



DUNGEONS
&
DRAGONS

The SHATTERED GATES OF SLAUGHTERGARDENTM

Player's Guide

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Introduction

You're about to embark on a journey full of danger and excitement, intrigue and challenge—a journey to the Shattered Gates of Slaughtergarde! You'll face off against sinister foes from rampaging dragons to calculating demons. As part of a close-knit team of adventurers, you'll grow in power and knowledge. And you'll earn glory and acclaim, as well as piles of treasure.

But to do all that, you need a character. That's where this book comes in. This *Player's Guide* is a link between the D&D rules and the adventure you're about to undertake. Here you can find all sorts of advice on how to make a memorable character who can survive the rigors of Slaughtergarde and emerge victorious.

Once the adventure has started, you'll still find the *Player's Guide* useful. Your character can acquire some of the magic items detailed in this book. In time, your PC might ally with one or both of the organizations detailed here—the Luminous Order and the Ebon Cabal. The *Player's Guide* tells you the benefits of that affiliation, including prestige classes available only to members of one of these groups.

Share the *Player's Guide* around the table as you undertake the adventure. That's what it's designed for. Refer to it as often as you wish—the knowledge in this book might save your character's life!

CREATING A CHARACTER

You and your friends begin your adventures in the Valley of Obelisks, a rugged land on the frontier of civilization. As you generate a new 1st-level character, consider the following points.

The Valley of Obelisks is a big place. Even a fast rider would take days to travel its length by road. Thus, nearly any character you can imagine can be from here. Don't be shy about trying an unusual combination of class and race, or a type of character new to you.

Your Dungeon Master has all sorts of adventure materials, but they require a reasonably cohesive cast of characters to spring to life. Discuss with your friends what kind of character you're making. That way, you make sure you've got the basics covered—someone who can heal, someone who can fight, someone who is skilled with arcane magic, and someone who can deal with traps. Ideas that your friends have for their characters might inspire you.

Another way you can make the DM's life easier is by inventing some sort of social connection between your character and at least one other PC. Doing so provides a reason your characters are together, and it helps make sure that everyone makes characters that work with one another. You don't have to play a character who's best friends with everyone else, of course, but D&D is a cooperative game, so you shouldn't play a complete misanthrope either.

Root your character in the world—or at least plant some seeds that can grow roots in time. You should be able to pick a community in the Valley of Obelisks that your character

calls home, and you should know the basics of how your character grew up, whether living relatives exist, and so on. You don't have to have a detailed history unless you want to. In fact, it's often convenient to leave some parts of the story blank initially, so you can fill them in later with details that connect to the ongoing campaign. In any case, you should be able to talk about your character in a way that doesn't rely on race, class, and level.

RACES OF THE VALLEY

Most communities in the Valley of Obelisks are welcoming to residents of all races, but some naturally attract more of one race than another. Others are the historical home of a specific race.

When you choose a race, you don't necessarily have to be from one of the communities described in that race's section. You can pick a different settlement, declare that you're from a small hamlet or thorp that isn't shown on the map, or even decide that you want to play a visitor from a far-off land.

Dwarf: Few of the valley's dwarves are farmers. Instead, they are artisans in urban centers or miners up in the foothills and mountains.

Communities: Dwarves dominate the town of Krokarr and the surrounding Sardarian Hills. Recently, a dwarf clan has moved to Hemyulak, where its members are scouting the nearby mountains for ore.

Elf: The elves of the valley call its many forests home. Elves spend their time tending the great trees, hunting, gathering rare herbs, and perfecting wizardry.

Communities: Built among the trees of the Oakwood, the town of Shul Shennek is the largest cluster of elves in the valley. Shul Vaath in the Vaathwood runs a close second. Both the Oakwood and the Vaathwood have smaller elf hamlets as well. Elf communities are more sporadic in the other forests, and no elves live in the Forest of Turlek. Werewolves wiped them all out.

Gnome: Gnomes in the valley keep to their own, living quietly in thorps burrowed into the hills and rolling pastures that characterize the central part of the valley. Many are shepherds or vegetable farmers.

Communities: Gnomes have a significant presence in Riverbend, and the Riverbend Carnival is justly famous for its skilled, entertaining gnomes.

Half-Elf: Half-elves have a reputation as diplomats and shrewd bargainers, so many gravitate to the merchant trades or other jobs requiring travel.

Communities: Those half-elves of the Valley of Obelisks who live with elves are usually found in Shul Shennek. These individuals are treated as full-blooded elves in the community, set apart from the others only by their short life spans. Since the elves of Shul Vaath disdain outsiders, half-elves are rare among them. Half-elves who live with their human kin are usually residents of large settlements such as Sumberton.

Half-Orc: Full-blooded orcs once comprised the majority of the barbarian tribes roaming the fringes of the valley, but they began mixing with humans long ago. Many of



these tribes are now made up entirely of half-orcs. A few such tribes wander the fringes of the Valley of Obelisks, hunting and gathering when they can, and raiding nearby settlements when they must.

Communities: The mountains north of the Valley of Obelisks and the headwaters of the Marrilach River are the territory of the two largest half-orc tribes.

Halfling: The Marrilach River that runs through the heart of the valley also runs through the heart of every halfling, it is said. The vast majority of halflings lives and works within a few miles of the river, many on the riverboats that carry goods back and forth between the Valley of Obelisks and the rest of the world.

Communities: Three halfling clans are particularly common in the valley. The Marktunsel halflings are historically from Sumberton; Lukrimar Keep is home to the Hundivarst clan; and the Faminestri clan is from Jewelford. Halflings from all three clans, as well as a scattering of "extended family" from other clans, live anywhere within sight of the Marrilach River.

Human: The dominant race of the Valley of Obelisks, humans built the roads and erected the settlements where most of the valley's residents live. Human farmers make up the preponderance of the valley's common folk.

Communities: The city of Sumberton is the largest settlement in the Valley of Obelisks, and nearly half of its population is human. Jewelford is another town that has a large human population, and many of the smaller villages and hamlets such as Dondurran, Tulvercross, and Silvermont have a human majority.

CLASSES OF THE VALLEY

It isn't hard to justify the presence of any class within the communities of the Valley of Obelisks. Some classes naturally gravitate to certain occupations and locations.

Barbarian

The settled lands of the Valley of Obelisks have few native barbarians. Some tribes wander along the northern periphery or the headwaters of the Marrilach River.

Occupations: Barbarians who come to the valley find work as caravan guards or soldiers, or as bandits who fight caravan guards and soldiers.

