for what it's worth, is in extraplanar exploration and applied alchemical sciences, specializing in alien minerals from the Plane of Earth. As you can see from my own body, the use of alchemical principles with specific types of stone can augment the physical form, honing our capabilities further toward perfection. While I have more than enough work to keep me busy, I am more than willing to lecture students from other institutions about the joys, perils, and discoveries I've made during my tenure at the Onyx Citadel.

The Ironfang Legion holds a particular respect for the Sarkorian people. Like us, they've been through many trials—crucibles of ruin and pain that have tempered them beyond the ken of most mortals. We admire the strength and tenacity to reform and reclaim your lands from the forces who sought to claim it. Unlike us, your nation is venerable and ancient. We have much to learn from those who have survived the worst this world has to offer, and even more to gain from the friends and allies you've gathered at this Convocation.

Our students are the finest young minds our nation has to offer, selected yearly from our Young Fang training camps. They represent the best and brightest of alchemists, technologists, and warriors. While it is true we have largely eschewed the arcane as part of our curriculum, I feel we are in good company with the oldest traditions of the Sarkorian people. In any case, our students are no strangers to magic and its potential for reshaping a battlefield.

It is worth stating outright that our students are considered... nontraditional by most standards. Our methods of application and course work are more rigorous, competitive, and demanding than other schools. We will require accommodations that cordon off our students

from the rest of the other schools. Frivolous socializing, carnal pursuits, and lackadaisical daydreaming are all unacceptable activities for our student body. This is not to say we do not want the cross-pollination of ideas, and I am very interested in hearing further details about the demon-slaying competitions that the Convocation sponsors. But I must insist that our students' downtime be dedicated to their studies, as this brief venture offers them no reprieve from their assigned coursework. I must also insist that any matters of school discipline be handled by me personally, without interference from other faculty. Should there be an incident between our students and another campus, I will be certain to resolve the matter to everyone's satisfaction.

Our student cohort is one of the finest classes we've ever instructed. We've also prioritized diplomatic skills and social finesse among those attending, to best fit the stated goals of the Convocation. While consisting primarily of hobgoblins, this class also contains a trio of fearsome goblin warriors, an alchemically adroit ogre with a knack for demolition, and a particularly sharp earth scamp from the Onyx Citadel. Brilliant designer... terrible precision engineer. Despite their discipline and dedication to their studies, they are considered a "fun bunch" by our instructors in relation to some of our other cohorts.

Finally, I would make a special request for a private audience with the docent of the University of Lepidstadt. My leadership has empowered me to seek a trade agreement with them. While I cannot divulge specifics, this trade deal goes beyond simple coin, but is rather a matter of Oprakan national security. I am happy to explain these sensitive matters to them once arrangements are made.



MUTATOR ONYX

ITEM 3

RARE | ALCHEMICAL | CONSUMABLE | EARTH

Price 10 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Activate ♦ (manipulate)

A mutator onyx is a jet-black, alien mineral first found within the walls of the Onyx Citadel but is now used primarily as an alchemical teaching or experimentation tool within Oprak. Pressing the gem into a solid, unattended inanimate object with Hardness 5 or less transforms that object's surface into a curious syrupy, liquid-like state, reducing its Hardness to 0. One mutator onyx can transform up to a 5-foot cube. After 10 minutes, the matter reverts to its solid state, regaining its Hardness.

J DACILANE

Philanthropic male human Eagle Knight

Ah, hello! It's a pleasure to meet you. J Dacilane, with the Dacilane Academy in Absalom. We do what we can to make sure the children of Pathfinder Society members continue their educations while their families fulfill their duties to the Society. Hmm? Oh, no no, I'm nothing so inspired or prestigious as the founder. As a child, I was saved from a very dangerous situation by Pathfinders. So, once I had the means, it felt important to support the organization in my own way. Help those who helped me.

Mmm, if you'll excu—what are—settle! *Settle*, please, *all* of you. Right. Berin, that stays on your wrist so that I and the senior students can help us stay safe. Yd, you know better than to help Berin disable school equipment; use that wand irresponsibly again, and I'm keeping it until we return to Starrise Spire. Hari, I asked you to help these two make good decisions—please do so. Understood? Excellent, I'll see you after the recital. Go, learn, enjoy yourselves, *and be responsible!*

The life of a school chaperone! But yes, truly, I was delighted that the Academy received an invitation. The younger students will enjoy themselves, of course, but I'm excited for my older charges! They'll see just how much time and effort and knowledge goes into tackling a project of this scale, that education doesn't exist in a vacuum! I hope that the Academy of Reclamation's noble goal inspires the students to improve their own worlds. Geltra—just over there, actually, the short, green-scaled person with the overflowing scroll satchel—Geltra was positively vibrating about the chance to speak with Magaambyans, so at least one of them is making the most of the opportunity!

For the older students like Geltra, the Convocation gives a chance to start finding their footing in the world. We've a few taking thaumaturgical samples of local soils and magics. Duaro is organizing the student recital and stage setup. I hope we see you there. It's easy to dismiss children, but they have emotions and hopes and interior lives just like the rest of us!

Oh, the pies? Yes, please, have a taste! Tels, one of our recent graduates and a truly wonderful lad, always looked after the little ones at the Academy. There was an... incident, with some similar pies, a fey caravan, and rather a lot of regenerating custard. Tels made these to help some of the frightened littles. Take the scary thing and make it approachable, fun—nutritive, really, of the spirit, if not the body. A little mischief *and* sweets that don't ruin your appetite? That's the stuff of dreams, as long as you're careful about bystanders. But that's a lesson too, I suppose.

I think that's what I'd like the Dacilane Academy to bring to this Convocation, though—dreams. And hope, looking at these kids and knowing tomorrow will be better than today, for Sarkoris especially.

PRANKSTER'S PERPETUAL PIEPLATE

ITEM 1

RARE MAGICAL

Price 12 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Although the simple pies that fill this glass plate every minute are edible, they don't last long enough to sate hunger or provide any real nutritive value. Instead, they can be magically guided at targets, unleashed harmlessly by even the most uncoordinated child.

Activate—Project Pastry ◆ (manipulate) **Frequency** once per minute; **Effect** You magically hurl the pie at a creature within 30 feet. Unless the target succeeds at a DC 15 Reflex save, they're splattered with a harmless but tasty mess, which remains until it is wiped away with an Interact action or is otherwise cleaned off (like if the target is submerged in water). After a minute, the mess disappears, and the pieplate refills with another kind of pie.



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MESSIDA VOST

Ruthlessly ambitious female human ritualist

You stand now in the presence of Messida Vost, Dean of Summoning, and I expect you to pay me the appropriate respect. Now, before you make a nuisance of yourself with repetitive questions, I shall anticipate your immediate curiosity: I am present as a representative of Korvosa's world-famous Acadamae—yes, *that* Acadamae—though it has quickly become apparent my personal talents, rather than the interests of my employer, are of particular value here.

The monstrous fiend at my side? Ah, of course. *That* is Zarothrask, spawn of Yamasoth. I assure you they are quite tightly bound to my will. Truthfully, I am a little insulted that you were not informed of this sooner, but I suppose

we have all been occupied these past few days. No, no, it is quite out of the question that I should go anywhere without their presence, especially this close to that demon-blighted waste you call the Sarkoris Scar. Speaking of which...

You—that is, the Convocation—and I have a common enemy: demons. There are a great many within their hierarchy who would jump at the chance to eliminate me, and Zarothrask serves as my insurance. Is it not obvious why? I am Golarion's foremost qliploth binder, and my studies toward their subjugation have more than once taken me deep into the Outer Rifts, destroying a significant number of that plane's demon usurpers. It is for this reason that we have crossed paths, and luckily for both of us, I have concocted a rather ingenious plan.

In a few short months, I would have the best of your arcanists honed into a peerless legion of qliploth binders patrolling the Scar, turning the fiends' ceaseless hatred toward the demon plague rather than your fragile mortal bodies. All I would require is a *modest* amount of support, and I understand that your lands contain a wealth of treasure within long-abandoned storehouses and vaults that I—ahem, *we*—could leverage as funding. No? Well, give it some thought; you know where to find me.

ZAROTHRASK'S CONTRACT

ITEM 9

RARE CONTRACT INVESTED OCCULT

Bulk —

You've bargained for power with a gongorinan, but in return, you must avoid furthering demonic goals. You gain a +2 item bonus to Athletics checks to Disarm manufactured items and to Grapple. Once per day, the gongorinan can warp your body with animal features; you must attempt a DC 25 Fortitude save or become sickened 2. When you recover from the sickened condition, your features revert to normal. The gongorinan will usually do this if you sin or aid a demon, even unintentionally.

Activate—Gongorinan's Emergence



(concentrate, mental, morph, occult, unholy)

Frequency once per day;

Effect Stony tentacles burst out of your body, lashing at foes. Creatures in a 10-foot emanation take 6d6 bludgeoning damage and 2d6 mental damage (DC 25 basic Fortitude save); on a failure, the creature also becomes sickened 1 (sickened 2 on a critical failure) as

parts of their anatomy temporarily warp into animal features. When a creature recovers from the sickened condition, its features revert to normal.

NOCHTLI TLATOA

Distractible female gnome arcane botanist

Saints' grace, you've startled me! Miraina would always say, "Roots to the earth, Noch, with your head in the clouds," and even this many nations away she's still just as right!

Introductions! Yes. How do you dawn, I am Nochtli Tlatoa; botanist of the Blue Gardens, nurturer of the Veins of Creation, researcher of the yelizyotl arcane, and Professor at Kimanéz University in Jolizpan!

The City of Flowers? Have you not heard of it? I suppose Arcadia is quite a distance from here. Shame you won't be able to see it except in our illusions.

But, I'll get myself off topic. My work at the University has for many years centered around research and development, specifically phosphorescent illumination and arcane mycorrhizal reintegration. Power grids! And illumination, if you're not familiar. Networks of it! All connected. Which really, if you think about it, is *exactly* what we're here to do at the Convocation—connect with one another, share what we know! Did you know that plants do this, naturally? Any forest, I think there's one a bit east of here, each tree is connected to the other beneath the soil, practically buzzing with an intricate network of mycorrhizal fungi that spreads out like a web from root to root, allowing them to share information, water, even—my Saints, I had a point, didn't I?

Connection! Right, and sharing information. Not something our people used to be very good at, I'll tell you. A city once thrumming with the unimaginable power of the kumaru tree; power so great that the Tyrant sent his servants to claim it! So I'm sure you can see why our arcanists for the longest time hadn't felt it prudent to so openly share what we had. Or, rather, what we *knew*. But! We're aiming to remedy that; with the newly sprouted kumaru we've begun branching out, and—hah! *Branching out*! Do you get it?

But truly, to bring my work here and to showcase it half a world away! Kimanézi breakthroughs in the botanical arcane: fungal colonization and inter-plant flow of arcane power; versatile applications of bioluminescent signal systems and integrated phosphorescence! By studying the restored kumaru trees, we've been able to utilize a multitude of botanical resources never before explored! And that is only what we've managed to achieve on our own. Imagine all the possibilities through this Convocation! Expanding our network from root to root, enhancing our connections; studying beyond Arcadia and bringing back new flora to study, new fungi to learn from—perhaps even new arcane applications with the assistance given by fresh eyes.

