

Feats

Most of the feats listed below are only available to characters who abide by the rules for Virtuous heroes listed in the previous chapter. Remember that a character who no longer meets the prerequisites for a feat loses the benefits of that feat, as well as any others that depend on it. In most cases, if a character improves enough to fulfill the prerequisite again, the character regains the benefits of the feat. If the obligation is dependent on his level of virtue, however, the hero may find it impossible to recover from corruption. Once he reaches the second stage of corruption, the feat he has purchased not only disappears, but can never be replaced, even if the hero should somehow redeem himself. When heroes fall, they fall hard.

Bestial Conscience

If you share an empathic link with a familiar, you are moral enough to attempt to sway its emotions when it contemplates an evil or treacherous act. You can overcome a few of the limitations of a Dread Companion (see Chapter Two of the **Ravenloft Core Rulebook**), but only if you are vigilant.

Prerequisite: Good alignment. Arcane spellcaster with a familiar, or paladin with a mount.

Benefit: Just as a Dread Companion is privy to your thoughts, you are marginally aware of its thoughts and feelings. You can attempt a Sense Motive roll to sense when this magical beast is contemplating treacherous or evil deeds (DC = 10 + dread companion's Will save). Whether the DM allows you to make this check at any time, insists that you wait until he calls for such a roll, or makes the roll secretly is a matter of personal preference.

In any case, when you sense this pervarication, you can make an opposed Will check to dissuade it from doing something you find morally distasteful. If you are Blessed (see below), you receive a +5 sacred bonus to both of these checks.

Blessed

You are not only aware of the existence of evil, but have pledged to oppose it. By attaining a state of grace, you have avoided the Caress of Evil, the first stage of Corruption. If you lose this feat, you lose the benefits of every feat that has it as a prerequisite.

Prerequisite: Special (see below)

Benefit: All blessed characters receive a +2 morale bonus on Fear checks and Horror checks. Divination spells can reveal that someone is Blessed.

How a character takes this feat depends on her alignment:

- An Innocent character can take this feat voluntarily. She simply loses her quality of Innocence and becomes Blessed instead.

- A Moral character must take the Test of Virtue feat as a prerequisite. Taking the feat is a sign to the DM that the character aspires to be Blessed. If the character then passes a *test of virtue*, that feat is replaced by the Blessed feat. See the Test of Virtue sidebar for more details.

- Once a character reaches the first level of corruption, she cannot benefit from this feat unless she become Penitent again. A character who reaches the second stage of the corruption, the Enticement, permanently loses any benefit from this feat. It can never be replaced or swapped with another one. Her sacrifice has been in vain, for she has betrayed her ideals.

Optional Rule: A Penitent character who has never been corrupted — that is, who hasn't succumbed to the first stage of corruption, the Caress — can sacrifice a character level to become Moral. If the character is of a neutral alignment (whether chaotic neutral, "true" neutral, or lawful neutral), she must adopt a good alignment at that time. After advancing one level, she can then attempt another *test of virtue*.

Conscience

Your conscience aids you when you attract the attention of the Dark Powers.

Prerequisite: Blessed

Benefit: Once per game session, you may reroll the "ones" die of a percentile roll for a powers check. You must accept the result of that reroll.

Dabbler

You have the ability to learn many skills usually unavailable to those of your profession or class.

Prerequisite: Your domain of origin must have a Renaissance cultural level, or you must have spent at least a year in a Renaissance domain.

Benefit: Choose a non-exclusive skill you do not have as a class skill. When you take this feat, it becomes a class skill for you.

Special: Each time you take this feat, it applies to a different skill.

Detect Virtue

You are able to sense another person's moral character if she is willing to let you do so.

Prerequisite: Virtue's Challenge (special ability) or Blessed (feat)

Benefit: With a successful Wisdom check (DC 20), you can tell if a willing person you are touching is Innocent, Moral or Penitent. If the check fails, the ability reveals nothing. If the subject is unwilling, this feat automatically fails.

Eidetic Memory

Your ability to tap into your memories is prodigious and you remember even the slightest detail of past events as if you were experiencing them again.

Prerequisite: Int13+

Benefit: Extraordinary gentlemen and gallant lady adventurers often have a highly developed sense of attention to detail when recalling their exploits. A character with this feat gains a +10 competence bonus on any Intelligence check to remember details of specific memories. The character cannot take 10 or 20 on this check, however. The character also gains a +5 competence bonus on any Will save to resist a spell that would alter that memory (such as *modify memory*).

Heroism

You gain inner strength and the will to resist your fears from your past efforts. This feat is only available to a Ravenloft commoner or a character whose current level is an NPC class. The character vows to perform an act of heroism when he takes this feat. If he does so, and survives, he gains the first level of a player character class.

Prerequisite: Innocent or Blessed characters can take this feat.

Benefit: After performing this act of heroism, the character gains a +1 sacred bonus against Fear saves.

Hope

You can inspire others with your faith in their abilities. Some heroes are more confident in their abilities when they know they are aided by the virtuous.

Prerequisite: Blessed

Benefit: Once each day, you can grant another good character a +4 sacred bonus to any one skill. You must state a brief blessing involving the

name of a good deity (from any realm) to bestow this blessing. The subject must be able to see and hear you.

Flaw: On behalf of the Dark Powers, one evil character or creature within one mile can make a Wisdom check (DC = 10 + your level) when you invoke this ability. On a successful check, the evil character knows your exact location at that moment, and it knows that you are Virtuous.