Character Concepts

- The berserker who glares at everyone and lets an axe do the talking.
- The exotic hunter-gatherer who's curious but naïve about civilization.
- The survivor who lived through a massacre or disaster that wiped out the tribe.

Bard

The art of song is particularly esteemed in the Valley of Obelisks. Performers are common, but only the best can call themselves bards.

Occupations: Every bard needs an audience, so the natural tendency is for bards to gravitate to larger cities such as

Sumberton and Jewelford. The gnomes of Riverbend produce a number of bards as well, many of whom learn their craft in the traveling Riverbend Carnival.

Character Concepts

- The tale-spinner who's eager to hit the road, perform heroic deeds, and tell stories about them.
- The fencer minstrel who wields a rapier as well as he does a mandolin.
- The dabbler who's fascinated by ancient lore, delving into crumbling ruins and long-forgotten crypts in search of secret knowledge.

Cleric

The folk of the Valley of Obelisk are cosmopolitan enough to tolerate the worship of any non-evil deity. With no single religion dominating the area, clerics of many faiths are common.

Occupations: Sumberton's Pious Way has a number of major temples and is the region's center of religious learning, so clerics commonly come from there. Every town, village, and hamlet has churches and chapels that could benefit from the presence of a cleric.

Character Concepts

- The missionary who tries to convert others by way of speech and example.
- The shepherd who guides and protects others through the trials and dangers of life.
- The zealot who takes the role of a soldier in a battle between good and evil.

Druid

While the Valley of Obelisks is known as an agricultural region, much of its land has never felt the touch of a plow. But that doesn't mean such land isn't tended, for druids watch over the valley's wild places.

Occupations: Some druids are loners, safeguarding the wilderness as best they can. The majority of druids in the valley belong to one of three orders: the Druids of the Red Rock (Andrall Forest), the Mahogany Circle (West Oakwood), and the Vaathwood Guardians (Vaathwood).

Character Concepts

- The innocent who simply wants to see all the splendors of the natural world, from the highest mountains to the deepest caverns.
- The militant who wants to protect the wilderness from the taint of evil—or the corruption of civilization.
- The mystic who seeks to better understand nature and divine magic.

Fighter

The Valley of Obelisks might be at peace, but it's far from peaceful. A strong sword arm is always an asset, and skill with a blade highly prized.

Occupations: Some fighters are soldiers in the national army, quartered in Sumberton or Castle Pendrant. Most are

members of local militias under the command of a titled lord or another member of the nobility.

Character Concepts

- The glory hound who sees each battle as a test of skill and a building block of fame.
- The soldier who's fascinated with small-unit tactics and apt to suggest techniques such as "pincer movements" and "bounding overwatch."
- The mysterious drifter who does good deeds, then wanders on in search of something—or away from something else.

Monk

Valley residents regard the martial arts as exotic, but a few understand the power such discipline offers.

Occupations: Many monks receive their training in one of Sumberton's monasteries. A few learned their art at a temple in Sekletir or in foreign lands.

Character Concepts

- The seeker who travels from place to place, finding adventure almost by accident.
- The contemplative who uses martial arts as a path to enlightenment.
- The would-be master who strives to best the champions of other fighting styles.

Paladin

Evildoers like to lurk on civilization's frontier, so who better than a paladin to make sure the Valley of Obelisks remains safe?

Occupations: The temples of Sumberton have paladin orders affiliated with them, and many paladins owe allegiance to the shrine at Sekletir.

Character Concepts

- The crusader who's a soldier with a righteous cause that nothing can stand in the way of.
- The honorable knight who tries to live a life of virtue as an example to others.
- The reformer who undertakes quest after quest in an effort to make up for some past sin.

Ranger

A ranger's place is out on the frontier, and the Valley of Obelisks offers plenty of challenges on the edge of civilization.

Occupations: Rangers are more common in the valley's smaller communities than in the big cities. Many act as hunters, guides, and scouts. The village of Hemyulak in particular is known for the rangers it produces.

Character Concepts

- The wanderer who goes wherever the path leads, always eager to see new sights.

- The guerilla who learned how to use stealth and camouflage to reach behind enemy lines, set ambushes, commit sabotage, and fade into the wilderness.
- The hunter who takes pride in stalking prey, then dispatching it quickly and cleanly.

Rogue

With so many communities and ways of life in the valley, it's easy for a rogue to make a mark or to blend in unobtrusively.

Occupations: The skills rogues possess mean that a city life best suits most of them, but some rogues are bandits or scouts in the trackless wilds.

Character Concepts

- The mischief-maker who loves to embarrass authority figures and do the impossible.
- The killer trained from childhood to slay quickly and silently.
- The deceiver who uses disguise, stealth, and other skills to act like a fantasy version of a modern spy.

Sorcerer

The raw arcane power of the sorcerer can manifest without warning, so members of this class are found throughout the Valley of Obelisks.

Occupations: A sorcerer or two can be found in most valley communities, using their spells to keep the peace, protect others, or cause trouble.

Character Concepts

- The dragon-descended who regards spells as a birthright from draconic ancestors.
- The meditator who's always trying to unlock the arcane secrets within the soul.
- The curious free spirit who uses experimentation and observation to master new spells.

Wizard

Sumberton alone is big enough to support an arcane college, so wizards are uncommon in the valley.

Occupations: Most wizards use their spells to earn a livelihood, often as members of the Scriveners Guild in Sumberton. A few live elsewhere, mostly as apprentices to hermit wizards who came to the valley to enjoy solitude.

Character Concepts

- The scholar who treats magic like a field of scientific inquiry.
- The acquirer who's always on the lookout for new spells and magic items.
- The intellectual who uses intelligence and magic to overcome physical frailty or social stigma.

The Luminous Order

As you discover the secrets of Slaughtergarde, you might meet agents of a knightly organization called the Luminous Order, which is based in a castle called the Shining Citadel. Over time, you can develop an affiliation with this group that leads to increasingly greater rewards for you—if you continue to act in an appropriate manner.

From time to time after you become affiliated with the order, the DM might tell you that your affiliation score within the Luminous Order has increased. As your affiliation score rises, you become entitled to the following rewards.