Saints, if we've learned anything throughout our University's history, it's that while we can of course achieve greatness with sufficient effort, no one can achieve *true* success alone. Those words are as good as inscribed

on the walls of Tumbaja; cooperation is the greatest virtue of all. Though I would also add knowledge.

May the Convocation be as illuminating—hah! *Illuminating!*—as my research!

KIMANÉZ LUMINESCENT TOADSTOOL

ITEM 3

RARE CONSUMABLE FUNGUS LIGHT MAGICAL

Price 9 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

This large blue toadstool glimmers with soft, magical light similar to moonlight. The spots of white adorning the mushroom's cap glow ethereally, as if illuminated from the inside, shedding dim light in a 10-foot radius.

Activate—Ward Area 10 minutes (concentrate, light, manipulate); **Effect** You plant the toadstool in the ground, allowing it to connect to all living fungi and plant matter within 120 feet of its planting. For 8 hours, any corporeal creature that touches the affected matter even accidentally begins to glow with bright magical light in a 10-foot emanation, which persists as long as they remain within 120 feet of the planted mushroom. A creature can move through an area containing affected fungi and plant matter without touching it by treating the area as difficult terrain and succeeding at a DC 18 Acrobatics check.



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THANOM

Kind male human alchemist

It's nice to meet you all. I hope your travels have been well. If anything ails you, let me know. I might have something to help. I made sure to pack every herb that Tang Mai has to offer.

I'm Thanom from the Indraracha Institute. It's an honor to be selected to represent the most prestigious university in Tang Mai. I'm one of the senior alchemists, and I tender to our school's expansive gardens.

While I don't like to compare myself, I'm not as magically adept as many of my classmates at the institute. My family were simple temple keepers. Magic runs deep within the land, but we were never throwing spells out. But we knew the flora and fauna around our homes. People always said our magic was healing the body and spirit through herbs. If there was an ailment, someone in my family could find a remedy for it.



Being sponsored to attend the institute is an opportunity I could not have expected. A noble physician saw my work with plants and was fascinated. Seeing the good in my approach and knowledge of alchemical medicine, they decided to help sponsor my attendance.

The Indraracha Institute is a marvel to behold in addition to being the finest school in Tang Mai for research and study. The campus is a mix of industry and the natural as a reminder that innovation comes from a balance of both. Great inventions do come out of the school, but they put as many resources as possible into the smallest of projects.

My research at the institute is in the vein of alchemy and yang na tattooing. I'm sure you have noticed the tattoos on my body. My aunt began my path, teaching me the basics of yang na tattoos and how to care for the trees that give them their name. I brought a cutting from my hometown, but the politics of planting it are complicated. It's something like claiming the land as an embassy of Tang Mai.

Speaking of politics, the institute has imperfections among the great things it's accomplished. I'm sure it's not the best for me to say it, but if I'm the representative, I should speak on the good and the bad of my school. The best magic users attend this institute with the intention of ruling Tang Mai. And with that come uneasy tensions between the different factions. My "rise in the ranks" has caused quite a stir against the more... traditional factions in the institute. The majority don't mind, but those who do often alienate both me and any others whose skills are non-magical here. I suppose the closest comparison with the sponsors would be Kitharodian, with the tension of their "legacies."

At least at Indraracha, perception is slowly changing. Those who don't have magic in their veins contribute as much as those who are descended directly from the five sisters. I hope that with my position, I can advocate for that and contribute to Tang Mai's bright future.

THREE-PILLARED YANG NA

ITEM 4

RARE DIVINE INVESTED TATTOO

Price 80 gp

Usage tattooed on the body

This tattoo represents an abstract tree whose trunk is made up of three lines of Tang text. Applied in a ritual involving jasmine, turmeric, and a blossom from a yang na tree, the tattoo provides three blessings. The first blessing keeps your mind still during negotiations, granting a +1 item bonus to Diplomacy checks.

Activate—Second Blessing ◆ (concentrate, detection) **Effect**

You learn the direction of the yang na tree that gave the blossom used in creating your tattoo. Most such trees are in Tang Mai, far to the west of the Inner Sea.

Activate—Third Blessing ◀ (concentrate) **Trigger** You take spirit damage; **Effect** You gain resistance 3 against that spirit damage.

VEASNA

Humble female vicharamuni student

Blessings to you! I'm Veasna, the representative of the Divine Conservatory of Magic from Nagajor. I'm just a student right now, but my teachers recommended me to represent the school. I've learned my appearance is a bit intimidating to those outside of my home nation, but don't worry. I have no ill intentions.

But about me: I've been a student for some time at the conservatory. I admit that I've been treated well there because of my status. To be a naga is to serve the spiritual needs of the world and all the people who walk it, so extra care is put toward my studies so I may learn what I need.

That care involves a lot of coursework, to say the least. We learn magic as well as diplomacy to guide mortals. Though, that does sound condescending. To call you mortals. I mean nothing by it! It's just that their path is defined differently within the school. The few naga students are trained to be rulers even if we have no followers and to act as guides for those who want to walk the path of good.

Outside those specialized courses, the Divine Conservatory is quite diverse in terms of attendees. We have people from all over Tian Xia come and study. Part of our responsibility is to also train mortals to be "servants of the world." Some of the implication is lost in translation, but most understand the saying to mean heroes who help people who need it. The instructors put care into teaching philosophy and ethics in addition to practical training.

We even have a fun class about how to save a town from bandits or malevolent entities. I've been thinking about running a few sessions of it and getting everyone used to seeing my face.

Although most students' education builds to a field project, I opted for more traditional research. While setting the world right directly has an appeal, my role was always going to be one of a teacher and guide. I've studied a traditional Nagajor dance while at the conservatory; the movement of our bodies passing on valuable lessons and serving as a bridge for the divine. I worked with some nagaji students to develop a version that humanoids should be able to perform, although I've yet to find anyone here to help present it.

We hope to recruit some adventurers from distant lands to come to the conservatory even for a short tenure. We welcome seasoned heroes as fellows or even lecturers to meet the students. The exchange of knowledge underpinning this Convocation doesn't need to end with the closing ceremony after all.

COILING DANCE

RARE CONCENTRATE HOLY MANIPULATE

Traditions divine, occult

Area 30-foot emanation

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

You perform a dance that seeks to pass on the knowledge and wisdom of a naga. Your allies in the area are filled with sacred energy, making their spells and attacks holy. Creatures or effects that would be unholy don't gain this benefit.

When you cast or Sustain this spell, you can choose an ally in the area that's grabbed, immobilized, or restrained. They can immediately use a reaction to Escape; they can use your Occultism or Religion modifier for the check instead of their unarmed attack, Acrobatics, or Athletics modifier if that would be better.

SPELL 2

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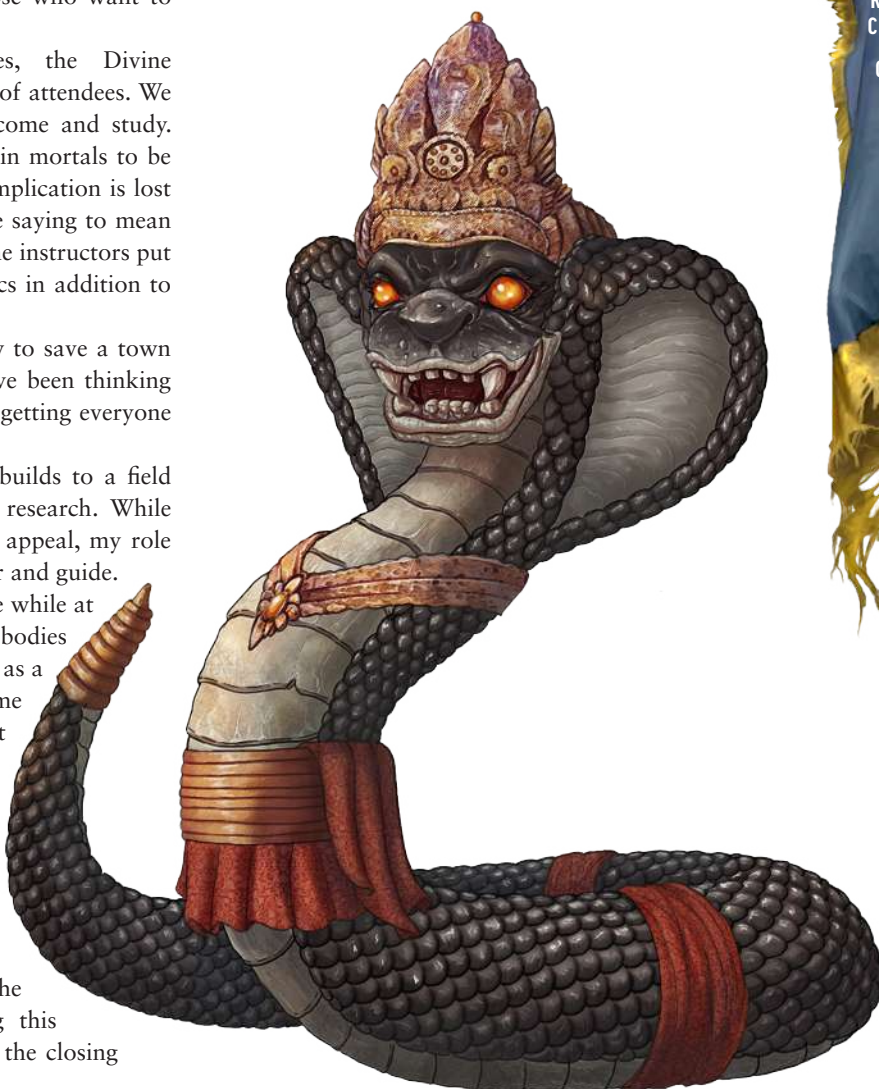
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VENORIUM BLOM

Concerned male human sorcerer

Was that Lady Darchana...? Perhaps I'm seeing things. We already have a whole delegation here from the Arcanamirium, so there's no reason for her to be here on top of that.

Pardon my rudeness! I doubt you'd know Lady Darchana by looking at her anyway, and you certainly don't know who I am!

My name is Venorium Blom, and it's a pleasure to meet you! I'm only a student at the Arcanamirium, though I already had some affinity for magic before being admitted. My current course load is aimed at finally getting a proper apprenticeship; this means that outside of studying Magical Transportation, my specialty, I'm also taking classes in Artifice and Enchantment, Magical Theory, and Fabrication. You see, I believe we can find new, more accessible ways to provide magical transportation for the populace. For now, that mostly means reading every book

on the topic I can find. Although the main library at this academy is smaller than the Arcanamirium's, I think I've learned more trying to navigate Cobyslarni's library than I have in any book so far.

Truth is, I didn't expect to be picked for our delegation, even with so many students wanting to stay in Absalom. Granted, we did use my teleportation calculations to get here, even if I didn't... technically get credit for it. Perhaps someone recognized my contribution and wanted me along for my expertise?

Some classmates tried to convince me that the head of the school is behind stealing my work, but that accusation seems far-fetched. Lady Darchana is specialized in the same kind of magic as me, but she's the second spell lord of Absalom! Just the scheduling alone! Try to set a meeting with her and see how many pages her aide will flip through before she can find time. Subterfuge on my level seems downright impractical.