Kiss of Dawn

Your dedication to the light gives you a benefit in preparing your spells.

Prerequisite: Good alignment, arcane spellcaster

Benefit: You regain all of your spells at dawn. When the sun rises, this feat takes effect. Even if you cast all your spells minutes before sunrise, you will regain them with the first rays of the sun.

Normal: Normally, an arcane spellcaster who casts a spell must wait twenty-four hours before she can cast the spell again.

Knowledgeable

You are a quick learner, a true Renaissance scholar. You're driven to dabble in a vast array of scientific and artistic fields.

Prerequisite: Int 13

Benefit: Each time you take this feat, you gain another four ranks in Knowledge skills. (If Knowledge skills are class skills for you, this is the equivalent of two +2 bonuses.) In no case can you have more ranks in a Knowledge skill than your maximum rank.

Library

You possess a collection of books, one that features many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore.

Prerequisite: Literacy

Benefit: Each time you take this feat, it applies to two Knowledge skills. When you can access your personal library, you gain a +2 competence bonus to all informational checks involving those two skills.

Literacy

It is often said that knowledge is the greatest weapon against the forces of evil. Even if you don't agree, you should be able to look up who said it.

Prerequisite: none

Benefit: If you couldn't read before, you can read now. If can already read, or if you've taken this feat a second time, you gain a +4 bonus when using Search checks to find information in books. (See the sidebar on "Searching for Knowledge" for more details on such checks.)

Resolute

You maintain the faint hope that virtue, by its very nature, can ultimately triumph over evil. Although modest, you believe that you are that virtuous.

Prerequisite: Blessed

Benefit: You get a +2 sacred bonus against Fear saves.

Sanctity

Your beliefs comfort you in your darkest hour.

Prerequisite: Blessed

Benefit: You get a +2 sacred bonus on Horror saves.

Sanity

Because your morality grants you a measure of mental stability, you find it easier to hold on to your sanity in an unkind world.

Prerequisite: Blessed

Benefit: You get a +2 sacred bonus against Madness saves.

Secret Society

You belong to a secret society that provides a tangible benefit to its members.

Prerequisite: You must meet the qualifications of the society in question.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Innuendo checks when secretly conversing with other members of your society. Once a week, you can consult with another member of the society about a matter relevant to the group. At the end of that week, you can take 20 on a Knowledge check (with a DC set by the DM) to ascertain the answers to your questions.

Test of Virtue

When a character takes this feat, it signifies to the Gamemaster that he is ready to undertake a *test of virtue*. The test lasts for the duration of one character level. More precisely, it begins when the character gains a character level, and lasts until he reaches the following level.

For instance, if Camilla takes the Test of Virtue feat when she reaches 3rd level, the test begins immediately; it lasts until she reaches 4th level. Level drain doesn't change this. If Camilla loses two levels to a wight, she still can't finish the test until she's 4th level.

During that time, the character must try to avoid taking any action that requires a powers check. If he does take an action that requires a powers check, he automatically fails the *test of virtue*. If you succeed at the powers check, you can try the *test of virtue* again after you've gained another character level. If you fail the powers check, of course, you've been corrupted.

The moment a character succeeds at this test, the Test of Virtue feat is replaced by the Blessed feat. He can then benefit from that feat as long as he avoids the first stage of corruption. A character must be Moral (see Introduction) before he can attempt a *test of virtue*.

Prerequisite: A character taking this feat must be Moral.

Benefit: The feat has no benefit until you pass a test of virtue.

Unicorn's Fellowship

Animal companions summoned by a druid are tormented by conflict, balancing their loyalty to the druid against the demands of the local darklord. A blessed druid's virtue is strong enough to resolve such conflict, calming the frenzied urges of animal companions.

Prerequisite: Blessed, Druid

Benefit: Spells subject to the "Animal Companions" rules (see **Ravenloft Core Rulebook**, Chapter 2) are not altered for you. Because your druid is blessed, her animal companions do not shadow or spy on her but instead obey her commands.

University Education

You have the benefits of having studied in a place of higher learning.

Prerequisite: Your domain of origin must have a Renaissance cultural level. If you do not take this feat at first level, you must live for a year in a major city within a domain with that level of technology before taking this feat.

Benefit: All Knowledge skills become class skills for you. You cannot make skill checks for a Knowledge skill until you spend ranks in it, however.

Wealth

Whether through investment, political influence, or the untimely death of relatives, you gained access to munificent resources when you took this feat.

Prerequisite: none

Benefit: Once each month, make a d20 roll against your character level. If this check succeeds, you can roll starting wealth again for one of your character classes. The money arrives within a week by a method chosen by the DM. You must choose a domain when you take this feat; you can only access these windfalls while you are within that domain.

Searching for Knowledge

Generations of heroes have struggled to not only understand the supernatural world, but also document what they have found. Unfortunately, the scarcity of printing presses, public libraries, and universities throughout the Dread Realms limits the dissemination of such knowledge. Even in realms that have access to such advantages, treatises on the supernatural are often seized, censored, or burned by corrupt rulers. The light of knowledge is furtively passed from one luminary to the next, and only the diligent efforts of secret society allow such treatises to see print. Now that Rudolf van Richten is dead, even his infamous tomes have begun to lapse into obscurity, except for those that have passed into the keeping of his spiritual inheritors, the Weathermay-Foxgrove twins or his other admirers.