Affiliation Score	Title: Benefits and Duties
1 or lower	None.
2–4	Knight Luminous or Luminary: You are eligible for quests and can purchase spellcasting from the clerics of the order at reduced cost.
5–8	Luminary Captain: You receive a <i>Luminary tabard</i> and gain expanded access to the order's NPC spellcasters.
9 or higher	Luminary Champion: You receive one <i>weapon of the celestial host</i> (your choice). Gaining the title of Luminary champion entitles you to enter the solar channeler or serene guardian prestige class.

PLAYING A LUMINARY

When you're a Knight of the Luminous Order—also known as a Knight Luminous or a Luminary—you're always on the lookout for evil, especially hidden iniquity that might lead to greater woe down the road. The Luminous Order was created to stop a demonic invasion, so you're particularly concerned with anything that lets evil gain a foothold such as a secret demonic cult engaging in foul rites within a forest or an evil lycanthrope hidden within a community. It doesn't have to be an earth-shattering invasion from the Lower Planes. You strike at any growing evil, uprooting it before it can bear bitter fruit.

The Luminous Order places great faith in the self-reliance of its members. If it accepts you within its ranks, the order is confident that you take its mission to heart. Thus the order demands few specific duties from you. If evil shows its face, then the Luminous Order asks volunteers to vanquish that evil. But the order's leaders rarely demand that a specific agent undertake a specific mission.

The order's leadership likewise respects the lives of members beyond the Shining Citadel's walls. It's common for Knights Luminous to be away from the citadel for months at a time, even if they aren't on a specific mission for the order. Joining the Luminous Order advances your career as a hero; it doesn't constrain that career.

Combat: Clerics, fighters, and monks are the most common classes in the Luminous Order, so members' tactics vary based on their strengths. Some Knights Luminous stand toe to toe with enemies, while others hang back and cast spells. Supernatural or magical enemies are countered

by supernatural or magical responses, whether that's turning undead or using *dismissal* on fiends.

If Luminaries have a weakness, it's that given a choice between protecting their comrades and defeating a foe, they save their friends every time. Clever enemies aren't above exploiting this sense of honor to gain an advantage on the battlefield—or at least to escape.

Luminaries usually operate in small groups. On the rare occasions when a crusade calls for larger groups, those squads organize like cavalry. The leader of such a company (often a Luminary captain) commands eight to ten others, and all of them travel on light warhorses to arrive at the critical point of the battle as soon as possible.

Advancement: The Luminous Order accepts roughly a dozen new members each year. Two broad criteria are used to determine membership. First, the Luminous Order wants new knights who already have some experience battling evil, especially supernatural foes such as undead and outsiders. Second, the order looks for recruits who have skills and talents that it doesn't possess in abundance. Strong sword arms are always welcome, of course, but to impress the leaders of the Luminous Order, you should try to accomplish something that they haven't seen before.

Once you become a Knight Luminous, you have access to the Shining Citadel and the aid of powerful members of the order. You can take living quarters at the stronghold if you wish, or merely visit when you want a quest or need the order's aid.

At the Shining Citadel, the best of the best are known as Luminary champions. If you become a champion, you can start to exert some influence within the order, deciding on its overall direction, prioritizing its many concerns, and assigning quests to other Luminaries. A political role has mandatory duties, though, so don't take such a position if you don't want the responsibility.

Missions: The original purpose of the Luminous Order was to thwart a demonic invasion, should another one ever occur. That hasn't happened in all the centuries of the order's existence; in the meantime, the organization deals with the frequent outbreaks of evil and lawlessness in the Valley of Obelisks as best it can. Last year, for example, the Luminous Order's notable accomplishments included protecting refugees fleeing the dragon attack on Andrushel, breaking the gnoll siege of Kel's Rise, uncovering a group of mind flayers hiding in a temple in Jewelford, and ending Jolly Mara's vampiric reign of terror in Stump Flats.

Knights Luminous also travel into the Slaughterscar from time to time to check the undead population. Current Luminary champions believe that periodic patrols are the best way to keep the undead within the crater, rather than seeing them spill out to menace the nearby countryside and communities.

Responsibilities: The Luminous Order is understanding of its members' responsibilities to family, lord, and country. You can spend up to six months away from the Shining Citadel without arousing worry in your comrades—and longer than that if you're on order business. As long as you don't besmirch the Luminous Order's good name, and you

fight evil to the best of your ability, the order is proud to call you a member.

SERENE GUARDIAN

"You fight well, but you're about to collapse in a paroxysm of pain. See?"

—Hanoo the Blessed, serene guardian

The Luminous Order teaches its soldiers some rudimentary meditations and concentration exercises, but these are just the tip of the iceberg. Those who master the esoteric, mind-enhancing techniques of the Luminous Order have earned the right to call themselves serene guardians.

BECOMING A SERENE GUARDIAN

If you have a disciplined worldview and a certain level of combat prowess, and you have the title of Luminary champion, then becoming a serene guardian is simply a matter of devoting the necessary time to training your mind.

SERENE GUARDIAN ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any lawful. The Luminous Order doesn't tolerate evil members, and evil characters aren't accepted among the order's ranks, but nevertheless a serene guardian who falls from grace keeps the powers of the serene guardian class and can still gain levels in the class.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Special: You must have an affiliation score of 9 or higher within the Luminous Order to become a serene guardian. If your affiliation score drops below 9 after you have become a serene guardian, you retain all class features and the ability to advance in the class.

THE SERENE GUARDIAN HIT DIE: D8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Resonance, painful release
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Damaging release
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Monk advancement or bonus feat
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Staggering release
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Greater resonance
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Traumatic release
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Immune to fear
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Confounding release
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Unclouded mind
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Soul release

Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level): Balance, Climb, Concentration, Craft, Escape Artist, Hide, Intimidate, Jump, Knowledge (religion), Listen, Move Silently, Profession, Sense Motive, Spot, Swim, Tumble.



Hanoo the Blessed releases resonance

Illus. by R. Horsley

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CLASS FEATURES

As a serene guardian, you deliver blows that establish a mystical resonance within your target. You also learn methods to release that resonance in ways that harm your enemies. All the following are class features of the serene guardian prestige class.

Resonance (Su): When you enter the class, you become able to establish resonance in your enemies. Whenever you deal damage to a foe two or more times in a single round, you create 1 point of resonance in that enemy. You usually need to make a full attack to create resonance, but a single attack followed by a successful attack of opportunity before your next turn also allows you to do so.

To produce an effect, you must release the resonance you have established. You can only release resonance in one target at a time. When you release resonance in a foe, all the resonance points you have created in that opponent are loosed to produce the effect you choose. The chosen effect only affects the creature from which the resonance was released. Once resonance is released, the target in which it was released returns to 0 resonance points; you have to create resonance in that enemy again before you can produce another effect against it.