What's more likely to happen is that some tenured docent wants to pretend it's their apprentice's work. Someone with power, money, or both needs to look good, and they'll get the credit. The currents of power don't stop because you're inside the school's walls. If anything, they're more concentrated, with instructors' dynasties and machinations playing out over years and decades. That's why it's so important to apprentice to a good instructor.

I just need to find the perfect one... someone practical, someone I can trust.

Until that apprenticeship comes through, it'll just be more classes and more books. And I'm not the only one stuck in that process of searching, of course. Just because your family has two gold to rub together doesn't mean that's enough to bribe your way in. I mean, there are always bribes—however, a docent's favor can cost a lot more than a couple gold pieces. The type of bribes they take merely differs; you'll need to have the kind of arcane secrets they want, even if it's just how to guarantee a dreamless night's sleep.

I'm sure every school has a dozen stories like that, of folks having to grease the right elbows. But, with all of us out of our normal environments, doesn't it feel like there might be a chance to do something about it?

DISRUPTIVE TRANSFER

SPELL 3

RARE CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE TELEPORTATION VISUAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range your Speed

Defense Will

Using Venorium Blom's formulas, you calculate a path through space. Teleport to an empty square you can see within range.

Creatures adjacent to your initial location witness an array of overlapping destinations. Each of them must succeed at a Will save or become dazzled for 1 minute.

ZENDA MODIC

Strategic female vampire architect

Greetings esteemed guests of the Convocation. Blood Lord Sittak sends her regrets that she was unable to attend this notable event and hopes that you will accept me in her stead. My name is Zenda Modic, and I serve as Assistant Professor of Osteology at the highly lauded Synostosis Academy in Yleb. As our institution stands at the forefront of researching practical fortification engineering, we were honored, yet unsurprised, to receive an invitation.

For the benefit of all here, I find it best to address the obvious discomfort I see on your faces. I am, as are most of my colleagues, undead. I, myself, am a vampire. While the Dead Laws of Geb hold no precedent here, I can assure you my colleagues and I respect the academic nature of the Convocation and the lives, or unlives, of each participant.

Now with that out of the way, on to the matter at hand. I stand before you today, not just as one of the leading researchers of osteology, but as an architect of the arcane, a weaver of the mystical threads that bind the very essence of the quick and the dead. I have dedicated my passion to unraveling the secrets concealed beneath the flesh. But friends, my pursuits go beyond the mundane study of skeletons; they delve into the alchemical and magical currents that pulse through every bone.

As we assemble the brightest minds of Golarion to exchange ideas and discourse regarding the new academy here in Sarkoris, I would like to bring to the forefront the concern of safety and fortification. Sarkoris rises from the ruins of decades of conflict. If you plan to educate young minds, you must consider the need for a safe and secure institute of learning. The Synostosis Academy stands above all others in our history of alchemical and arcane engineering, constructing one of Golarion's most impressive structures to date, the Bonewall—a fortress not just of stone and mortar, but a testament to the marriage of necromantic mastery and architectural brilliance.

Before my arrival, my colleagues from Lepidstadt informed me that the throngs of your own dead remain firmly off-limits for resource gathering. A shortsighted stance in my opinion, but I will respect it. May I be permitted, however, to point out the nearly limitless amount of demon remains that litter the earth of Sarkoris? In fact, demon bones, being thicker and usually larger compared to human bones, would serve well in the engineering of a structure akin to the Bonewall—not even mentioning the arcane benefits of using material touched by the Outer Rifts... Immensely useful indeed. I apologize, I seem to have gotten lost in my own musings for a moment.

You see, my research lies not only in the arcane property of bone and how it could be used to heighten defenses, but more specifically a practical approach to utilizing the residual energy within bones through understanding the customs and magical practices of other societies. There is much to be learned by understanding these differences.

I look forward to collaborating with you all, especially those of you seeking possibilities beyond convention.

DEMON BONE TILES

ITEM 2+

RARE CATALYST CONSUMABLE MAGICAL UNHOLY

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate Cast a Spell (add 1 action)

These bones from different types of demons can be used to form temporary barriers. When you crush the bone fragments and blow the resulting dust around yourself as you cast *shield*, the *shield* appears as a bone bulwark shaped like the demon's face.

When use Shield Block with the spell, the barrier explodes into many bone fragments. The shards cause persistent bleed damage to each creature adjacent to you that fails a Reflex save at the listed DC. This persistent bleed damage is unholy and can be stopped with an Interact action to remove the shards.

Type *pusk bone tiles*; **Level** 2; **Price** 7 gp

The persistent bleed damage is 1d4, and the save DC is 16.

Type *brimorak bone tiles*; **Level** 5; **Price** 28 gp

The persistent bleed damage is 1d6, and the save DC is 20.

Type *seraptis bone tiles*; **Level** 15; **Price** 1,200 gp

The persistent bleed damage is 2d8, and the save DC is 34.



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SIHEDRON SPIRES

What? Yeah, we're here for the Six Schools Convocation. Somebody named Bia Isha sent a letter last year and Professor Xada told him we were coming. I heard he even sent a couple letters to follow up, but we didn't ask him to get anything ready for us. Apparently, he thought we might get here a couple weeks ago, but who shows up to the party right away? And when a professor of sloth is overseeing transportation, you know how it goes.

Or I guess you might not. People actually misunderstand a lot, giving that little chuckle when they talk about the College of Lust or thinking wrath magic makes you hate everyone. Sin magic is about using the language of the Universe. You do it too, you just don't realize. Those runes that appear around your hands when casting a spell? That's the "underpinnings of reality," or whatever the teachers want to call it. We're using the same runes as you, just with more focus, which means more power. The runes of the Sihedron happen to be the most powerful and universal runes, so we call them the "runes of rule."

And the underpinnings of the universe turn out to be heady stuff. When you use those runes, the words, you feel the entire concept flowing through your body. Casting magic through the lust rune is like having a

crush and that moment of realizing they like you back, maybe even more. That moment, pure and undiluted, with none of the complications of making it work or knowing it'll end someday.

So, yeah, we do tend to use our magic a lot. It's not an addiction, like people keep claiming, but you won't find many of our students going to bed with spells unused. To quote my favorite professor, it's not like the spells pay you rent. That means it can look like wrath students lose their temper at the first sign of stress, but it's more that any problem they can solve with fire or lightning is really just an opportunity. Or for students of lust, someone's mind is getting changed today. It's just a question of who and how.

Lust is my favorite, of course. I mean, you're supposed to pick a rune and stick with it, but most of us try using different runes to start out, just to see what clicks. Lust is also the largest college at the Sihedron Spires. But I think that's mostly because lust is the rune Queen Sorshen ruled over back during ancient Thassilon. The rest of the schools are about even, except envy. If anyone wants to be that miserable, they should probably go to Arcanium Abjurant in Xin-Edasseril instead. It's not that we have a rivalry, exactly, although the queen did once say something about how its students "should be proud of

getting accepted where Belimarius never could.” I really need to ask them about that at some point.

It’s just that, even the gnawing hunger of Gluttony has to be better than knowing exactly how flawed you really are, right? That’s what you get when you cast magic through the rune of envy. Wizards from Xin-Edasseril say it’s an addictive sensation, knowing exactly where you stand without any delusion or social vagaries. Something about being prepared for everything, I guess. Myself, I think they just like to make themselves miserable. The rest of us would rather not know.

Anyway, that’s enough about them or I’ll need to take a bath. You can invite the Arcanium Abjurant next time if you want to listen to them whine. Professor Xada apologized to Bia Isha and he completely understands, so we’re apparently grabbing a couple abandoned buildings and patching them together.

From what he said, he actually invited us because of our association with the sins. Which, I have to say, might be a first. I can see the logic, though. They’ve had some demon problems, and each demon is associated with a sin. I’m not sure it’s quite the same, though. There are demons of lust and the rest, certainly. There were even some pusks—sloth demons—by the side of the road on the way into town if you need some target practice.

When I say it’s not the same, I’m not trying to say the runes are actually virtuous. Our queen calls that “Xin’s Delusion.” It’s just that the runes are so much bigger than demons. Demons are just selfish no ones who happen to resonate with sin just enough to use some of its power. A lust demon will twist people around, using their desires to drive them to destruction. The rune can do that, sure. Everyone has scores they want to settle. But the rune can also bend minds toward something beautiful. Some students with bad cases of Xin’s Delusion would say that’s all they use magic for, guiding people away from harmful desires. I doubt anyone could keep to that narrow path for long, but it’s true that demons can’t even set foot on it.

Also, there are demons of stuff like arson, which throws off the whole symmetry. I mean, I suppose there’s probably a rune of arson out there. That’s the whole point of runes, that they’re part of the language that creates everything in existence. So if arson exists, there’s got to be a rune of arson, right? But it’s not really as useful or powerful as the runes we use. If you want to set something on fire, the rune of wrath is much more powerful, and you also have the option of setting something on... lightning? That came out wrong, but you get what I mean. The rune of arson

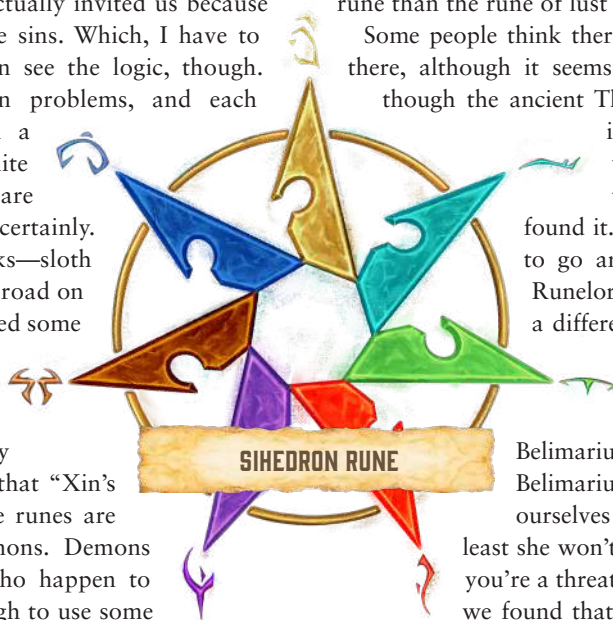
probably would be addictive, like everyone claims sin magic is. I mean, I don’t really know how you’d vibe with it otherwise.

It’s true our personal runes are also narrower, rooted in some personal experience that sort of... loses its restrictions as you understand the underlying sin better. The more you work at understanding rune magic and the more powerful you become, the more powerful your own personal rune becomes. It’s sort of a measure of how much impact you have on that whole “underpinnings of reality” thing. We do it by drawing closer to the rune of rule that we’re focusing on. A particular infatuation in a runelord’s past becomes the shared experience of similar infatuations and perhaps eventually all lust as you trim away parts of the rune that constrain it. That’s all post-graduate research, though I do think it’s important to understand how the demonic sins are lesser things, more like my personal rune than the rune of lust itself.

Some people think there are more runes of rule out there, although it seems unlikely to me. It’s not as though the ancient Thassilonians had any lack of inspiration or resources, so you’d think if there was one, they would have already found it. But some people really want to go around calling themselves the Runelord of Fear or whatever. There’s a difference in emphasis, claiming to rule over a rune of rule. That means setting yourself as equal to Sorshen or at least Belimarius on her sad little islands. Belimarius sneers a bit at calling ourselves runelords in general, but at least she won’t hunt you down for claiming you’re a threat to her. Although I feel like, if we found that rune of arson, wrath would lose half its students.