On the rare occasion when scholars find esoteric tomes on the occult or supernatural, studying them is still an arduous task. In Ravenloft, characters can use the Search skill to find knowledge hidden in any collection of information, whether that's a private library, stack of tomes, collection of correspondence, or hall of public records. Instead of breaking these searches down round by round through five-by-five foot squares, this use of the skill resembles a Gather Information check. Searching a library for information requires a Search check and 1d4 hours of research. A smaller collection, like a stack of letters in a desk, may require a smaller increment of time, perhaps 1d4 x 10 minutes.

Thorough investigators may want to at least skim a book in its entirety to get the gist of its message and contents. For a literate character reading in a language he understands, "skimming" generally takes one hour per one hundred pages. This not only grants a detailed summary of the book's contents, but also grants a +4 circumstance bonus to further attempts to Search through the book for information.

injury. I cannot and will not be a party to leading you down such a dark path.

I pray that you do not think ill of me for refusing your request. The life of a hunter can bring only sorrow to your hearts and wounds to your flesh, neither of which I could bear. The world is full of worthy successors to van Richten's legacy. It need not be you, Miladies.

Please write again. Though I cannot be an ally in the battle against monsters, perhaps I can be a friend. Be safe, and may Our Guardian in the Mists watch over you.

Editor's Note: Really! I suppose Toret Severin thought that we were porcelain dolls to be placed on a high shelf and admired. Clearly, he did not yet realize that Gennifer and I have already cleaved our way through many a dark thicket. Uncle's lessons had evidently not taken root in this anchorite's mind, so my next letter instructed him to make an effort at gathering data before making judgments. After proper chastisement, I offered him a proposal. He replied as follows.—LWF

If your most recent letter is any indication, you are a most headstrong woman. I suspected that you might protest the contents of my first correspondence, but I did not anticipate such contradictory and forceful language!

I understand your distress at my refusal, Milady, but you must in turn understand that like all good men of the cloth, I cannot refuse my conscience. Nonetheless, I am a man who respects the wishes of a noblewoman. Though I initially thought of returning your second letter, I considered the proposal contained therein. Though perhaps forward, your request that I ask about you and your sister within my circles seemed reasonable enough.

As it happens, you are owed a sincere and humble apology, Milady. I was stunned to learn how many folk already know your names, even in the darkest alleys of Levkarest. No doubt it may surprise you to hear just how widespread your fame has become. It is a strange sort of fame, subtle and without the reverence and fire that characterized that of the good doctor. But I found it just the same, and it was steeped in equal measure of bafflement and adoration. Of course, much of this renown may stem from the sheer novelty of your identities. But I also heard much gossip of banished wraiths and vanquished lycanthropes, accounts of innocents rescued and villages delivered. In particular, your recent victory over the Withered Trapper of Tepest has set many tongues wagging, for as you no doubt

know, the creature managed to escape from van Richten himself some years ago.

If these accounts are to be believed, then you and your sister are already worthy successors to van Richten. I admit my presumptions and my error, Milady. Though I couched it in terms of my genuine fear for your safety, my refusal was merely cowardice. In light of these revelations, I am now quite willing to arrange any introductions you might require. Consider me your humble servant in any matter from this point forward.

Of course, it does you little good, Milady, to know that I can orchestrate a meeting with all manner of folk, if you know nothing of who those folk might be. I hope you do not take offense if I do not reveal the exact identities of my most favored contacts at this juncture. You must trust me in this matter, Milady, for their secrets are often as perilous — if not moreso — than any you or I might harbor.

Given this consideration, I still feel it necessary to elaborate on the stripe of folk with whom I might put you into contact. Thereby, you might have some notion of whether I can assist you in any given matter. Enclosed with this missive you will find a brief inventory of some of my most valuable allies. Many served van Richten well in his hunts against the minions of darkness. Their names have been stricken, but I have done my best to describe how they might be valuable to you and your sister.

I trust you will not hesitate to write or call upon me at your first need. Good luck in your righteous endeavors, and may Our Guardian in the Mists watch over you and your loved ones.

Your Humble Servant,

Toret Johann Severin

Post-Script — I feel true excitement for the first time in years, since my last meeting with the departed doctor. Bless you both for bringing purpose back to a simple man's life.

New Feats

The following feats are available to any character who meets the prerequisites. High alchemical formulae, which can also be taken as feats, are found in the previous chapter.

Ancestral Legacy [General]

A mysterious relative or messenger has appeared and bestowed on you a valuable heirloom. Though you may not yet know its full significance,

this birthright comes with a legacy of honor, power, and perhaps unspeakable sins.

Benefit: You receive a free item. The DM must choose an item with a gold piece value equal to or less than one eighth of your starting wealth. If you take this feat at a level other than 1st level, the DM should consult Table 2–24 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to determine your starting wealth. The item can be a weapon, armor, tool, art object, vehicle, animal, or even land (see Table 5–6 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The item always carries an Embarrassing curse that affects only you and your blood relatives. The item can be magical, but if so its curse is Frustrating rather than Embarrassing.