At 5th level, your mastery of resonance increases. If you deal damage to a foe three times or more in a single round, you create 2 points of resonance in that opponent.

Painful Release (Su): As a swift action, you can release resonance in the form of searing pain that flows throughout your target's body. For each point of resonance released, that foe takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws for a number of rounds equal to the number of resonance points released. This ability has no effect on creatures that are immune to extra damage from critical hits.

Damaging Release (Su): At 2nd level, you learn how to damage your foe directly with the power of resonance. As a swift action, you can release the resonance you have created within a target to deal that foe 1d6 points of damage per point of resonance released. This damage doesn't help you create resonance in the target again.

Monk Advancement or Bonus Feat: Most serene guardians were once monks, fighters, or rangers, because it's easier for such characters to damage the same enemy twice in the same round. Beginning at 3rd level, if you have levels in monk, you can count half your serene guardian levels as monk levels for calculating your flurry of blows attack bonus, Armor Class bonus, and unarmed damage. If you don't have monk levels, you can instead choose any bonus feat for which you meet the prerequisites from among the allowed fighter bonus feats (PH 38).

Staggering Release (Su): At 4th level, you learn how to slow your enemy by releasing resonance. As a swift action, you can release the resonance you have created within a target to reduce that foe's speed by 10 feet in all modes per point of resonance released. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of resonance points released.

Traumatic Release (Su): At 6th level, your power over resonance becomes more destructive. As a swift action,

you can release the resonance within a target to deal that foe 2d6 points of damage per point of resonance released. This damage doesn't help you create resonance in the target again.

Immune to Fear (Ex): When you reach 7th level, your mind becomes so serene that fear becomes a mere abstraction. You are immune to fear, magical or otherwise.

Confounding Release (Su): At 8th level and higher, the resonance you release can befuddle the mind. As a swift action, you can release the resonance you have created within a target to affect that foe with *confusion*, as the spell. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of resonance points released.

Unclouded Mind (Ex): At 9th level and higher, if you fail a Will save, you can make a Concentration check and use that check's result as your save result.

Soul Release (Su): At 10th level, your mastery of resonance is absolute. You can use resonance to separate your enemy's soul from his body, killing him instantly. To attempt a soul release, you must have created 1 point of resonance in your target for every 2 Hit Dice that enemy has. Then, as a swift action, you can release that resonance, forcing that foe to succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your serene guardian level + your Wis modifier) or die. This is a death effect.

PLAYING A SERENE GUARDIAN

They call you "serene" for a reason. Even when you seem overmatched, you're unflappable in a fight. Part of the reason for your cool demeanor is that you know you're quietly creating resonance for a release move.

Combat: The Luminous Order often assigns serene guardians to attack enemy leaders and powerful individual monsters. Because of the way resonance works, a serene guardian is less effective when he's constantly changing targets. Other Luminaries know that a serene guardian wants to make full attacks every round, so they often try to distract the guardian's target and otherwise keep enemies off the guardian's back.


Advancement: Being recruited into the ranks of the serene guardians requires proving yourself to the Luminous Order, then showing the existing serene guardians that you have the mental discipline to join them. Further advancement is simply a matter of unceasing practice and profound meditation.

SOLAR CHANNELER

"The energy of the cosmos courses through my veins. Are we all not witnesses to its transformative power?"

—Suthra Galadan, solar channeler

Holy warriors ready to defend the Material Plane against demonic invasion, solar channelers are effective healers and spellcasters until the situation demands melee combat. Then they become furious angels.



*Sutbra Galadan
takes wing in her
solar form*

BECOMING A SOLAR CHANNELER

Good clerics and powerful paladins who have reached Luminary champion status within the Luminous Order should have no difficulty undergoing the Ritual of Feathers required to become a solar channeler.

SOLAR CHANNELER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any good.

Special: Ability to turn undead as a 6th-level cleric.

Special: You must have an affiliation score of 9 or higher within the Luminous Order to become a solar channeler. If your affiliation score drops below 9 after you have become a solar channeler, you retain all class features and the ability to advance in the class.

Special: Must participate in the Ritual of Feathers (see Advancement).

CLASS FEATURES

The solar channeler learns to channel positive energy for emergency healing and to temporarily become a powerful flying creature akin to a solar. All the following are class features of the solar channeler prestige class.

Channel Healing (Su): By expending one daily use of your ability to turn undead and channeling that energy toward a willing ally, you can cast any *cure* spell as a swift action, or you can cast a *cure* spell on a target up to 30 feet away. You can do both in the same round, but doing so expends two daily uses of your ability to turn undead.

Turn Undead (Su): You add your solar channeler level to your effective level for turning undead granted by any other class to determine your effective level for turning undead. For example, if you're a 7th-level cleric/1st-level paladin/1st-level solar channeler, you turn undead as if you were an 8th-level cleric.

Spellcasting: At every level except 1st, 5th, and 10th, you gain new spells per day and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class to which you belonged before adding the solar channeler level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you had more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a solar channeler, you must decide to which class to add each eligible solar channeler level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

Lesser Channel Solar (Su): Beginning at 5th level, you can expend one of your daily uses of your ability to turn undead as an immediate action to transform into a powerful creature that looks like a solar (MM 12). At the beginning of each of your subsequent turns, you must use a swift action to expend one additional daily use of your ability to turn undead. If you do not or cannot do so, you return to your normal form.

While you are in solar form, your body and gear are replaced by a body and a magic greatsword like those of a solar. You become a Medium creature (if you were of a different size before), and you lose the ability to cast spells and

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Illus. by R. Horsley

RCH

THE SOLAR CHANNELER HIT DIE: D8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Channel healing, turn undead	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Lesser channel solar	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Greater channel solar	—

Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level): Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (the planes), Knowledge (religion), Profession, Spellcraft.

to use the class features of your normal form while you're in solar form (except that you can expend daily uses of your ability to turn undead in order to maintain the altered form).

For as long as you maintain solar form, you don't have access to items worn, held, or carried by your normal form, although your AC remains the same. The greatsword disappears if it leaves your grasp, but you can spend a move action to make it reappear in your hands. Your attacks, damage, and speed change as described on the following table. All other aspects of your character remain the same.