All of that is to say we can and absolutely will help. The sins are a lot bigger than demons, but that just means we have them surrounded and outgunned. It’s a lot easier to keep a demon out of your head when our magic is already there, and so much greater. How is a demon supposed to tempt us when what they have to offer is so much less than what we already have? And what power could they have over us when we wield mastery over the sins that make up their very being? Sloth mages can ruin a pusk’s day without standing up and, even if some demons can see through the illusions of pride, that’s not the only reason to steer well clear of those. Wrath, well, they have the same solution for everything. I just can’t fault them when it works.

So, once the greed students have remodeled some buildings, we’ll have some people over and show the six schools why they should let us host next time. Everyone’s invited, tell your friends!



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RUNELORD (RARE CLASS ARCHETYPE)

You've learned arcane magic, following the path of the runelords. You learn the secrets of runic magic, the building blocks of magic. But be warned: You might succumb to sin in your pursuit of power. The seven runes held in highest regard by the runelords echo the addictive power of the seven sins.

Beyond the runes themselves, you also learn the techniques of the ancient runelords. You learn to use their signature weapons and can acquire the secrets of the ancient magic items called *aeon stones*, embedding them into your skin.

RUNELORD

1st

You draw untold power from runes, sometimes called sin magic. You associate with one of the seven sins, also known as the seven rewards of rule: envy, gluttony, greed, lust, pride, sloth, and wrath. If you choose this class archetype, you must select Runelord Dedication (page 116) as your 2nd-level class feat.

Prerequisites: You must be a wizard.

Runelord Adjustments: You become trained in martial polearms and spears. When your proficiency for simple weapons increases, your proficiencies in these weapons increases as well. You learn the Thassilonian language.

Instead of an arcane thesis, you gain a personal rune. Your personal rune also affects your arcane bond.

You must select the School of Thassilonian Rune Magic as your arcane school, and you must choose one sin to specialize in. When you cast any curriculum spell or school spell from the School of Thassilonian Rune Magic, you do so simply by tracing runes of power in the air. This removes the need to speak incantations aloud. When you Refocus, you do so by contemplating or indulging in your sin.

Each sin is opposed by two others. The incompatibility of these sins means that casting magic philosophically appropriate to those opposing sins, as represented by each school's anathema, interrupts your connection to your own sin and personal rune. If you violate your sin's anathema, you lose the benefits of your personal rune, and whenever you attempt to cast a curriculum spell or school spell, you must succeed at a DC 15 flat check or the spell is lost. This disruption lasts until you complete an *atone* ritual (*Player Core* 390); unlike a normal *atone* ritual, Arcana can be used for both the primary and secondary checks. Your curriculum spells (including spells of your own sin) never violate this anathema, sometimes providing alternatives to prohibited magic.

You gain Advanced School Spell as a bonus feat at 8th level, gaining the advanced school spell for the School of Thassilonian Rune Magic; once you've begun your studies of sin magic, there is no turning back from its allure.

SCHOOL OF THASSILONIAN RUNE MAGIC

This curriculum, taught at a few select academies in New Thassilon, can be learned only by wizards with the runelord class archetype. You have begun to study one of the seven runes of sin, granting you great power but at the cost of anathematic magic. All runelords gain the below curriculum and school spells. In



addition, you must choose one of the seven sins to specialize in. You add your sin's spells and initial school spells to your curriculum. The addictive nature of sin magic prevents you from using magic in ways aligned with other sins, represented by that sin's anathema. Casting a sin spell never invokes the anathema of its school of sin.

Unlike other wizards, some of your curriculum spells may be spells that don't typically appear on the arcane spell list (marked with an asterisk). You still cast these spells as arcane spells, the unifying knowledge of sin bridging the gap between disparate magics.

Curriculum cantrips: *detect magic*, *sigil*; 1st: *mystic armor*, *runic body*, *runic weapon*, *sure strike*; 2nd: *darkvision*, *see the unseen*; 3rd: *clairaudience*, *veil of privacy*; 4th: *clairvoyance*, *fly*; 5th: *mind probe*, *sending*; 6th: *scrying*, *truesight*; 7th: *contingency*, *spell riposte*^{PC2}; 8th: *unrelenting observation*, *seize soul**; 9th: *foresight*

Advanced School Spell *personal runewell* (page 118)

ENVY

The Cutting Eye reveals weaknesses in yourself and others, creating those weaknesses when you need to humble those who dare surpass you.

Anathema Use your magic to cause harm with the elements or void.

Sin Spells cantrips: *shield*, *tangle vine*; 1st: *schadenfreude*^{PC2}, *enfeeble*; 2nd: *dispel magic*, *stupefy*; 3rd: *earthbind*, *thief of fortune* (page 119); 4th: *containment*^{PC2}, *outcast's curse*; 5th: *banishment*, *grisly growths*^{PC2}; 6th: *cursed metamorphosis*, *spellwrack*; 7th: *duplicate foe*, *planar seal*; 8th: *quandary*; 9th: *detonate magic*

Initial School Spell *cutting eye* (page 117)

GLUTTONY

The All-Encompassing invokes a deep emptiness in its users, encouraging them to consume and consume, with nothing ever feeling like enough.

Anathema Use your magic to protect others or manipulate minds.

Sin Spells cantrips: *caustic blast*, *void warp*; 1st: *grim tendrils*, *summon undead*; 2nd: *create food*, *ghoulish cravings*^{PC2*}; 3rd: *rouse skeletons*^{PC2}, *vampiric feast*; 4th: *seal fate*^{PC2}, *vampiric maiden*^{PC2}; 5th: *corrosive muck*^{PC2}, *slither*; 6th: *disintegrate*, *vampiric exsanguination*; 7th: *devouring void* (page 119), *eclipse burst*; 8th: *desiccate*; 9th: *massacre*

Initial School Spell *all-encompassing hunger* (page 117)

GREED

The Precious Gleam carries knowledge that the world's problems are far beyond one's current form and resources. But forms can change and resources can be hoarded with the help of this rune's magic.

Anathema Use your magic to affect the mind or perception rather than physical reality.

Sin Spells cantrips: *live wire*^{PC2}, *read aura*; 1st: *ant haul*, *leaden steps*^{PC2}; 2nd: *enlarge*, *phantasmal treasure*^{PC2}; 3rd: *one with stone*, *shrink item*^{PC2}; 4th: *aerial form*, *shape stone*; 5th: *elemental form*, *impaling spike*; 6th: *dragon form*, *petrify*; 7th: *chrysopoetic curse* (page 119), *lifewood cage*^{PC2}; 8th: *monstrosity form*; 9th: *metamorphosis*

Initial School Spell *precious gleam* (page 117)

LUST

The Heart's Hook drowns rationality in desires, twisting its targets' thoughts until they gladly serve the runelord's wishes.

Anathema Use your magic to meddle with physical forms or invoke the void.

Sin Spells cantrips: *daze*, *message*; 1st: *charm*, *command*; 2nd: *charitable urge*^{PC2}, *stupefy*; 3rd: *dream message*, *enthrall*; 4th: *confusion*, *suggestion*; 5th: *mind probe*, *subconscious suggestion*; 6th: *dominate*, *never mind*; 7th: *love's sacrifice* (page 119), *warp mind*; 8th: *uncontrollable dance*; 9th: *telepathic demand*^{PC2}

Initial School Spell *heart's hook* (page 117)

ROLEPLAYING SINS

Indulging in sin is a topic where players might have varying levels of comfort. There are typically many ways to indulge in your character's sin, with some versions (such as meditating on the sin and allowing it to fill your heart or creating art that thematically extols it) that can be portrayed less explicitly. As with any other act in the game, keep to the Pathfinder Baseline (*Player Core* 397) or whatever other guidelines you've discussed with your group in advance.

RIVAL ACADEMIES

WELCOME TO THE CONVOCATION

SPONSORS

Academy of the Reclamation

Cobyslarni

Kitharodian Academy

The Magaambya

Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves

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PRIDE

The Crescent Scepter is endlessly convinced of its own superiority and the ascendance of its users. If someone's eyes show something else, clearly their eyes are mistaken.

Anathema Use your magic to change or create physical things rather than their appearances.

Sin Spells cantrips: *bullhorn*^{PC2}, *figment*; 1st: *dizzying colors*, *illusory disguise*; 2nd: *illusory creature*, *invisibility*; 3rd: *blindness*, *levitate*; 4th: *mirage*, *vision of death*; 5th: *cloak of colors*^{PC2}, *illusory scene*; 6th: *phantasmal calamity*, *vibrant pattern*; 7th: *mask of terror*, *project image*; 8th: *confusing colors*^{PC2}; 9th: *overwhelming presence**

Initial School Spell *crescent scepter* (page 117)

SLOTH

The Reclined spreads a sense of restful peace to its users, the feeling of rest after a hard day of work without the drudgery leading up to it. With its magic, runelords can cut away even the smallest drudgery.

Anathema Use your magic to manipulate appearances or directly cause harm with the elements.

Sin Spells cantrips: *telekinetic hand*, *telekinetic projectile*; 1st: *sleep*, *enfeeble*; 2nd: *ghostly carrier*, *summon elemental*; 3rd: *cozy cabin*, *slow*; 4th: *dull ambition*^{PC2}, *translocate*; 5th: *summon dragon*, *telekinetic haul*; 6th: *collective transposition*^{PC2}, *teleport*; 7th: *indolent haze* (page 119), *planar palace*; 8th: *quandary*; 9th: *resplendent mansion*^{PC2}

Initial School Spell *reclined apport* (page 117)

WRATH

The Vengeful Glare fills its users with a zealous rage and the restless need to solve problems, which generally takes the form of cutting to the most direct solution.

Anathema Use your magic to protect or create.

Sin Spells cantrips: *frostbite*, *ignition*; 1st: *force barrage*, *thunderstrike*; 2nd: *blistering invective*^{PC2*}, *floating flame*; 3rd: *fireball*, *lightning bolt*; 4th: *ice storm*^{PC2}, *wall of fire*; 5th: *howling blizzard*, *wall of ice*; 6th: *blinding fury*^{PC2*}, *disintegrate*; 7th: *eclipse burst*, *fiery body*; 8th: *earthquake*; 9th: *falling stars*

Initial School Spell *vengeful glare* (page 118)

ARCANE BOND AND PERSONAL RUNE

Runelords hail from an era where even a scholar was expected to be able to defend themselves with arms if necessary, leading to the practice of attaching a blade to the typical wizard's staff. You must choose a polearm or spear as your arcane bond. In place of an arcane thesis, you have a personal rune, which appears on your bonded weapon. The weapon functions as a staff with charges equal to the highest rank of spells you can cast and contains the sin spells from your sin up to that rank (including your cantrips). Your personal rune isn't a property rune and doesn't count against the weapon's limit of such runes.

If you prepare a magical staff, it merges with your bonded item until your next daily preparations, adding its charges and spell list. While merged, the weapons haft takes on aesthetic aspects of the staff.

RUNELORD FEATS

As you continue along your path of Thassilonian study, you are able to learn more abilities used by the ancient runelords.