In addition to the curse, whenever the item is worn, carried, or otherwise visible, it may give you a +2 bonus or –2 penalty to Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks. Whether this bonus or penalty applies depends on your audience, the nature of the item, and the reputation of your family. For example, a dagger your grandfather used to murder a rival could give a +2 bonus to checks with a scheming uncle, a –2 penalty to checks with the rival family's patriarch. It might also add a bonus or penalty to checks with serfs working your family's lands, depending on whether they viewed your family as a clan of firm guardians or murderous tyrants.

Special: You may not take this feat more than once.

Hexbreaker [General]

You are skilled at unweaving the blasphemous fabric of the black arts. Evil magic seems to unravel particularly easily under your deft hands.

Prerequisites: Non-evil alignment, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), spellcaster level 5th+.

Benefit: You receive a +2 insight bonus to Spellcraft checks to identify a spell being cast if the spell in question requires a powers check. You receive a +2 bonus to your dispel check when you use *dispel magic* against a spell that requires a powers check, regardless of whether it is a targeted dispel, an area dispel, or a counterspell.

Indomitable [General]

You have an exceptional mind that bounces back from numbing terror with confidence and determination. Though encounters with supernatural horrors might shatter your world and haunt

your dreams, you are firmly resolved to destroy such creatures.

Prerequisites: Wis 11+. You must have suffered a moderate or major Horror or Madness effect.

Benefit: Whenever you fail a Horror or Madness save prompted by a creature's presence or actions, you thereafter receive a +1 morale bonus to your attack rolls and Gather Information, Knowledge, and Sense Motive checks when you are pursuing that creature's destruction. If you fail multiple Horror or Madness saves, the effects of this feat are not cumulative.

Logical Mind [General]

Though the Realm of Dread might be steeped in the supernatural, you put your faith in rationality and observation. When faced with the unbelievable, this scholarly skepticism is a source of mental fortitude.

Prerequisites: Int 15+, at least one Knowledge skill (choose from anatomy, architecture and engineering, geography, history, nature, or nobility and royalty), non-chaotic alignment.

Benefit: You receive a +4 resistance bonus to Will saves against spells, spell-like effects, and supernatural effects, and to mundane Fear, Horror, and Madness saves prompted by creatures with spell-like or supernatural abilities.

Special: Once you take this feat, you can no longer purchase ranks in Lore skills or make Lore skill checks untrained. You may still attempt checks with Lore skills in which you already possess ranks.

Muse [General]

You possess the rare sort of beauty or spirit that feeds the divine flame of creativity. Your very presence inspires passion and stirs others to works of creative genius.

Prerequisites: Cha 15+.

Benefit: When allies attempt a Perform check within thirty feet of you and you are within the allies' line of sight, they receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their roll. This effect does not extend to any creatures other than your allies unless you wish it to. This is an extraordinary ability. You can grant a +2 circumstance bonus to an ally who is using the Craft skill to create an item, but you must spend all of the item's construction time in the company of the creator and your activities must otherwise be limited to talking, eating, and resting. You receive a +2 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Informa-

tion, and Perform checks when interacting with a character who has at least 8 ranks in Craft or Perform. Whenever you are reduced to below 0 hit points, any allies in your presence with a Charisma of 12 or higher must make a Horror save (DC 20).

Special: You may take this feat only at character creation.

Nine Lives [General]

You seem to be protected, perhaps by a guardian spirit, perhaps by a malign power that wants to keep you alive long enough to deal with you personally. Regardless, you have a penchant for surviving lethal situations.

Benefit: If you fail a Fortitude or Reflex save and are reduced to -10 hit points or below as a direct result, you may take two points of permanent Charisma drain to re-roll that saving throw. If you fail the re-roll, you can take another two points of Charisma drain to roll yet again, and so on. This is an extraordinary ability. The Charisma drain can be recovered as normal with *restoration* or similar magic, but this ability can only be used a number of times in your character's life equal to her Charisma score at the time of character creation.

Special: You may only take this feat at character creation.

Portents [General]

You are blessed with hazy visions of the near future. These take the form of vague feelings of comfort or dread that manifest on the cusp of pivotal choices.

Prerequisites: Wis 15+.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can use *augury* as the spell cast by a sorcerer of a level equal to your character level. This ability is usable once per day and requires no spell components. Once used, you cannot use this ability again until you have rested for at least 8 hours. This is a supernatural ability. It does not provoke an attack of opportunity, though like a spell it can be disrupted if you fail a Concentration check.

Scent of the Grave [General]

You carry an unholy stench that is undetectable to all creatures but animals. The beasts of the earth are frightened and intimidated by the sheer wrongness of your scent.

Benefit: Animals suffer a -2 morale penalty to their attack rolls and skill checks when within 30 feet of you. For animals with the Scent special

quality, this penalty rises to -4. You receive a +4 profane bonus to Intimidate checks with animals. You may never have an animal companion or cohort, and you suffer a -4 profane penalty to Handle Animal checks. You can have a familiar or a paladin's mount only if it is a dread companion. This is an extraordinary ability.

Special: This feat often manifests following a close brush with lycanthropes or the undead, but some characters — particularly calibans — possess it from birth.

Smitten [General]

You are truly and deeply in love, in the purest storybook sense. Your love is not necessarily requited, but acts as a source of strength and purpose, for you would cross oceans and move mountains to protect your beloved.