Level	Greatsword Attacks	Speed
5th	+20/+15/+10 (2d6+9/19–20)	fly 90 ft. (good)
6th	+21/+16/+11 (2d6+10/19–20)	fly 90 ft. (good)
7th	+22/+17/+12 (2d6+11/19–20)	fly 90 ft. (good)
8th	+23/+18/+13 (2d6+12/19–20)	fly 120 ft. (good)
9th	+24/+19/+14 (2d6+13/19–20)	fly 120 ft. (good)
10th	+25/+20/+15 (2d6+14/19–20)	fly 150 ft. (good)

Greater Channel Solar (Su): At 10th level, you can remain in solar form for 1 minute for each daily use of your ability to turn undead that you expend.

PLAYING A SOLAR CHANNELER

You deal with challenges the way you always have, but when combat turns for the worst, you know that you've got an angel in reserve. The Luminous Order regards its solar channelers highly—especially those who have reached 5th level or higher. Your ability to turn into a powerful angel is seen as a sign that the gods favor you.

Combat: You can't turn into an angel whenever you want, so you have to assess whether a given fight requires the assistance of your solar form. Becoming an angel is a double-edged sword, because you won't be able to heal your allies or cast other spells until you return to normal.

The Luminous Order often sends solar channelers into the Slaughterscar. Even if you can't transform into an angel, you're still remarkably effective against the undead.

Advancement: Those who meet the entry requirements and wish to do so are invited to take part in the daylong

Ritual of Feathers at the Shining Citadel. At the conclusion of this prayer-filled ceremony, an actual solar briefly appears and wordlessly touches you with its sword. From that moment forward, you find that the gates on your ability to channel positive energy have been opened. Taking on the form of a solar requires further practice and greater inner strength.

Ebon Cabal

The Luminous Order isn't the only powerful group working behind the scenes in the Valley of Obelisks. A group of ambitious schemers—wizards mostly—exists solely to accumulate more power for its members. This faction is the Ebon Cabal, based in a fortress called the Black Tower.

The Ebon Cabal isn't an evil organization, though it probably has a few evil members within its ranks. It's definitely "neutral ambitious," however, and its members have few scruples about seeking and taking what they want.

Over the course of the adventure, you might encounter the Ebon Cabal and become affiliated with the group. From time to time after you become affiliated with the group, the DM might tell you that your affiliation score within the Ebon Cabal has increased. As your affiliation score rises, you become entitled to the following rewards.

Affiliation

Score	Title: Benefits and Duties
1 or lower	None.
2–4	Ebon Initiate: You are given a ceremonial black robe and is eligible for quests. An Ebon initiate can buy magic items from the wizards of the Ebon Cabal at reduced cost.
5–8	Ebon Factotum: You receive a <i>cloak of the Ebon Cabal</i> .
9 or more	Ebon Master: You receive one <i>rod of the Tower</i> (your choice), along with a diamond-studded black mask worth 500 gp. Gaining the title of Ebon master entitles you to enter the dark scholar or twisted lord prestige class.

PLAYING AN EBON CABALIST

Joining forces with the Ebon Cabal means that you speak the language of power. You're comfortable operating among the ruthless and the ambitious—and those are your *allies*. You might profess noble ideals when it suits your overall plan, and you always have an overall plan, but those ideals can be cast aside whenever doing so gets you what you desire.

Because the Ebon Cabal functions like a mutual aid society, joining it has an ironic twist. The more powerful you are, the less powerful the Ebon Cabal can make you. Further, the more power you wield, the more your fellows in the cabal ask you for aid.

Combat: Most members of the Ebon Cabal are wizards or sorcerers, so battles with them are flashy and brief. Many Ebon cabalists are accomplished conjurers; thus, they are capable in melee combat, using summoned and called creatures to do their bloodletting for them.

Not all members of the Ebon Cabal are spellcasters, however. Some cabalists use stealth and prowess at arms, suitably enhanced by nightmarish supernatural abilities, to accomplish their goals. These dark warriors are known as the twisted lords.

The Ebon Cabal has no standing levy of troops, nor does it need one. Instead, it bends the will of the local nobility to muster the soldiers it needs, using threats, promises, or enchantment spells to ensure cooperation.

Advancement: If you have some power the Ebon Cabal wants, its members come to you. After studying you from a distance, often using magical surveillance, those members decide if you would be a worthy addition to the cabal. They know better than to offer memberships to people who aren't likely to say yes.

If you accept an invitation to join the Ebon Cabal, you receive a tour of the cabal's Black Tower. You are issued black robes that you're expected to wear within the tower walls. Then members start approaching you individually, offering aid in exchange for future favors or asking for assistance in some ongoing plot.

Working with others is the only way to move ahead in the Ebon Cabal—the name of the game is mutual aid, after all. As you perform more tasks for your seniors in the cabal, you receive greater rewards. Eventually, you reach the point where you look forward to the arrival of new members: You have a few simple jobs for them to undertake.

Missions: Few tasks that Ebon cabalists undertake are actively evil, although it's common for a new member to receive requests involving questionable morality. Those who do the asking rarely pay any heed to the finer points or even the broad strokes of legality. Working for the Ebon Cabal often means working against laws and avoiding the scrutiny of established authorities.

For example, within weeks of her arrival at the Black Tower, a new member might receive the following requests and offers:

"The Sumberton Minstrels Guild has weak leadership and is primed for a takeover. I'd like your help."

"Would you like the services of an assassin anytime in the next month?"

"One of the fragments of the Baluterria Tablet is being held in a manor north of Jewelford. Let's steal it."

"It would suit my purposes if a certain army patrol near the headwaters of the Marrilach River were delayed from returning for three days."

"The great dragon Olthamaathran has reopened negotiations with us, and we need attaches capable of surviving the journey."

"I can craft powerful staffs, and I'll do so for only the cost of materials. Surely you'd like such a potent weapon?"

Responsibilities: You don't have to take every offer presented by your fellows, of course. No cabalist does. But others in the cabal always remember that you refused. Those who decline to help their black-robed comrades too often are eventually excluded from the more worthwhile plots. Members who continually spurn others might find the doors of the Black Tower shut against them one day.

DARK SCHOLAR

"What's in my spellbook is the least of your worries. I translated the Codex of the Crimson Trance. I can recite the profane Verses of Al-Vushirak. I've read the final chapter of Netherion's Grimoire, in which your doom is foretold."

—Shinsestra Fireplume, a dark scholar

Dark scholars are arcanists who have delved deeply into texts regarded as too revolutionary or too dangerous for others. Their colleagues and mentors in the Ebon Cabal have shown them forbidden lore, and that has only whetted their appetite for more.