Additional Feats Tattoo Artist (*Treasure Vault* 118)

RUNELORD DEDICATION

FEAT 2

RARE ARCHETYPE CLASS DEDICATION

Prerequisites runelord

Your connection to your sin suffuses all magic you use. When you indulge in your sin to Refocus, you can also exchange one spell you have prepared for one of your curriculum or sin spells of the same rank.

EMBED AEON STONE

FEAT 2

ARCHETYPE DOWNTIME SKILL

Prerequisites Runelord Dedication, trained in Crafting

You discover the secrets to embedding *aeon stones* into your flesh. You spend 1 day attuning to an *aeon stone* and physically embedding it in your skin. While the stone is embedded this way, you gain the benefits of the *aeon stone* as if it were orbiting above your head, but it protects the stone from being noticed or stolen as easily. *Aeon stones* in your flesh must be invested to function, as usual.

You can also use this activity to safely remove an embedded *aeon stone* in 1 day. Someone without this feat can attempt to surgically remove it safely by spending 1 day and succeeding at a DC 30 Medicine check, or hastily by simply ripping it from a corpse.

AEON RESONANCE

FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Embed Aeon Stone

You gain the resonant power of one embedded *aeon stone* as if it were placed in a *wayfinder*. While you can embed multiple *aeon stones* in your flesh, you can gain the resonance power from only one embedded stone at a time, selected each day when you make your daily preparations.

Special At 8th level, you can take this feat again. If you do, you gain the resonance powers of up to four invested *aeon stones* instead of only one.

ROD OF RULE

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Runelord Dedication

Your personal rune is connected more closely to your arcane bond. You gain the critical specialization effects of your arcane bonded weapon. In addition, whenever you critically hit a creature with your arcane bonded weapon, they begin to feel the pull of your sin, imposing a -2 circumstance penalty to saves against any of your curriculum or sin spells until the end of your next turn.

SINBLADED SPELL

FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE SPELLSHAPE

Prerequisites Runelord Dedication

Requirements You are holding a weapon in the polearm or spear group.

You punctuate your spellcasting with a flourish of your weapon, imparting physical force to your magic. If the next spell you cast is a non-cantrip sin or curriculum spell that affects a single target, and you either succeed on your attack roll or the target fails its saving throw against the spell, a wound in the shape of your personal rune appears on the target, dealing additional persistent bleed damage equal to the spell's rank, in addition to its regular effects.

SIN RESERVOIR

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Runelord Dedication

During your daily preparations, you can indulge in your associated sin or meditate on its values (and risks). When you do, you gain one additional spell slot of any spell level up to two levels below the highest-level wizard spell you can cast. You can prepare only one of your curriculum spells in this slot.

SIN COUNTERSPELL

FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Runelord Dedication, Counterspell

Your deep connection to a specific sin allows you to easily negate spells that sin opposes. Instead of being able to counter a foe's spell with Counterspell only if you have the same spell prepared, you can Counterspell it with any of your curriculum spells if the spell cast would violate your sin's anathema.

ORICHALCUM BOND

FEAT 18

ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites Rod of Rule

The ancient Thassilonians associated sins with different skymetals, and you've adapted that theory to empower your bonded weapon beyond its normal limits. When your personal rune is placed on a weapon during your daily preparations, choose a weapon property rune of up to your level that is common or you otherwise have access to. That rune is also added to the weapon until your next daily preparations. This rune counts against your weapon's limit as normal.

THASSILONIAN MAGIC

RUNELORD WIZARD SCHOOL SPELLS

ALL-ENCOMPASSING HUNGER

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON DEATH FOCUS MANIPULATE VOID WIZARD

Sin gluttony

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 living creature

Defense basic Fortitude

You reach out to devour a life, regardless of whether you need it for sustenance. The target takes 1d6 void damage, with a basic Fortitude save. If the creature is reduced to 0 Hit Points, it dies, and you gain temporary Hit Points equal to the damage dealt. These temporary Hit Points last for 1 minute.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 1d6.

CRESCENT SCEPTER

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON EMOTION FEAR FOCUS MANIPULATE MENTAL VISUAL WIZARD

Sin pride

Duration until the beginning of your next turn

You hold up any object, which takes on the appearance of glowing regalia in the eyes of those who look on you, representing the political or religious institute most feared by each creature. If a creature attempts to attack you during the spell's duration, it must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature becomes frightened 1, the penalty applying to its attack roll.

Failure As success, but frightened 2.

CUTTING EYE

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS WIZARD

Sin envy

Trigger You are the target of an attack or must attempt a saving throw against a spell.

Requirements You're aware of the attack or spell.

Your eyes open enviously, stealing the power of an opponent for yourself. You are not off-guard to the attacker or spellcaster until the beginning of your next turn. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your AC against the triggering attack or a +2 circumstance bonus to the triggering save.

HEART'S HOOK

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE EMOTION FOCUS MANIPULATE MENTAL WIZARD

Sin lust

Range 120 feet; **Targets** two creatures

Defense Will

You drive two creatures toward a fated meeting. Each will be compelled toward the other, but you can elect to have one automatically succeed on its saving throw.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature must spend the first action on its next turn to approach its partner. It can't Delay or take any reactions until it has obeyed this urge.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target must use all its actions on its next turn.

PRECIOUS GLEAM

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MANIPULATE MENTAL WIZARD

Sin greed

Range 60 feet; **Duration** until the beginning of your next turn

You temporarily enhance a weapon, replacing it with finer materials. On the next successful attack with that weapon during the spell's duration, the attack deals an additional 1d6 precision damage. You can choose for the metal to become your choice of cold iron, silver, or steel, causing the attack to bypass resistances accordingly.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 1d6.

RECLINED APPORT

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE FOCUS MANIPULATE TELEPORTATION WIZARD

Sin sloth

Range 60 feet; **Targets** 1 unattended object of light Bulk or less

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Walking over to an item to pick it up is so much effort. Whether it's your spellbook, a reagent, or a glass of wine, it's simply more efficient to call it to your hand. You teleport the target into your open hand. If you don't have a hand free, it falls to the ground at your feet.

Heightened (3rd) You can target an unattended object with a Bulk of 1 or less.

Heightened (5th) The range increases to 120 feet, and you can target an unattended object with a Bulk of 1 or less.

Heightened (7th) The range increases to 120 feet, and you can target an unattended object with a Bulk of 2 or less.

VENGEFUL GLARE ◆

FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON | CONCENTRATE | FOCUS | WIZARD

Sin wrath

Range 30 feet; **Targets** one creature you can see

Defense Fortitude

Your gaze falls on a creature, filled with icy vengeance or fiery wrath. The gaze deals 1d4 damage (basic Fortitude save). It deals your choice of cold damage or fire damage and gains the appropriate trait. If you already dealt damage to the creature earlier this turn, it also takes 1 persistent damage of the gaze's type.

Heightened (+1) The initial damage increases by 1d4 and persistent damage by 1.

PERSONAL RUNEWELL ◆◆

FOCUS 4

UNCOMMON | CONCENTRATE | FOCUS | MANIPULATE | WIZARD

Sin all

Range 30 feet; **Area** 15-foot radius, 30-foot-tall cylinder

Duration 1 minute

The runelords of Thassilon pioneered the creation of *runewells*, magical artifacts that could extract and store the power of sin magic from mortal souls. A circle of light carves its way across the ground as you create your very own *runewell*, your personal rune flaring to life within it as you add your own sin to those seven revered in the past. Whenever any creature Casts a Spell within your *personal runewell*, the well resonates, with your choice of effects.

- The runewell amplifies the power of your spells, as well as those of your allies. If the spell deals damage and doesn't have a duration, the well adds a status bonus to damage equal to the spell's rank.
- The runewell punishes enemies foolish enough to attempt magic in your seat of power, firing arcane bolts at the spell's caster that deal 4d6 force damage, with a basic Reflex save.

If you cast *personal runewell* a second time, your previous *personal runewell* vanishes. You can Dismiss the spell.

Heightened (+1) The amount of damage dealt by the *runewell*'s bolts increases by 1d6.

THASSILONIAN SPELLS

Sometimes found in Thassilonian ruins, these spells are also taught as part of the curriculum at the Sihedron Academy. Characters who go to that academy or have the runelord class archetype have access to these spells.

CHRYSOPOETIC CURSE ◆◆

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE CURSE MANIPULATE

Tradition arcane, divine

Range 30 feet; **Targets** one creature

Defense Will; **Duration** 1 minute

You grant the target the gift of riches, giving them the power to turn anything they touch to gold. The target must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target's skin turns their armor and clothing partially to gold. If the target is wearing any armor or clothing, they become encumbered.

Failure As success, but the curse extends to the target's held weapons and other gear. If the target is holding any weapons or other objects, they become clumsy 3, and the objects' Hardness is reduced by 5.

Critical Failure The curse becomes even stronger, extending to the surrounding terrain. As failure, and if the creature is standing on a solid surface, the ground in their space transmutes itself into a quagmire of liquid gold. The gold is greater difficult terrain. If the creature leaves its square (or when the curse ends), any affected terrain returns to its original shape and substance and the terrain in the new square transmutes to gold.

Any objects that were turned to gold return to their previous form and original shape when they leave the target's possession or the spell ends. As long as the target did not critically succeed on their saving throw, 2d6 gp worth of gold flakes and dust are left behind as the curse recedes.

DEVOURING VOID ◆◆◆

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE VOID

Tradition arcane, divine, occult

Range 120 feet; **Area** 30-foot burst

Duration sustained up to 1 minute

Countless tears in space appear in the area, like hungry mouths. When the spell is cast and the first time each round it's sustained, living creatures in its area take 7d8 void damage (basic Fortitude save). A living creature using a move action to leave the area must succeed at a Reflex save or their action is disrupted at the edge of the area.

Heightened (+1) The void damage increases by 1d8.

INDOLENT HAZE ◆◆◆

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE INCAPACITATE MANIPULATE MENTAL SLEEP

Tradition arcane, occult

Range 120 feet; **Area** 20-foot emanation

Defense Will; **Duration** 1 minute

The faint scent of poppies and a soothing calm fill the area, urging creatures to lay down and take a rest, to do nothing at all, ever again. Creatures in the area when you Cast the Spell

must attempt a Will save. Creatures who end their turn in the area must also attempt the save. You can Dismiss the spell.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature lies down to rest, becoming prone. If they were already prone, they instead drift off to sleep, becoming unconscious.

Failure As success, except that the creature is so happy lying down that they cannot attempt to Stand or otherwise maneuver themselves off of the ground on their next turn, though they can Crawl (potentially to escape the spell's area).

Critical Failure The creature immediately lies down and drifts off to sleep, becoming prone and unconscious.

Any creature in the area who is already unconscious when you Cast the Spell (or whose turn ends in the spell's area while they are unconscious) takes 6d4 spirit damage as their life force is drained away through their dreams. This damage does not automatically wake them.

Heightened (+1) The spirit damage increases by 2d4.

LOVE'S SACRIFICE ◆

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON AUDITORY CONCENTRATE EMOTION MENTAL

Tradition arcane, divine

Trigger You take damage that would reduce you to 0 Hit Points.