Benefit: Select a humanoid creature, or any creature that at least appears humanoid. That individual is your beloved. When your beloved is within your line of sight, you receive a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and saving throws. If your beloved is threatened by physical or magical harm, including mental attacks or control, this bonus rises to +2. If your beloved is reduced to 0 hit points or below in your presence, you must make a Horror save (DC 20). If your beloved dies or is revealed to be a supernatural creature (such as a lycanthrope or vampire), you must make a Madness save (DC 20).

Special: You cannot take this feat more than once, even if your beloved dies. This feat has no benefit after your beloved dies, and cannot be replaced with another feat.

Spirit of Light [General]

You are the candle in the darkness and the harbor in the storm. You have a soul that seems to put others at ease and give them strength in times of grief and terror.

Prerequisites: Cha 13+, good alignment.

Benefit: Your allies receive a +1 sacred bonus to Fear, Horror, and Madness saves to counteract sinkholes of evil as long as they remain within 30 feet of you. When in your presence, a creature that has failed a Horror or Madness save receives a +2 sacred bonus to its recovery checks. You must spend at least eight hours a day with the creature each day following the failed save. Your activities during the eight hours do not matter, but you must remain within 60 feet of that creature for the duration. This is an extraordinary ability.

Special: You may take this feat only at first level.

Sworn Enemy [General]

You have pledged to destroy a specific breed of monster, such as aberrations, shapechangers, or the undead. When you meet such creatures on the field of battle, your attacks are stoked by your hunter's fury.

Prerequisites: Skill Focus (Knowledge [monster lore]). This Knowledge skill must match your enemy creature type. You must have once been reduced to 0 hit points or below by a creature of your enemy type.

Benefit: Select a creature type as your enemy: aberrations, animals, beasts constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, giants, humanoids, magical beasts, oozes, outsiders, plants, shapechangers, undead, or vermin. You must select a subtype if your enemy is the humanoid type, but need not if it is the outsider type. You receive a +1 morale bonus to your attack rolls against that creature type, but only when you know you are facing such a creature. For example, if your enemy is shapechangers, you do not receive the bonus when attacking a lycanthrope in humanoid form that you do not know to be a lycanthrope.

Special: You cannot choose your own creature type unless you are evil. This feat cannot be taken more than once.

Unseen [General]

Provided you remain perfectly still, you can hide in plain sight. Through some perplexing trick of the light or the mind, other creatures seem to simply overlook you.

Prerequisites: Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Hide).

Benefit: Whenever you are not being observed, you can conceal yourself as a free action, making yourself invisible as though affected by the spell *invisibility*. You can take no actions while concealed, including moving or talking. The effect lasts as long as you take no actions. This is an extraordinary ability, though *see invisibility*, *true sight*, and similar spells will reveal your presence. In all other respects this ability it is treated as a glamer, and may be disbelieved.

Warding Gesture [General]

At some point in the past, a relative or friend taught you a simple folk gesture thought to keep the minions of evil at bay. Though you rely on this

superstition reflexively, unnatural creatures are genuinely fearful of you when you brandish such a sign. Whether this is because of its occult power or simply your *belief* in its power is uncertain.

Prerequisites: Wis 11+, Cha 11+.

Benefit: Choose a creature type: aberrations, beasts, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, giants, magical beasts, outsiders, shapechangers, or undead. You need not select a subtype if you choose the outsider type. As a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity, you can make a simple gesture. Treat the gesture as a passive gaze attack (see "Gaze Attacks" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Creatures of your chosen type must make a Fear save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Charisma bonus) if they view the gesture. Creatures that make their Fear save are immune to your gesture for 24 hours. You must have at least one hand free to make the gesture. You can make the gesture only once per encounter, but it is usable an unlimited number of times per day. This is an extraordinary ability.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you must designate a new creature type that is affected by the gesture.

Prestigious Professions



he most successful career must show a waste of strength that might have removed mountains, and the most unsuccessful is not that of the man who is taken unprepared, but of him who has prepared and is never taken.

—E. M. Forster, *Howards End*

Below you will find a selection of my most trusted allies, chosen from among my associations for their depth of skill and possible utility in hunts for the minions of darkness. I have often asked myself, Milady, "What makes a man — or woman, I should add — an extraordinary man?" And perhaps more significantly, "What makes an extraordinary man a hero?" Is it the boon he is given at birth, be it a heritage of honor, a soul of fire, or a blessing from the gods? Is it the talents he develops, be it laboring at a purpose, sharpening his mind, or awakening his hidden gifts? Is it the choices he makes, or the circumstances that are thrust upon him? I do not yet know the answer to such questions, but I have seen that all such elements play a role in creating heroes.

Editor's Note: True enough, but an odd observation to make. Is the Toret trying to suggest something to us through such language? — LWF

New feats

*Then black despair,
The shadow of a starless night, was thrown
Over the world in which I moved alone.*

— The Revolt of Islam



or those yearning for the seductive embrace of evil, the Dark Powers provide many interesting abilities. Divine feats provide new attacks and defenses for clerics, especially those of evil alignment. Other general feats are more suited to those of a roguish persuasion. A few might even be useful to who follow the cause of good — or at least believe they do. DMs may decide which of these feats they wish to allow in their games.

Some special feats exist solely for the dread companion. DMs who allow feats to be applied to dread companions may expect their players to use an available feat slot when the creature is called.

Brawler [General]

In the world of Ravenloft, few peasants have the ability to gain swords or the training to fight well unarmed. With this feat you may choose one object you can lift and swing and use it as a crude weapon as though you had proficiency with it.