BECOMING A DARK SCHOLAR

The path to dark scholarship is straightforward. You must be an arcane spellcaster who has mastered one or more Knowledge skills, and you must become an Ebon master in the Ebon Cabal.

DARK SCHOLAR ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Skills: 10 ranks in Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), or Knowledge (the planes). (Having 10 ranks in more than one of these skills is beneficial.)

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 4th-level arcane spells.

Special: You must have an affiliation score of 9 or higher within the Ebon Cabal to become a dark scholar. If your affiliation score drops below 9 after you have become a dark scholar, you retain all class features but you can't advance further in the class.

CLASS FEATURES

As a dark scholar, you master forbidden lore and reap the benefits of such delving. All the following are class features of the dark scholar prestige class.

Spells Per Day: At every level beyond 1st, you gain new spells per day and an increase in caster level (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which you belonged before

adding the dark scholar level. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a dark scholar, you must decide to which class to add each eligible dark scholar level for the purpose of determining spells per day, caster level, and spells known.

Book Mastery (Ex): At every level but 2nd and 7th, your study results in the mastery of forbidden lore.



RCH

Shinsestra has mastered many forms of forbidden lore

Choose one book for which you meet the skill prerequisite from the following table. Remember that you gain new skill ranks before you gain class features, so as a 6th-level dark scholar you could potentially gain your 16th rank in Knowledge (history) and immediately claim mastery of the *Lexicon of the Elder Gods*.

The books of forbidden lore, the Knowledge requirement for each one, and the benefits you gain from reading them, are as follows.

Histories of the Mad Empire, Vol. II: Knowledge (history) 10 ranks; +2 insight bonus on Will saves.

Jarrathak's Trials, Annotated: Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks; cast divination and illusion spells at +1 caster level.

Arcana of Yorrek: Knowledge (arcana) 12 ranks; +1 insight bonus on Reflex and Fortitude saves.

Verses of Al-Vushirak: Knowledge (the planes) 12 ranks; +1 to the saving throw DCs of enchantment and necromancy spells.

Book of the Stilled Tongue: Knowledge (history) 14 ranks; cast spells two or more levels lower than your maximum spell level without verbal components.

Codex of the Crimson Trance: Knowledge (arcana) 14 ranks; +4 insight bonus on Concentration checks.

Netherion's Grimoire: Knowledge (the planes) 16 ranks; use *bestow curse* 1/day as a spell-like ability.

The Thousand Unspeakable Names: Knowledge (arcana) 16 ranks; cast conjuration spells at +1 caster level.

Lexicon of the Elder Gods: Knowledge (history) 16 ranks; cast evocation spells at +1 caster level.

The Ascendancy Manuscript: Knowledge (the planes) 18 ranks; use divine scrolls as if you were a cleric of your arcane caster level.

Tome of Unparalleled Puissance: Knowledge (arcana) 18 ranks; 1/day, all spells you cast within a 10-minute period are at +1 caster level.

Among the Dragons: Knowledge (history) 18 ranks; age one year for every two years that pass.

Scholarly Lore: At 2nd level, you become a storehouse of information beyond the lore contained in your forbidden manuscripts. You can attempt to recall some relevant piece of information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places as a bard does by using the bardic knowledge class feature (PH 29). You add your dark scholar level and your Intelligence modifier to the lore check.

Tongues (Su): At 7th level and higher, you are continually under the effects of *tongues*, as the spell.

PLAYING A DARK SCHOLAR

You are obsessed with knowledge, but your thirst for lore has a decidedly practical mindset. If it doesn't make you more powerful, you're a lot less interested in studying it.

Your efforts for the Ebon Cabal probably involve acquiring new tomes of forbidden lore. Who knows? If you bring a tome to the Black Tower so potent that other dark scholars must study it, your influence only increases further in their debt to you.

THE DARK SCHOLAR

HIT DIE: D4

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Book mastery	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Scholarly lore	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	<i>Tongues</i>	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Book mastery	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level): Concentration, Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession, Speak Language, Spellcraft, Use Magic Device.

Combat: You control the battlefield the way you always have—with magic. Your spells often have a little extra kick due to your research, however. When you reach the pinnacle of your studies, you are able to perform feats of magic that no mere wizard can match.

Advancement: Dark scholars are all Ebon masters within the Ebon Cabal. Most are wizards, although intelligent sorcerers can derive great benefits from this class as well.

Resources: The books associated with this class aren't in the Black Tower's main library. You have convinced a more powerful member of the Ebon Cabal to let you read forbidden lore from a private collection. Who knows what else you might find there?

TWISTED LORD

"Do you find me repulsive? Wait 'til I have your blood all over me. Then I'll look much worse."

—Cerowain the Gaunt, twisted lord

The stealthy assassins of the Ebon Cabal, twisted lords can turn their visages fearsome at a moment's notice. They eventually learn to infuse their dirty tactics with the power of nightmare.

BECOMING A TWISTED LORD

Existing twisted lords have one word of advice for those who aspire to their position—"Don't!" But within the Ebon Cabal, the influence that the twisted lords wield is obvious. Few heed the warnings. They instead partake of twistroot from the Slaughterscar and begin the inevitable transformation into twisted lords.

TWISTED LORD ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Skills: Bluff 9 ranks, Intimidate 5 ranks.

Special: You must have an affiliation score of 9 or higher within the Ebon Cabal to become a twisted lord. If your affiliation score drops below 9 after you have become a twisted lord, you retain all class features and the ability to advance in the class.

Special: You must ritualistically consume twistroot (see Advancement).

THE TWISTED LORD

HIT DIE: D6

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Twisted form
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	+1d6 sneak attack
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Improved Feint
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Peripheral invisibility
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	+2d6 sneak attack
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Improved demoralize
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Twist target
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	+3d6 sneak attack
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Twist perceptions
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Twist mind

Class Skills (8 + Int modifier per level): Appraise, Balance, Bluff, Climb, Craft, Decipher Script, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Disguise, Escape Artist, Forgery, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Jump, Knowledge (local), Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Profession, Search, Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Swim, Tumble, Use Magic Device, Use Rope.

CLASS FEATURES

You became a twisted lord by partaking of twistroot in a ceremony supervised by your peers at the Black Tower. The first power you learn is the ability to twist your form, turning yourself into a misshapen, fearsome figure. Over time, you master the capabilities of your warped body, and you then tap into the powers of your distorted mind. All the following are class features of the twisted lord prestige class.