Range 30 feet; **Targets** one creature

Defense Will

You cry out for aid, and a creature near you feels compelled to throw itself in front of the threat as the ultimate expression of their love. A target that genuinely loves the caster without magical compulsion, at their player's or the GM's discretion, fails the save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The creature moves adjacent to you, moving further than its Speed if necessary as the magic compels it to exceed its limits. It takes half the damage you would have taken, while you take the rest. If you would be reduced to 0 Hit Points, you're reduced to 1 instead.

Failure As success, except they take the full damage. If the damage reduces them to 0 Hit Points, they immediately die; this is a death effect.

THIEF OF FORTUNE ◆◆

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Tradition arcane, divine

Range 60 feet; **Targets** one beneficial spell effect currently affecting a creature, with a duration of 10 minutes or less

Seeing another creature improve themselves with magic, you reach out and seize its benefits for yourself. Attempt a counteract check against the target spell effect. If you successfully counteract the effect, the effect does not end. Instead, you gain the effect of the target spell as well. If you would not be a valid target for the spell, you do not gain any of its benefits.

The spell's duration is halved as you siphon off its magical energy for yourself. Each round that both you and the original creature are affected by the spell counts for two rounds when determining the spell's duration. You can Dismiss the spell.

RIVAL ACADEMIES

WELCOME TO THE CONVOCAION

SPONSORS

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Cobyslarni

Kitharodian Academy

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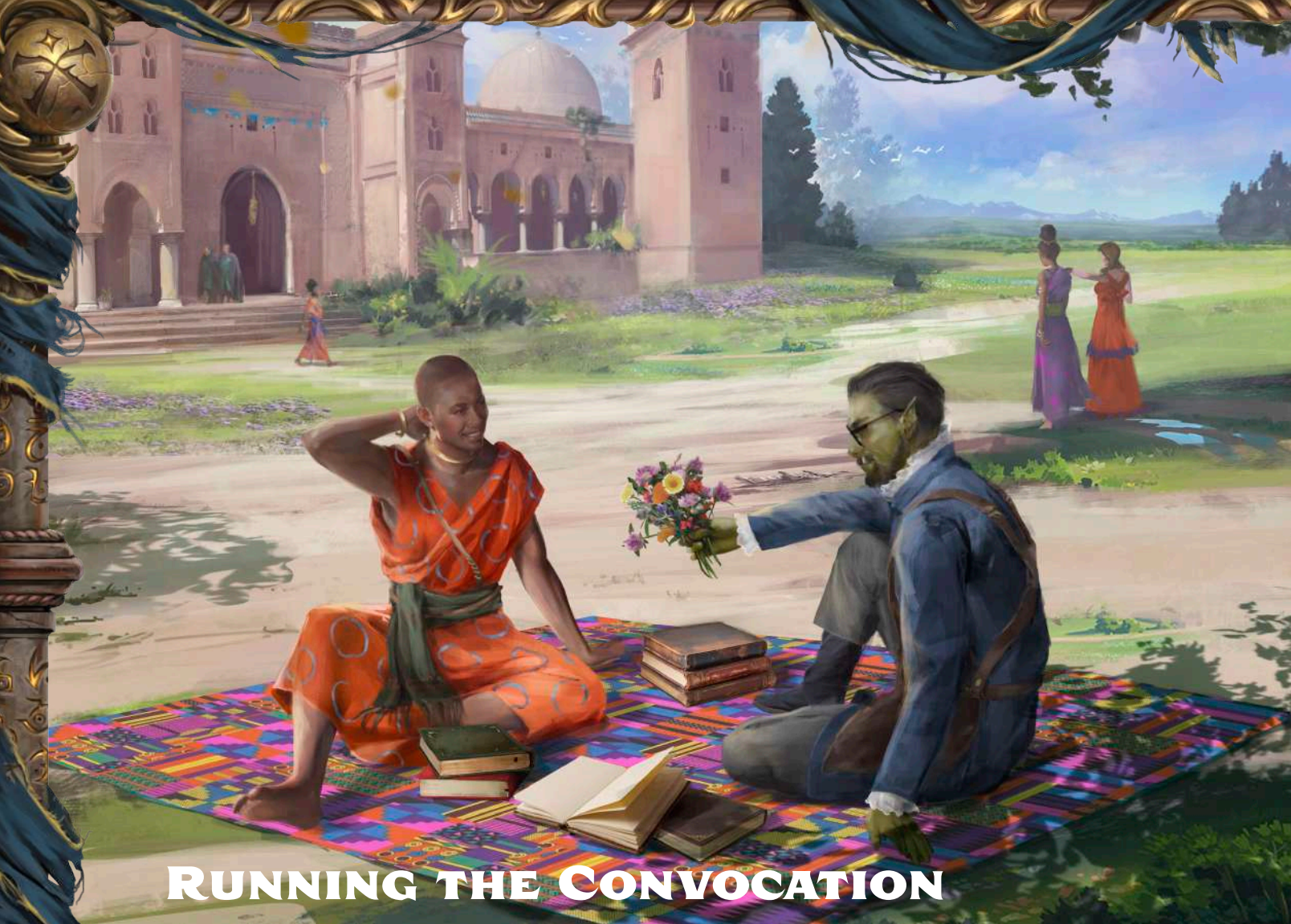
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RUNNING THE CONVOCATION

The Convocation presented in this book is an excellent showcase of many schools in the world of Golarion, but is also designed to serve as an adventure setting or an event that characters can visit, experience, and play within. If you're planning to use the Convocation as a major element in your game, it can launch a variety of different campaigns, depending on the themes your group wishes to explore as well as your PCs' interests and connections. The following section offers advice on using the material in this book to create a dynamic event in game.

Rather than a single looming threat that requires the characters' complete attention, the Convocation offers a toolbox of concerns, rivalries, and goals that players can chart their own course. This section examines some of the campaign models and likely adventures that can take place with the Convocation as a backdrop.

DAY BY DAY

These individual interactions and small pieces of adventure can benefit from a different approach than running an Adventure Path or other strongly-plotted campaign. In the very beginning, however, it can look similar, with hooks distributed based on exciting events or characters' backgrounds.

As it continues, each interaction represents a thread that the players may want to follow, finding their colleagues, friends, rivals, and enemies among those attending the Convocation. Players will often be happy to chase those threads as long as the obstacles along the way seem surmountable. When it's working well, GMing can be reactive, introducing opportunities and complications as the players proceed with their own plans. Most often this just means the intersection of another NPC's story or a thread you've already introduced. Perhaps they need someone's help, are already working on another project, need to upstage a rival, or have their own vision that threatens to spill out beyond what the characters are working on.

Behind the scenes, it's important to keep a few simple hooks readily available. These can save you when players are just getting started, threads wind down, or everyone is out of sync following a break. For the Convocation, heading into Sarkoris to kill some demons and reclaim territory is a great option to fall back on. These can also be requests made to the organizers for help guiding researchers, guarding exhibits, orienting visitors, or gathering materials. Requests like this can be a low-pressure way to introduce new NPCs and complications to the players at their own pace.

THE JOY OF KNOWLEDGE

First and foremost, this event will draw the interest of more studious and idealistic PCs, who might be interested in the new ideas and secrets being gathered for the first time. The sponsoring schools and most of the invitees are considering how their knowledge might be used to continue the healing of the Sarkoris Scar, giving a goal to direct this collective wisdom toward.

A campaign centered on the Convocation can be one rooted in collegial discovery and hopeful wonder, in partaking in the particular joy of making and sharing knowledge, all to make a better future. The Convocation is an opportunity for PCs to engage in theoretical and practical examination of the Universe and darker corners beyond. Although academic PCs will find no shortage of research to lose themselves in, the Convocation provides many more opportunities for knowledge to be gained by friendships with like-minded philosophers and exploring the dangerous wilderness.

If this is the focus of your campaign, it becomes increasingly important to make sure there are opportunities for different characters to shine. Time pressure through the research subsystem (*GM Core* 190) or combats can help reward everyone for contributing, but it also helps to consider characters' specialties and Lore skills when setting out other challenges.

THE STAKES OF RESEARCH

However, the Convocation does not only contain research, teaching, and academic camaraderie. With the gathering of so many brilliant minds and their proud traditions, conferences are also sites of political intrigue and economic rivalry. Even the honest competition to help in the Sarkoris Scar or build up the Academy of the Reclamation can easily become heated as politics and pride get involved, escalating to sabotage and violence.

A campaign featuring the Convocation can also show the high stakes beneath the event's high spirits, as institutions clash and compete for their interests and agendas. Your PCs might find themselves protecting or securing delegations' professional partnerships and reputations, perhaps as agents assisting an attending academy with which they have prior connections. For example, a Lion Blade PC might be invited to help oversee the Kitharodian contingent or a PC with fey connections might help Cobyslarni's visiting scholars as translators and attachés. In the same way, PCs might find themselves drawn into political tensions as rivalries intensify and become implicated in larger struggles beyond the Convocation.

DANGEROUS DISCOVERIES

The region's embattled history also raises the concern of threats from demonic remnants and former crusaders

turned bandits. With the sponsors assembling an ad hoc security force, anyone at the Convocation might be asked to help protect the various academies' research (and researchers). With so many secrets and discoveries assembled in one place, the Convocation is vulnerable to espionage and outside disruption both by demonic infiltrators and national interests.

There is also a tendency for more sheltered exchange students to treat the world as their playground, which poses a security risk, given the former Worldwound's proximity. Researchers are no less likely to put themselves at risk when a private experiment or even an exhibit begins to run wild.

ROMANCE IN THE AIR

Just as friction between different factions and a melting pot of gifted intellectuals creates tension and even violent rivalries, it also provides an atmosphere for explosive romances. The Pathfinder Baseline (*Player Core* 397) assumes things won't get steamy at the table without a serious discussion, but a low roar of trysts and sudden infatuations is a natural part of any gathering like the Convocation. Getting a crush's attention has inspired endless adventures and misadventures, so even NPC romances might drag in their friends as helpers or rescuers.

One important consideration for romance, particularly at the Convocation, is power dynamics. Academic positions, fame, the backing of sponsors, and raw physical or magical power can all create uncomfortable pressures. This often crosses the line in situations like a professor courting a student, where unspoken pressure can become a threat with a slight change in implication, so it pays to keep an eye on the relative positions of player characters and their interests.

With questions like those power dynamics and relationship description, it's important to check in as players and GMs to make sure everyone is still comfortable. Characters feeling uneasy can drive stories, but making a player uneasy can leave them feeling trapped at the table. Consider the tools for responsible play on *GM Core* page 7.

VISITING FELLOWS

With the Convocation set up, there also comes investments and developments... of inns, eateries, guards, transportation networks, banks, moneychangers, clinics, shops, and the rest of things which make visiting a place both more convenient and comfortable. Outsiders moving through Nerosyan like the Pathfinder Society in nearby Starrise Spire or pilgrims keen to tour the sites of the Mendevian Crusades can certainly add another political layer to a Convocation campaign, but also represent another way to use the Convocation. Nerosyan, Mendev, and the Sarkoris Scar can support countless adventures beyond the Convocation and PCs drawn by those can also interact with the Convocation.