Prerequisite: Str 13+.

Benefits: If weapons are taken away or you have no coinage to get them, this feat allows you to pick up any reasonable object and use it with the effectiveness of a standard weapon. It is up to the DM to decide damage for the unusual object, although all ability bonuses and combat feat bonuses still apply.

Darkness Within [General]

Now that you have started to walk the spiraling path of corruption, the inhibiting powers of good and purity are less effective on you.

Prerequisite: You must have failed a Dark Powers check and be on the way down the path of corruption.

Benefit: Protection from evil only gives +1 to AC and saves against you, as does magic circle against evil. Holy smite does half damage to you, and dispel evil only gives opponents a +2 bonus when facing you.

Deadly Presence [Divine]

You can sometimes suppress or nullify life-giving magic.

Prerequisites: Ability to turn or rebuke undead, Cha 13+.

Benefit: You can spend one of your turn/rebuke undead attempts to interfere with healing spells within a 25-foot area. The effect lasts one round, ending on your next action. While the effect is active, any spell cast in the area that would restore lost hit points to another character requires the caster of the curative spell to make a Will save to succeed. The DC of the Will save is 10 + the interfering character's level as a divine spell caster + his Charisma bonus. If the healer fails the save, the healing spell is affected, and a number equal to the interfering character's level as a divine spell caster plus his Charisma bonus is subtracted from the number of hit points that would otherwise be restored. The DM should make a powers check at 2% every time this feat is attempted.

Deathly Pallor [General]

Death magic has warped you to the point that lesser undead see you as one of their own and do not harm you.

Prerequisite: You must be able to cast the spell *animate dead*.

Benefit: Unintelligent undead such as zombies and skeletons see you as a fellow animated undead and will not attack you unless commanded specifically to do so. Although you are very much alive, some of effects related to the undead affect you as well. You must make a Will save to see creatures under the effects of the spell invisibility to undead. You can even be rebuked, commanded, or turned, although the cleric or paladin doing so suffers a -7 penalty on the turning check, using your level as the HD category of undead. You make a powers check at 20% when you take this feat.

Death's favor [Divine]

You possess faith in death as the only eternal thing in the universe. Death itself rewards you for your vigilance.

Prerequisite: Ability to turn or rebuke undead, Cha 13+.

Benefit: Spend one of your turn/rebuke undead attempts to gain a +2 sacred bonus to your saving throws versus all Necromancy spells and any divine spells of the Death and Repose domains.

Dirge of Woe [General]

You can sing the songs that cause the living to lament and the dead to shed tears.

Prerequisite: Bardic music ability, 9+ ranks in Perform.

Benefit: Spend one of your bardic music uses to make enemies quake with dread, fear, and sadness. All good-aligned creatures within 30 feet of you must make a Will save against a DC of 10 + your bard class level + your Charisma bonus. Those failing the save must subtract your Charisma bonus from all checks, attack rolls, and saves as long as they remain within the 30-foot area. Neutral characters must make the same save against half the above DC (round down). Evil characters are still moved by the music and might shed tears or lower their heads in somber silence, but suffer no other effects. The DM should make the appropriate checks and rolls so that players cannot use Dirge of Woe to detect alignment by inference.

Disp passionate Dread Companion [General]

For reasons unknown to your character, your dread companion is not very dreadful. This can be a mixed blessing. Unlike many dread companions, yours does not seek out as much trouble. Your companion's nature is more self-absorbed and requires more motivating.

Prerequisite: You must be able to have a dread companion.

Benefit: Your dread companion is not evil. Substitute neutral as the alignment for your companion

Energy Drain [Divine]

You can channel negative energy to drain the life force from your foes.

Prerequisite: Ability to turn or rebuke undead, Cha 13+.

Benefit: After you succeed in a melee touch attack, you may opt to spend one of your rebuke or command attempts to drain the energy out of a foe. The victim must first make a Fortitude save against a DC of 10 + your divine spellcaster level. If the save is failed, the victim is drained a number of levels (or HD) equal to your Charisma bonus. The effect of this energy drain lasts until the afflicted character gains a full day's rest. You make a 1% powers check when you use this ability.

Equestrian [General]

Naturally skilled on horseback, you may perform any action on horseback that you could normally perform while sitting or standing, including normal attacks and various special feats, as well as special riding maneuvers. Your defensive maneuvers also protect your mount with this feat.

Prerequisites: Mounted Combat, 5+ ranks in Ride.

Benefit: As comfortable on horseback as on your feet, you may Dodge, use Point Blank Shot, or any other feat normally only available while in standard melee. Your mount also gains the benefit of any defensive maneuvers, with penalties to attack and other feat- or action-created bonuses counting toward the mount as well.

Special: You may only use this feat with standard mounts such as light horses and war dogs, since these domesticated animals are more easily trained to your will. No mount of a size more than two categories greater than its rider can benefit from its rider's defensive maneuvers.

Ethereal Touch [General]

Your physical touch has an ethereal quality. Ghosts, spectres, and creatures that would normally be intangible to others are physically solid to you.

Prerequisite: Wis 16+, previous contact with an incorporeal being.

Benefit: You may touch incorporeal creatures and subsequently harm them. This feat allows the character to possess the corrupting touch attack as described in the entry for "ghosts" in the PHB.

Extra Domain [Special]

You may select an additional cleric domain with this feat.