Twisted Form (Ex): When you enter this class, you gain the ability to adopt a twisted form by taking a move action to do so. Your face takes on a sinister, misshapen cast. Your limbs lengthen and bend, and your spine stoops. The symmetry of your body becomes a thing of the past.

While in your twisted form, you gain a +4 bonus on Bluff checks to feint in combat, a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks to demoralize an opponent, and a +4 bonus on Escape Artist checks. You take a -4 penalty on Diplomacy checks and other attempts to influence an NPC's attitude.

You can remain in your twisted form as long as you like. Many twisted lords find it more comfortable than the form they had before they partook of twistroot.

Sneak Attack: Beginning at 2nd level, you deal extra damage when you are flanking an opponent or at any time when the target would be denied its Dexterity bonus. This extra damage only applies to ranged attacks if the target is within 30 feet. See the rogue class feature (PH 50). Your sneak attack damage improves at 5th and 8th level. This extra damage stacks with sneak attack damage from other sources (such as levels in the rogue class).

Improved Feint: At 3rd level, you gain Improved Feint as a bonus feat.

Peripheral Invisibility (Su): Starting at 4th level, you can briefly become invisible if no one's staring right at you. Doing so takes only a swift action, but you can't use peripheral invisibility if anyone succeeded on a Spot check against you or attacked you in the previous round. Peripheral invisibility lasts for 1 round. Once you've used it, you must wait 1 minute before using it again.

Improved Demoralize: When you reach 6th level, your misshapen features are particularly unnerving to your enemies. You can attempt to demoralize an opponent (see Intimidate, PH 76) as a move action rather than a standard action.

Twist Target (Su): At 7th level, you develop a rudimentary ability to worm your way into an opponent's mind. If you are adjacent to a shaken foe, you can try to momentarily confuse that enemy by taking a standard action to project the force of your personality. Your target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your twisted lord level + your Cha modifier). If the save fails, that foe must make a melee attack at his highest bonus against any adjacent ally at the beginning of his next turn. After that attack, your enemy is no longer shaken. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Twist Perceptions (Su): At 9th level and higher, you can take a standard action to project the distortions in your body into the perceptions of an adjacent creature that is shaken. Your target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your twisted lord level + your Cha modifier). If the save fails, your opponent is stunned. After the save attempt, successful or not, your foe is no longer shaken. At the end of each of your target's turns, he can attempt another Will save to shake off the stunned condition. He remains stunned until he succeeds.

Twist Mind (Su): At 10th level, you master the ability of twisting others' minds with visions that both repulse and fascinate. If you

are adjacent to a shaken foe, by taking a standard action, you can assume control of your enemy. Your target must make a Will save (DC 10 + your twisted lord level + your Cha modifier). If the save fails, you can control your enemy's actions on subsequent rounds, taking a standard action each round to do so. At the end of each of your enemy's turns, he can attempt another Will save to shake off control. He remains under your command until he succeeds on the Will save or until you choose not to spend a standard action controlling him.

PLAYING A TWISTED LORD

You've lived through a horrifying nightmare—the initial exposure to twistroot in the ceremony that allowed you to become a twisted lord. You're comfortable in a form that others find repulsive, and you wouldn't have it any other way. You can prey on the weaknesses of others' sensibilities, taking advantage of how they instantly recoil when they see you.

You see many of your peers in the Ebon Cabal shudder when you pass, but you're more comfortable within the Black Tower's walls, where a ruthless meritocracy doesn't have room for distaste over someone's looks. Besides, you can assume your natural form whenever you need to.

Combat: How you fight as a twisted lord depends a lot on your experience. At low levels, you fight like a rogue, moving into position to use your sneak attack. In time, peripheral invisibility and Improved Feint give you new ways to deal sneak attack damage even when you aren't flanking your enemy. As you attain more levels,

you face an interesting tactical choice between using peripheral invisibility and Improved Feint to set up sneak attacks or using improved demoralize to set up your supernatural mind twists. The answer is situational. It depends on the nature of your foe and whether you're confident in your ability to demoralize him.

Advancement: Anyone who has earned the rank of Ebon master and has shown the ability to manipulate people by guile and coercion is eligible to consume twistroot from the Slaughterscar. If done in ritual fashion, twistroot ingestion turns you into a twisted lord. The process is not only painful, it's accompanied by horrifying nightmares that a few would-be twisted lords find fatally frightening.



Cerowain the Gaunt wants to know what you're looking at

The twistroot nightmares leave persistent scars on your psyche that you eventually learn to use as weapons.

As a twisted lord, you're probably in great demand as a spy and assassin. Your colleagues in the Ebon Cabal are eager to send you off on all sorts of missions involving stealth and skulduggery, and maybe even a few knives in the dark.

New Magic Items

As you explore the *Shattered Gates of Slaughtergarde*, you might come into possession of the following magic items. Some are granted through affiliation with the Luminous Order or the Ebon Cabal. Others might be in the next treasure chest you open.

LUMINARY TABARD

When you don this tabard, your spirit feels lighter and the world less threatening. You relish the thought of an evildoer trying to frighten you, for you wear the silvery emblem of the Luminous Order, against which no evil can stand.

Lore: This tabard marks its wearer as a Knight of the Luminous Order. (Knowledge [local] DC 20)

Description: A dark blue tabard, worn over the shoulders and cinched at the waist, this garment has a silver tower insignia on it and more silver embroidery at the hem. When it absorbs a fear effect, the tower glows and seems to grow slightly larger for a moment.

Activation: A *Luminary tabard* functions whenever it's worn. The absorption effect happens as an immediate action right after the save. It takes up the vest body slot.

Effect: A *Luminary tabard* grants you a +2 resistance bonus on Reflex saves. Further, whenever you succeed on a save against a fear effect, the tabard heals you of a number of points of damage equal to the caster level of the effect or the Hit Dice of the effect's creator, whichever is lower. If you encounter a persistent fear effect that requires a new saving throw every round, the healing effect of the tabard functions only the first time you succeed on the save.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate abjuration; CL 10th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, affiliation score 5 within the Luminous Order, *remove fear*, 1,500 gp, 120 XP, 3 days.

Weight: —

Price: 3,000 gp.

CLOAK OF THE EBON CABAL

This cloak, woven by the unscrupulous mages of the Ebon Cabal, is a badge of office, but it's more than ceremonial. It protects you from enemy spellcasters and provides an extra spark of vitality that might be the difference between life and death.