RIVAL ACADEMIES

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Kitharodian Academy

The Magaambya

Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves

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GLOSSARY & INDEX

CONNECTIONS

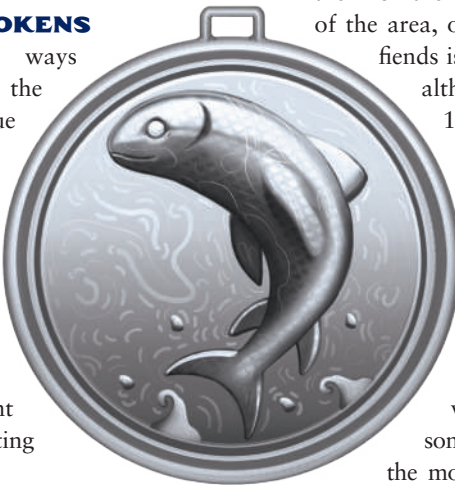
As much as knowledge, the Convocation is about forming connections. Below are some suggestions for how to use the connection subsystem (*NPC Core* 226) to track the PCs' standing. With everyone out of their element, lifelong friendships and dire rivalries crop up with surprising regularity.

Although romance may play a part in connections, professional relationships speak to basically any goal a PC may have. Connections with academics in the right fields is a tremendous help for any researcher, social climbers can extend their networks all over Golarion, sporting leagues need to expand their membership, and schools seek to poach talented students and professors from each other.

EXAMPLE ACADEMIC TOKENS

In addition to the common ways of deepening a connection, the Convocation provides many unique opportunities for academic and cross-cultural bonds.

- **Minor tokens** are small acts that touch the NPC, such as arranging to feed them as part of a group event, leaving an impression on them with at a presentation you give, suggesting an interesting joint project, or openly appreciating their performance or research.
- **Moderate tokens** require time and resources more than lip service. Some examples include helping behind the scenes for their presentation or exhibition, following through on a promise to help with their research, guiding them around to orient them to the Convocation, or exchanging stories and goods from your respective homelands.
- **Major tokens** represent a higher level of commitment, either through extended time or personal danger. A PC might complete a joint project, head into the Sarkoris Scar to help with the NPC's research, share dangerous academic secrets, or save the NPC or their research from a demonic incursion.



EXAMPLE ACADEMIC INSULTS

As it opens up opportunities for friendship, the Convocation also creates countless opportunities for minor snubs to snowball into rivalries.

- **Minor insults** can be unintentional acts that seems small to the person committing them. It can be as simple as drawing participants away from an NPC's exhibition, dismissing views they hold or the results of their research, showing appreciation for one of their rivals, asking them to share school secrets, or speaking poorly of attendees they're inclined toward.

- **Moderate insults** typically feel targeted toward the NPC, such as speaking negatively about their school or field of study, sleeping during their lecture, or presenting work that feels based on theirs without crediting them. Broadly disruptive acts—like accidentally releasing a charnel creation on the exhibition grounds or holding a raucous concert in a library—might also count as a moderate insult to those impacted.
- **Major insults** either cause lasting harm to the NPC or mark the PC as a serious threat. Some examples include direct plagiarism of the NPC's work, bullying, hateful remarks toward a group they belong to, use of suspect magic on them, or making negative comments to the NPC's superiors about them or their work. Particularly with the history of the area, openly using fiendish magic or aiding fiends is a major insult to many participants, although others like Messida Vost (page 106) have no such compunctions.

CONSEQUENCES OF CONNECTION

Within the academic melting pot of the Convocation, there are countless opportunities to aid or sabotage other attendees.

- **Bonded** connections are generally willing to share many secrets, including some they probably shouldn't. In all but the most serious cases, this includes internal information about their school and its techniques, including the uncommon feats, recipes, and spells the NPC has learned.
- **Committed** connections are willing to put a good word in with others of their faction, counting as a minor favor with that NPC when the committed one arranges a meeting. Although this is a guideline, introductions to a rival or someone much above their station may not be effective or could even backfire.
- **Associated** connections will generally share details of their own research, often at great length, granting access to an uncommon or rare rules element they've developed. While students will often spill all the details immediately, professors and other career academics will hold back secrets for committed students and their most dangerous research for bonded connections they truly trust.
- **Acquainted** connections will treat the PC like any other Convocation member. Their reactions at this point generally fall in line with the personality listed in their introduction.
- **Avoided** connections generally won't go out of their way to harm the PC but will share their vaguely negative opinion or otherwise exert social pressure when the PC comes up.
- **Despised** connections will actively sabotage the PC, but not risk ending their life or career to do so. This

SPONSOR SCHOOL	CLASS EXAMPLES	SPECIALIZED EXAMPLES
Academy of the Reclamation	Ranger, wizard	Blessed one, campfire chronicler (page 34)
Cobyslarni	Druid, witch	Familiar master, pactbinder (<i>Dark Archive</i> 166)
Kitharodian Academy	Bard, rogue	Kitharodian actor (page 58), Lion Blade (<i>Lost Omens Shining Kingdoms</i> , <i>Lost Omens World Guide</i> 131)
The Magaambya	Druid, wizard	Magaambyan attendant and halcyon speaker (<i>Lost Omens Character Guide</i> 101 and 104)
Monastery of the Unbreaking Waves	Magus, monk	Jalmeri Heavenseeker (<i>Impossible Lands</i> 224), Student of Perfection (<i>Lost Omens World Guide</i> 83)
University of Lepidstadt	Alchemist, investigator	Lepidstadt surgeon (page 94), sterling dynamo (<i>Guns & Gears</i> 52)

may involve spreading rumors like minor insults to other representatives of their school, preparing specifically difficult questions to confront the PC, challenges to competition, or minor acts of physical sabotage they think they can get away with.

- **Vindictive** connections actively pursue the PC and cause them trouble, even at personal risk. Although this might mean attacks in the night and directly destroying research, those with formal positions are more likely to stake their own careers and reputations on destroying their rivals’.

REPUTATION

Particularly for groups interacting with the Convocation as outsiders or passersby, the reputation subsystem (*GM Core* 200) can track their relationship with the Convocation as a whole. Characters can gain Reputation Points with the Convocation by assisting with the duties of hosting such an ambitious, multi-institution event, or strive to actualize the Convocation’s lofty ideals of shared learning.

While connections are from each PC to an NPC, reputation generally handles how the party is seen by the Convocation as a whole. Generally, choosing either connections or reputation would be correct for a campaign even if you’re focusing on the political and relationship dynamics of the Convocation.

Minor favors to the Convocation include showing up as audience members for underattended talks, helping with presentations, volunteering at exhibition booths, guiding other attendees, or presenting general knowledge. Moderate favors include distributing the novel results of your research, entering demon-infested territories at the behest of Sarkorian authorities or the Academy of the Reclamation, and mediating conflicts between schools. Major favors would include protecting the attendees from dangerous sabotage or demonic attack, arranging research that brings together multiple schools, or recovering lost information about Sarkorian gods or traditions.

The Convocation considers disruptions to the event to be disservices, including stirring up rivalries or making

blanket remarks about the superiority or inferiority of a specific school. Destroying items of historic or academic significance, general sabotage, engaging in plagiarism, or consorting with the demons of the Sarkoris Scar are also surefire ways to raise eyebrows as major disservices.

FREE ARCHETYPES

The Convocation also provides a good place to use the free archetype optional rule (*GM Core* 84) as an additional reward for building up these connections. By opening free archetypes appropriate to their relationships, it can represent those informal mentorships, accelerated study programs, personalized apprenticeships, courses for self-study, or similar learning opportunities.

Within a PC’s own school, the few acquainted connections a PC likely already has are enough to let them into any general training, letting them take multiclass archetypes of the classes frequently taught there, such as ranger or wizard at the Academy of the Reclamation. A committed connection within the school as a mentor also allows more specialized archetypes as the school’s inner training.

Participating in the Convocation more broadly, gaining a few acquainted connections at different schools, can give a character a free archetype with an academic theme, like the archaeologist, linguist, loremaster, scroll trickster, and talisman dabbler from *Player Core* 2.

Getting access to another school’s most closely guarded lessons is generally harder, but the kind words of a committed connection can get you into general training for multiclass archetypes, and the leaked secrets of a bonded connection can include specialized archetypes. Although learning from other schools is the spirit of the Convocation, taking a school’s inner teachings might still be considered a betrayal by others in that school.

If you’re using reputation, the options work more broadly. To use this optional rule with reputation, a liked reputation allows free archetypes chosen among the academic archetypes, admired allows the multiclass archetypes of every sponsored school, and revered allows the specialized archetypes of the sponsor schools.

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Abhaya the Returner 79

Acadamae 98, 106

Academy of the Reclamation 24–27

Academy of the Sublime 97, 102

Aesara Fleethoof 97, 100

Alamyra Jadwiga 97, 101

alchemical (trait) Alchemical items are powered by reactions of alchemical reagents. Alchemical items aren't magical and don't radiate a magical aura. Alchemical creatures are partially powered by alchemical reactions.

all alchemical items 29, 57, 89, 104

anadi A reclusive people from Garund who resemble spiders and can assume human forms. *LOME* 102–105

anathema Actions contrary to your point of view and violations of your personal code are called anathema. If you gain anathema from a source of power such as a deity, violating the anathema can cause you to lose related abilities.

Ancuin's Brewery 7

Arcanamirium 99, 110

archetype A special additional theme for your character that you can choose using your class feats.

Campfire Chronicler 34–35

Kitharodian Actor 58–59

Lepidstadt Surgeon 94–95

Pactbinder expansion 46–47

Runelord (class archetype) 114–117

Arclords of Nex Mages with formal training in the ways of the archmage Nex. *LOWG* 80

Areelu Vorlesh Sarkorian witch who assisted Deskari in opening the Worldwound. Killed during the Fifth Mendevian Crusade.

Avistan One of Golarion's continents. It makes up the northern half of the Inner Sea region. *LOWG* 7

Axis A massive planar city that is known for its adherence to law and home to the monitors known as aeons. *GM Core* 179

Ayin Lun 14

Azimbye Baadurlo 67

background The experiences your character had before becoming an adventurer. Each player character chooses a background during character creation. 22–23

Baphomet The demon lord of beasts, dungeons, and traitors. He was confronted, but not destroyed, by the heroes of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade. *Divine Mysteries* 184

basilisk A team ball sport popular in Avistan. *LOTG* 61–63

Belimarius The Runelord of Envy, still clinging to the traditions of old Thassilon. *Legends* 34–35

Bia Isha 5

Blackearth Cairn 17

Bloodstone Conservatory 97, 101

Bofika Nemesan 42

Bounded Grove 14

Carrock 19

Cascade Bearers 60, 68

Casmaron One of Golarion's continents. Located immediately east of the Inner Sea region. *LOWG* 7

Chapel of the Argent Shield 14

Cheris Nefritius-Sincloth 90

Chiral 97, 102

Chthonian Player Core 89

Cobyslarni 36–39

witch patron 44

connections *NPC Core* 226–229

contract (trait) A contract is a type of item that magically establishes an agreement between multiple parties and typically grants magical benefits. *Dark Archives* 164–165

convocation see Six Schools' Convocation

counteract The process used when one effect tries to negate another. *Player Core* 431

Crown of Feasting Ravens 17

Cruciform Cathedral 12

Dacilane Academy 98, 105

demon (trait) A family of fiends, demons hail from or trace their origins to the Outer Rifts. Most are irredeemably unholy and have darkvision. *Monster Core* 76–83

Deskari The demon lord responsible for creating the Worldwound. Defeated in 4718 AR by the Fifth Mendevian Crusade. *LOWG* 32–33

Diarra Romagne 30

Divine Conservatory of Magic 98–99, 109

Drezen A city in the Sarkoris Scar once overrun by demons.

dromaar A prominent heritage in the Inner Sea region, dromaars share characteristics with both orcs and another ancestry, typically humans. *Player Core* 83

drouge A game popular with intellectuals in Absalom.