Prerequisite: Wis 18+, 10+ ranks in Knowledge (religion), divine spellcaster level 7th+.

Benefit: When you take this feat, you may choose an extra cleric domain. If your deity has domains you do not have, you must choose from those. If you have every domain your deity encompasses, then you may pick a domain that does not conflict with your deity's nature (or alignment).

Extra Wounds [Divine]

When you cast inflict wounds spells, the damage tends to be more severe.

Prerequisite: Ability to turn/rebuke undead, Cha 13+.

Benefit: Spend one of your turn/rebuke undead attempts to add your Charisma bonus to the damage you cause with an inflict wounds spell.

feral Rearing [General]

Abandoned or orphaned at birth, you were raised by wild animals. Utterly deprived of human contact until your adolescence, you remain more beast than human.

Benefit: You have the animal type rather than the normal creature type for your race. Animal Empathy is a class skill for you, regardless of your actual class. You gain a +4 racial bonus to all Animal Empathy and Handle Animal checks. You may communicate with one normal animal listed in the Monster Manual (e.g. brown bear, hawk, wolf, etc.) as though affected by the spell speak with animals cast at 5th level. This is an extraordinary ability.

Your base Outcast Rating is increased by 2. Like a barbarian, you do not automatically know how to read and write. You must spend 2 additional skill points (or 1 skill point if you are a bard) to gain the ability to read and write a language you can speak. Barbarians with this feat suffer no additional effect.

Special: This feat must be taken at 1st level.

Heartlore [General]

You possess a remarkable reservoir of knowledge regarding the myth and folklore of the land, including the superstitions of the common folk regarding herbal healings, protection from supernatural creatures, and other widely held beliefs.

Prerequisite: Int 14+, Wis 16+.

Benefit: Knowledge (monster lore) and Knowledge (Ravenloft) are considered class skills (see *Ravenloft* Core Rulebook for skill descriptions).

Special: This feat must be taken at 1st level. Though characters of any class may take this feat, it is exceptionally rare among all classes but barbarians, druids, rangers, and sorcerers. Classes that rely on book learning and higher education do not absorb the knowledge of the "folk" as readily.

Hollow [General]

You were born without a soul. Energy draining has no effect on you, nor do any spells or effects that enslave or imprison the soul. Unfortunately, this

makes you an abomination in the eyes of some seers and prevents you from ever being raised from the dead.

Prerequisites: Cannot be of good alignment.

Benefit: You are immune to energy draining, magic jar, and trap the soul; the malevolence ability of ghosts; and all forms of possession. You cannot be reincarnated, raised, or resurrected. Your base Outcast Rating is increased by 1 when dealing with any character that has a Wisdom score of 12 or more, and by 4 when dealing with the Vistani.

Special: This feat must be taken at 1st level.

Life-force Sacrifice [Metamagic]

You know how to sacrifice your own life essence for greater spell casting flexibility.

Prerequisite: If you are a divine spellcaster, you must possess one of the following domains: Death, Destruction, or Repose. If you are an arcane spell caster, you must have mastery over the Necromancy school. In the case of wizards, you must specialize in the school of Necromancy; in the case of sorcerers, you must know one Necromancy spell for each level of spell you can cast.

Benefit: When the tide of a situation or conflict goes in a completely different direction and catches you without appropriate spells, you may sacrifice a number of hit points equal to the level of the spell you want to "exchange" for another spell of the same level in your "repertoire." This ability is similar to the cleric's spontaneous casting ability except that you lose hit points, and the spell can be exchanged for any spell you can normally prepare. The sacrificed hit points must be regained only through normal healing. Attempts to use cure spells or any other magical healing to regain hit points sacrificed using this feat are ineffective.

Machiavellian [General]

You have a silver tongue and a natural presence about you. You have learned to put this innate charm to use as a political predator.

Prerequisite: Cha 16+; 2+ ranks in each of Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo, and Sense Motive.

Benefit: You gain a +2 competence bonus on Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo, and Sense Motive checks.

Mechanical Aptitude [General]

Your character is especially gifted when it comes to designing, creating, and building things that require moving parts. This feat is very common among gnomes.

Prerequisite: Int 13+, 4+ ranks in any Craft sub-skill.

Benefit: You gain a +2 competence bonus to any Craft check that relates to moving parts, including clock making and gunsmithing.

Mesmerizing [General]

Something about you reaches inside people and grabs hold of their will.

Prerequisite: Wis 16+, Cha 14+.

Benefit: You gain a +2 competence bonus to Diplomacy and Hypnotism checks.

Mimicry [General]

You are skilled in the ability to replicate sounds, including accents, different vocal tones, and various animal noises and calls.

Benefit: You have a +2 competence bonus to Disguise checks while attempting to speak as someone other than yourself or while imitating a particular person (with an opposed Charisma check to fool anyone who knows that person as better than an acquaintance). Strangers in other domains are less suspicious of you, since you speak in any tongue (if you know the language) with little or no discernable foreign accent. Any spells or abilities that influence animals also gain a +2 bonus, as you are far more adept at speaking their "language."

Piercing Gaze [General]

You have a greater ability to see through mists and fog, as well as an increased chance to capture the gaze of someone you wish to enchant.

Prerequisite: Wis 12+, Cha 12+.