Lore: This cloak's border embroidery marks its wearer as a member of the Ebon Cabal. (Knowledge [local] DC 25)

Description: A series of golden runes and sigils are embroidered into the inside border of this black cloak.

Whenever you're within a quarter-mile of the Black Tower, the runes start to glow and crawl along the edge of the cape.

Activation: The effects of a *cloak of the Ebon Cabal* only last as long as you wear it.

Effect: A *cloak of the Ebon Cabal* grants you 5 temporary hit points per day that last for up to 24 hours. You also gain a +1 resistance bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate abjuration; CL 10th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, affiliation score 5 within the Ebon Cabal, *dispel magic*, *bear's endurance*, 1,500 gp, 120 XP, 3 days.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 3,000 gp.

DRAGONRIDER SHIELD

Originally designed for knights that rode fearsome dragons into battle, a *dragonrider shield* protects you from enemy attacks and a fatal plummet.

Description: This heavy shield is made of black metal and has a primitive painting of a dragon on the face. When the shield's *feather fall* effect is active, the shield seems to fold down the middle and flex back and forth in an imitation of flight. When you reach the ground, the shield returns to its normal shape.

Activation: You receive the protective benefits of the shield whenever it's strapped to your forearm. The *feather fall* effect functions as an immediate action whenever you start falling—you don't have to do anything to activate it.

Effect: A *dragonrider shield* is a +1 heavy steel shield that absorbs 5 points of energy damage per attack. The type of energy absorbed depends on the dragon depicted on the front—red for fire, blue for electricity, white for cold, or green for acid. In addition, the shield can produce a *feather fall* effect on you once per day.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint abjuration; CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *resist energy*, *feather fall*, 3,250 gp, 260 XP, 7 days.

Weight: 15 lb.

Price: 7,500 gp.

FERAL BRACERS

Common items among druids of the Valley of Obelisks, *feral bracers* are tied to the spirit of a specific kind of animal. They make you tougher while you're in that animal's form.

Description: These bracers are usually fashioned from the hide of a predator, with wolf skin and bear skin being common materials. Teeth or claws dangle from the edge of the bracers closest to the wrists. Each set of *feral bracers* is attuned to a specific kind of animal such as a dire wolf or a tiger.

Prerequisite: The magic of *feral bracers* functions only for someone who can transform into an animal, whether by using wild shape or some other shapechanging magic or ability.

Activation: *Feral bracers* function whenever worn. They retain their attunement when taken off.

Effect: When you don *feral bracers*, choose one animal whose form you can take. Whenever you take that shape, you gain 1 temporary hit point per character level. The temporary hit points persist as long as you retain that form. Further, the hairs on the *feral bracers* stand on end when you are within 60 feet an animal of the kind the bracers are attuned to.

You can change the animal that the *feral bracers* are attuned to by meditating for 1 hour in the proximity of a living example of that animal. Doing so erases any previous attunement and connects the bracers to the spirit of the new kind of animal.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate transmutation; CL 7th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, creator must be a druid, *reincarnate*, 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Variants: The greater version of these bracers grants 2 temporary hit points per character level and costs 10,000 gp.

Weight: 1 lb.

Price: 2,500 gp.

ROD OF THE TOWER

The Ebon Cabal prizes versatility, and thus the weapons granted to Ebon masters are an expression of that trait. Each one provides a weapon or shield at the touch of a button, plus a few spells useful in a tight situation.

Lore: This distinctive rod marks its wearer as a member of the Ebon Cabal. (Knowledge [local] DC 25)

Description: Each *rod of the Tower* is a metal cylinder about 6 inches long and 2 inches thick. One end has an embossed sigil depicting a hand—the sort of raised symbol one would use to apply a wax seal. Along the length of the rod are three metal buttons.

Whenever a button is pressed, it emits a brief buzz, then a click. A button stays in once pressed, but pushing one button makes any other depressed button pop back up.

Activation: Pushing a button is equivalent to drawing a weapon (thus a move action for most characters). Button one causes a weapon or shield to spring forth, with the rod forming the handle. Buttons two and three have different effects, depending on the specific kind of *rod of the Tower* you have. Only one function of a *rod of the Tower* is active at a given time. The weapon disappears if you activate a spell effect, for example. A spell effect created by the rod ends if you activate the weapon or the other spell.

Button one functions whenever you press it, but buttons two and three are only usable once per day.

Effect: The specific powers of a given *rod of the Tower* vary depending on its type. Each type has a distinctive embossed sigil on one end.

Rod Sigil	Button One	Button Two	Button Three
Pointing finger	+1 dagger	scorching ray	burning hands
Closed fist	+1 short sword	spider climb	expeditious retreat
Open palm	+1 buckler	invisibility	obscuring mist
Fingers spread	+1 spear	scare	ray of enfeeblement

Aura/Caster Level: Faint evocation (pointing finger), faint transmutation (closed fist), faint illusion (open palm), faint necromancy (fingers spread); CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Rod, affiliation score 9 with the Ebon Cabal, any spells cast by the specific rod, 3,500 gp, 280 XP, 7 days.

Weight: 5 lb.

Price: 7,000 gp.

WEAPON OF THE CELESTIAL HOST

These weapons, issued to soldiers at the Battle of Slaughtergarde, await new champions to claim them from the Shining Citadel's arsenal. They offer magical enhancement to both your offense and defense.

Lore: The distinctive feathery filigree on this weapon marks its wearer as a Knight of the Luminous Order. (Knowledge [local] DC 20)

Description: These weapons, all two-handed melee weapons, have featherlike decorations on them. All *weapons of the celestial host* glow when wielded. They also cast a directional beam of light at your command (as described below).

Prerequisite: The magic of a *weapon of the celestial host* goes dormant if an evil creature wields it, rendering it merely a masterwork weapon.

Activation: The weapon's enhancement and shield bonuses function whenever it is wielded. As a free action, you can make your *weapon of the celestial host* emit a beam of light. The beam remains until you take another free action to turn it off.

Effect: A *weapon of the celestial host* provides a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls. Furthermore, it grants you a +1 shield bonus to Armor Class.

The beam of light emitted by a *weapon of the celestial host* is equivalent to a bullseye lantern (PH 126).

Aura/Caster Level: Faint transmutation; CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator can't be evil, *shield*, 2,000 gp, 160 XP, 4 days.

Weight: Varies, depending on the weapon.

Price: 4,000 gp plus the cost of a masterwork two-handed melee weapon.