Dyinglight Once a major Sarkorian city, it was abandoned by its human inhabitants after the opening of the Worldwound. 18

Egede Mendev's second-largest city. 15

Ehmik Naaruj 97, 103

Emerald Boughs 60, 68

Enivuni 18

Estrovian Forest A vast, ancient forest in Mendev. 15

exhibition hall 10

Astonishing Engine 88–89

Dance of Perfection 76–77

Echo Repository 40–41

Healing the Scar 28–29

Tree of Stories 64–65

Wrath of the Righteous 52–53

familiar 44–45

foydaan Genies from the Plane of Water that prefer skilled negotiation to open conflict. *Monster Core* 158–159

Fifth Mendevian Crusade A small band of brave souls defeated Deskari and closed the Worldwound in 4718 AR. *LOWG* 29

Fire Circle District 12

Forest of Embers 17

Frostmire Fen 17–18

gadget (trait) Gadgets are consumable technological inventions with innovative uses.

Lepidstadt Gadgets 92–93

Ganhil 78

Garund One of Golarion's continents. Its northern portion makes up the southern half of the Inner Sea region. LOWG 8

Gazryn Nu'Darga 97-98, 104

Geb (nation) A nation in eastern Garund that's a haven for undead. LOWG 76-77, *Book of the Dead* 176-179

Glungur 18

Godsrain A rain of divine power, warmongering blood, and sacred metal falling across the Universe as Gorum's body is ripped apart. *War of Immortals* 4

Gorum (deity) Dead god of battle, strength, and weapons. *Player Core* 36, *War of Immortals* 4

Gundrun A rebuilt town many consider the base of the Sarkorian Reclamation. 18

Hall of Lambent Oaths 97, 103

Halls of Revelation 97, 100

Hank the Alerunner's Hideout 13

harrow A method of divination that uses cards known as a harrow deck to tell fortunes. Especially popular in Varisia.

Herne's Oak 15

hex (trait) A hex is a short-term effect generated on the fly from your patron's magic, requiring your familiar to draw from your patron. As such, you can cast only one spell with the hex trait each turn; attempts to cast a second hex spell on the same turn fail, and the spellcasting actions are lost.

hobgoblin Hobgoblins are a sturdy, clever people with a propensity for militaristic order. PC2 12-15

holy (trait) Effects with the holy trait are tied to powerful magical forces of benevolence and virtue. They often have stronger effects on unholy creatures. Creatures with this trait are strongly devoted to holy causes and often have weakness to unholy. If a creature with weakness to holy uses a holy item or effect, it takes damage from its weakness.

Horgus Gworm A foul-tempered aristocrat who aided the heroes of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade. 15, 52

Houses of Perfection These martial arts schools in Jalmeray emphasize techniques tied to the elements. LOIL 196-197

Icerift Castle 15

incapacitation (trait) An ability with this trait can take a character completely out of the fight or even kill them, and it's harder to use on a more powerful character. If a spell has the incapacitation trait, any creature of more than twice the spell's rank treats the result of their check to prevent being incapacitated by the spell as one degree of success better, or the result of any check the spellcaster made to incapacitate them as one degree of success worse.

Indraracha Institute 98, 108

Iobaria This nation in western Casmaron is an unsettled frontier after a number of plagues. 12

Irabeth Tirabade *Legends* 52-53

Irahai *Legends* 54-55

Irrisen This nation in northwestern Avistan is known for its constant winter and its rule by winter witches. LOWG 110-112

Isthralei 34

Iz A Sarkorian city razed during heavy fighting in 4718 AR. LOWG 27, 33

J Dacilane 98, 105

Jaalika 17

Jadwiga This human ethnicity located primarily in Irrisen traces its heritage to the witch-queens of that land. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 10

Jalmeray An island nation off the eastern coast of Garund, Jalmeray is home to immigrants from the distant region of Vudra. LOIL 180-185, LOWG 77-79

Jarn Lesantillo 48

Jenway Nightblossom 38

Jistka Imperium This ancient empire ruled northern Garund around -3600 AR.

Kateriyana de Rijiene 84

Kenabres 15

kholo An ancestry of hyena-like hunters and raiders. PC2 16-19

Kimanéz University 98, 107

Kitaja 73

Kitharodian Academy 48-51

knivesies A blood sport where the participants are tied together, using a shared knife to fight over the wagers. LOTG 59

Lake of Mists and Veils A large lake in northeastern Avistan. LOWG 28

Lion Blades (faction) A secretive group of spies believed to work to defend Taldor and its interests from enemies. *Lost Omens Character Guide* 65

Magaambya 60-63

magus (class) *Secrets of Magic* 34-49

Resurgent Maelstron hybrid study 82-83

Mendev This nation located in northeastern Avistan is a launching point for crusades against the demons of the Sarkoris Scar. 13-15

Mendevian Delegation Forum 13

Messida Vost 98, 106

Mircea Celeste 54

Monastery of Unbreaking Waves 72-75

monk (class) PC2 114-127

Unbreaking Waves monks 80-81

morph (trait) Spells that slightly alter a creature's form have the morph trait. Any Strikes specifically granted by a magical morph effect also gain the magical trait. You can be affected by multiple morph spells at once, but if you morph the same body part more than once, the second morph effect attempts to counteract the first. Your morph effects might also end if you are polymorphed and the polymorph effect invalidates or overrides your morph effect. For instance, a morph that gave you wings would be dismissed if you polymorphed into a form that had wings of its own. The GM determines which morph effects can be used together and which can't.

Msuna Elewe 66

Murrou 43

Mwangi A name that encompasses multiple ethnicities hailing from the Mwangi Expanse. LOME 22-31

Mwangi Expanse This area in northern central Garund consists of most of the regions in and around the Mwangi Jungle, including the nation of Vidrian. LOME, LOWG 84-95

Nantambu A city-state located on the western edge of the Mwangi Jungle. LOME 232-245, LOWG 89-90

Neathholm 74

Needleglens 18

Nerosyan 12-13

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New Thassilon This young nation in northwest Avistan is home to time-displaced Thassilonians. LOWG 113-115

Ng The Eldest of changing seasons, secrets, and wanderers. *Divine Mysteries* 189

Nochtli Tlatoa 98, 107

nonlethal (trait) An effect or weapon with this trait is nonlethal. Damage from a nonlethal effect or weapon knocks a creature out rather than killing it. You can use a nonlethal weapon to make a lethal attack with a -2 circumstance penalty.

Nsentiah 61

Old-Mage Jatembe This great wizard founded the Magaambya and helped rekindle the art of magic during the Age of Anguish. *Legends* 62-63

Oprak A nation in central Avistan, Oprak is home to hobgoblins who won the land by force. LOWG 44

Outer Rifts (plane) An endless winding plane full of dangerous chasms and home to the fiends known as demons. The plane is unholy. *GM Core* 181

Outer Sphere The outer portion of the Great Beyond, consisting of nine planes with a strong link to particular philosophies and serve as the homes for many gods: Axis, Abaddon, the Boneyard, Elysium, Heaven, Hell, the Maelstrom, Nirvana, and the Outer Rifts. *GM Core* 178-181

Plane of Water (plane) An elemental plane saturated with endless oceans, bogs of mud and silt, and clouds of steam. *GM Core* 176

Proving Grounds 97-98, 104

Purity Forge 14-15

qlippoth (trait) A family of fiends hailing from the Outer Rifts, most qlippoth are unholy. Their appearance affects the minds of non-qlippoth that view them. *Monster Core* 280-283

Queen Galfrey Former queen of Mendev who abdicated her rule at the end of the Fifth Mendevian Crusade, becoming a herald of her patron goddess.

Queen Galfrey's Palace 13

Rain-Scribes 60, 68-69

Raliscrad 18-19

reputation A subsystem for tracking groups' feelings about the PCs. *GM Core* 200-201

ritual An esoteric and complex spell anyone can cast. *Player Core* 389

Rolam Bitterpath 13, 16-19

Runelord 114-119

Saresp Mountain 15

Sarkoris A region located in northern Avistan. The previous site of the demonic Worldwound. 16-19

Sarkoris Scar see Sarkoris

Severed Spiral 15

Shudderwood 19

Sihedron Spires 112-113

Six Schools' Convocation Six academies and their guests gathered for the preservation and recovery of knowledge. 5-9

skill (trait) A general feat that improves skills. all skill feats 55, 91

Sorshen The former Runelord of Lust, now the queen over half of New Thassilon. *Legends* 35-37

spell A magical effect created by performing mystical incantations and gestures known only to those with special

training or inborn abilities.

all spells 31, 32-33, 42, 44-45, 70-71, 82, 83, 90, 100, 102, 109, 110, 117-119

foydaan spells 83

reclamation spells 32-33

storytelling spells 70-71

Thassilonian spells 117-119

Star Keep 15

Starrise Spire 13

Storasta 19

Synostosis Academy 99, 111

Taldor A nation located in southeast Avistan. This empire in decline seeks to reclaim former glory. LOWG 128-129

talisman (trait) A talisman is a consumable that must be affixed to an item. *GM Core* 263

all talismans 66, 79

Tatiana Lesantillo 55

Te Taspeh Valley 15

Telva Renn 24

Tempest-Sun Mages 60, 69

Tere Athlanere 91

Thanom 98, 108

Thassilon An empire destroyed ten thousand years ago, known for its titanic monuments and rune magic. LOWG 113-115

Towers A card game played with the harrow deck. LOTG 59

Undarin A Sarkorian city razed during heavy fighting in 4718 AR. LOWG 27, 33

undine Planar scions descended from faydhaan or other inhabitants of the Plane of Water.

unholy (trait) Effects with the unholy trait are tied to powerful magical forces of cruelty and sin. They often have stronger effects on holy creatures. Creatures with this trait are strongly devoted to unholy causes, and often have weakness to holy. If a creature with weakness to unholy uses an unholy item or effect, it takes damage from its weakness.

University of Lepidstadt 84-89

Ustalav A nation located in northern central Avistan. Countless terrors roam the region. LOWG 45, *Book of the Dead* 188-189

Uzunjati 60, 69

Valas's Gift 15

Veasna 98-99, 109

Venorium Blorm 99, 110

Vil Seral 31

West Sellen River The natural border between Mendev and Sarkoris.

witch *Player Core* 178-191

Cobyslarni patron 44, 45

wizard *Player Core* 192-205

Runelord (class archetype) 114-117

School of Rooted Wisdom 68-69

School of the Reclamation 32-33

Worldwound An enormous rift that opened in the nation of Sarkoris, allowing the demonic hordes of the Outer Rifts to spill forth and destroy the region. It has since been closed, leaving the Sarkoris Scar. LOWG 26, 32-33

Wounded Lands 19

Zemnaide 36

Zenda Modic 99, 111

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