Benefit: Your gaze is strange and intense. Often your eyes seem to glow in the dark when ambient light reflects off them. When caught in the Mists, you have a +3 bonus to Spot checks when looking for a Mistway. Your oddly piercing gaze also allows you to cast spells that require victims to look at you with a +2 DC to their save.

Special: Because of the weirdness of your gaze, you have a +1 Outcast bonus with strangers. This feat must be taken at 1st level.

Second Sight [General]

You have a gift of perception. Not only are you exceptionally alert, you are gifted at the art of scrying.

Prerequisites: 4+ ranks in each of Scry and Spot.

Benefit: You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Spot and Scry checks.

Shadow Affinity [Metamagic]

You have a natural affinity with the creatures of shadow.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 1st+.

Benefit: When you summon outsiders from the Plane of Shadow, they are treated as one hit die higher than normal and do not make a Will save to free themselves as with normal conjuration in Ravenloft. Additionally, you gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws related to darkness and shadow magic.

Skeletal Dread Companion [General]

Your dread companion is itself undead, on top of being a supernatural creature. Although all dread companions are evil, the Dark Powers reserve skeletal dread companions for individuals who seem truly bent on continuing on the path of corruption and moral decay.

Prerequisite: The ability to have a dread companion, be it a mount or a familiar.

Benefit: After choosing the type of animal for a dread companion (usually horses for paladins, and bats, cats, owls, and so on for wizards and sorcerers), you may apply the skeletal dread companion template (see Appendix) to your companion. Skeletal dread companions retain any and all abilities from when they were alive. For instance, bats still fly despite the lack of a wing membrane, and cats still see sharply even though they have hollow eye sockets.

Skeletal dread companions are much tougher than other companions, and even though they are undead, they are far from mindless. Normal rules for Intelligence for a dread companion apply. The disadvantages of this feat consist in the possibility that your dread companion might be turned, rebuked, or commanded by a cleric, and spells and effects that target undead will likewise affect your companion.

You make a powers check at 5% when you take this feat.

Skywise [General]

With this feat you know with absolute accuracy the cycles of the sun, moon, and stars.

Prerequisite: 4+ ranks in Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore.

Benefit: Living in the realms of Ravenloft, sometimes your life may depend upon your ability to know when the full moon is about to rise — or when sunset is coming. You have the natural ability to know when the moon will rise and what phase it will be in. You feel the changes in the earth when the sun rises and sets and have an uncanny knowledge of the patterns of stars within the seasons. This feat does not depend upon seeing the sky. You are just as accurate while indoors or exploring an underground tomb and do not need to concentrate to know when a change is about to take place.

Tantric Ability [General]

Generally practiced by the inhabitants of Sri Raji, this ability is a lovemaking technique meant to bring two souls closer.

Prerequisite: Wis 14+, Cha 12+; you must learn this feat through direct experience from another individual who possesses Tantric Ability. You cannot have this feat if you also have the Hollow feat.

Benefit: You declare the use of this feat when your character participates in intimate relations with a chosen partner. The partner makes a Will save (DC 15 + your Charisma bonus). If your partner fails the Will save, you gain a +2 competence bonus to all Diplomacy, Innuendo, Read Lips, and Sense Motive checks involving the partner for a number of hours equal to your Charisma bonus.

Target Vulnerable Spot [General]

You gain the ability to locate and attack vulnerable points in a creature's body with a piercing weapon.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+, +4 ranks in Heal, Improved Critical, Weapon Finesse.

Benefit: When attacking monsters with particular vulnerabilities (such as a lycanthrope's susceptibility to silver), you gain an advantage. If you succeed at a critical hit with a piercing weapon

of the correct type (silver, wooden stakes, and the like), you have found their vulnerable spot and do three times normal damage — stunning, disabling, or killing the creature as per its weakness listed in *Denizens of Darkness* or the *Monster Manual*.

Tarokka Natural [General]

You are a natural with tarokka cards. Perhaps you have Vistani blood in you, or maybe you are a seer. Whatever the case, you own and know how to use the infamous deck of divination cards. Unlike many con artists using the decks, yours actually works.

Prerequisite: Int 12+, Wis 12+.

Benefit: You may use the tarokka deck as a focus for Gather Information and Scry checks in addition to the normal Bluff checks for the cards. Like the Bluff check (when pretending to use the cards), you gain a +2 competence bonus to the roll when actually using the cards.

Unseen Sensor [Metamagic]

Your divination and scrying abilities are much more subtle than others that use similar magic, and your viewings remain largely unnoticed.

Prerequisite: 6+ ranks in Scry, 6+ ranks in Hide, able to cast at least two Divination spells.

Benefit: When you succeed in Scry checks or use arcane eye, the sensor that views the location is invisible. Spells that allow someone to see things that are invisible can see the sensor.

Unwholesome Ichor [General]

Owing to an unusual heritage, a curse on your family, odd eating habits, some other similar reason, you have blood that is poisonous to any natural creature and distasteful to the undead.

Benefit: If you are bitten by any natural creature with an Intelligence score greater than 2 or by intelligent undead, they automatically turn their attention to someone else if possible or discontinue and attack involving physical contact if no other foes are within range. Natural creatures that have caused more than 4 points of damage with their bite attacks must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) or be nauseated and unable to attack anyone for 2 rounds. Intelligent undead may make a Will save (DC 15) to continue a biting attack against you. If they fail, they react as though turned and will not attempt to bite you again during this combat.

Special: This feat must be taken at 1st level.