

d12

Monthly

**DIVINE MAGIC
ISSUE**

Issue 5
October 2021

**CREATE A
PANTHEON
FROM
SCRATCH**

**WAYWARD
FOLLOWERS**

PUNISHMENTS FOR THOSE
WHO LOSE THEIR WAY

**ALIGN YOUR
CAMPAIGN**

A LOOK AT HOW USEFUL
ALIGNMENTS CAN BE



Location: More secrets revealed in the town of Riverbend

D12 Monthly is a helpful resource for fantasy roleplayers.

The Divine Magic Issue

Following the path of the pious is not always an easy one.

Most other classes do not have the added burden of pleasing anyone else - fighters, rogues, wizards, sorcerers - these would-be heroes answer to no-one.

The cleric answers ultimately to their creator, their gilding light, or savour.

And, in exchange for that, the cleric receives blessings in the form of spells and other abilities.

On the other hand, if they stray from the righteous path they may be punished.

Alignment also plays a large part in the cleric's ethos. They follow their deity's (and church's) teachings and they need to align - at least in part - to that ethos.

In this issue I look at how you can play a better cleric who not only follows your deity's teachings but also grows it.

I also look at where clerics and other followers can go wrong and what the consequences of misdeeds could be.

Paladins are not forgotten either, with a new look at paladins based on their deity's beliefs.

We also look at the religious side of Riverbend.

Finally, we look inside a temple to the god of magic and we roll the dice to see how your adventure will kick off.

I hope you enjoy it and get inspired by the contents within.

And remember, as always, happy gaming!

- Russ from YUMDM

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About Me

I have been roleplaying for over 30 years and DMing for most of those. I have played over 50 different roleplaying games, but my first love is fantasy - it's like coming home.

Thanks to my Patrons: *RollStats, Matt Kurowski, John, Michael Lawrence Senchuk, Jacob Alexander, ButterflyDefect, J. David Chrisman, Alex, Korg INC, NOLA Bert, GameCat, Kay Bee, Roll to Save, Widsith Atopos, Brandon Stuart, Lee Boden, Anthony White, Rory Starks, Joseph Hurley, and Steven Bode* for making this zine as good as it is.

Want to join this team and support the zine? I have a Patreon account:

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(New tiers are now available to receive a physical copy).

Contents

Features

- 4 Creating a Pantheon**
Get your deities in order
- 7 Holy Symbols**
Not all symbols are equal
- 8 Turning Up The Heat**
More to a cleric's turning ability
- 10 Organized Chaos**
When Faiths Fracture
- 12 Weapon Spotlight**
This month it's the mace.
- 13 Wayward Followers**
Punishments for followers who lose their way
- 14 Align Your Campaign**
Another Look at Alignments
- 16 Paladins**
Rethinking the Spiritual Warrior
- 18 Location, Location, Location!**
A closer look at Riverbend.
- 21 Temple of Ferast**
We look at a magic sanctum
- 22 Twisted Table**
Starting Your Adventures



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Organized Chaos: When Faiths Fracture by Gary Smith

Creating a Pantheon

Get Your Deities in Order

The daunting task of creating a pantheon of deities can overwhelm some GMs. But never fear as there are a couple of simple ways to approach this.

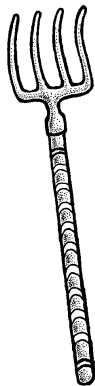
Creating Your Own Deities

An easy way to create a pantheon of deities is to think about your world and list out what would be important to those who live in it.

Remembering that older religions may become entrenched or disappear completely over time.

A small list of these aspects maybe as follows:

Nature
Magic
War
Agriculture
Safety or Home
Law or Justice
Travel (Land and Sea)
Weather
Seas or Oceans
Elements (Air, Earth,
Fire and Water)
Death
Wealth and Commerce



This list is by no means exhaustive but does list out areas where mortal beings may look to the gods to help them in their daily struggles, or seek guidance.

The culture, and cultural norms, of the society will impact this list as well.

Some cultures may put less emphasis on death or war, for example. Therefore the deities for them may not be as significant.

You can start with as few as twelve major deities (or even less), which you can easily write up a small paragraph on each, assigning domains or spheres as needed.

It's okay to come up with some names and (very) basic ideas about your gods, and then fill in the blanks afterwards.

Taking an example from my own campaign world, Aythia, my initial write up for one of the twelve major deities, Arkeris:

Arkeris [ARK-ker-IS] is the god of night, trickery, lies, and illusion. He is the patron god of thieves.

That's all I started with.

As the campaign and the world grows you can add more to that beginning point, starting with the deities you are going to use within a particular session or a one of the PC's deities.

You may need to add some additional information such as domains or spheres the clerics have access to and a little more about the church and their beliefs (see below).

Given Arkeris is the deity of thieves and illusions, perhaps the church encourages illusionists to join them so the Thieves'

Guild can use their abilities to their own advantage.

A unique thief/illusionist class could be created as well which is only available to those characters who worship Arkeris.

As you can see, just by creating these deities it adds to the lore of your world and helps your world building efforts.

Naming Your Deities

Coming up with names for various gods and goddesses can be difficult.

I try to use associated words that could represent the deity.

For example, my god of nature, Gruan, came from the word 'grow'. I changed it to 'gru' and then added the 'an' on the end as it sounded good.

It can be that simple.

Use Existing Deities

Another way to grow a pantheon quickly is to use existing deities - either in a fantasy world or our own real world.

You can do this in two ways:

1. Use the deity "as is" - name and description
2. Use the deity and just change their name

Both work well and I find that even if you use an existing deity, over time your

version will diverge from the original pretty quickly.

The next aspect of a pantheon to look at is what the cleric's duties are within it. What is expected of a cleric (and other followers), and what are some of the day-to-day activities they perform.

A Cleric's Duties

What should clerics be doing in the name of their god?

This will depend greatly on the deity you worship, but clerics and paladins should be doing a little more than just adventuring.

As mentioned above, deities usually represent various aspects of the world.

These can be nature, magic, war, and many others. Below are some activities the cleric or other follower of various deities could be doing in addition to their adventuring or during any downtime.

Nature

Followers of a nature deity should be actively protecting it. This may mean stopping any excess destruction or promoting growth and/or expansion of it.

War

Followers of the deities of war should look to battles as a way to hone their skills, but not at the expense of the innocent. They may also be called upon to keep warfare fair. As well as be called upon to honour the fallen in battle by holding remembrance services and erecting holy sites.

Magic

Deities of magic like their followers to expand and grow their own powers but not at the expense of magic itself. Research into new spells is encouraged, as is the design and manufacture of new magic items.

Knowledge

The deity could either espouse sharing knowledge or hoarding it. Either way, followers are encouraged to seek out new knowledge and document it, copying text and researching further information.

Travel / Exploration

Always on the move, the followers of a deity of travel or exploration are always seeking new adventures and places to visit, spearheading and funding journeys to new destinations.

Sea/Ocean

Deities of the seas would expect their followers to make frequent journeys on or in the seas. Protecting the creatures within the oceans may also be important. They would also fund or help those going on seaforages - from small merchant vessels to large vessels sent out to explore new lands.

Holy Days

Each deity would celebrate various days, weeks, and months. These special days for the deity would be observed by clerics everywhere.

Tithing

Tithing is the act of donating an amount - usually expressed as a percentage of total

income - to the church of the deity you follow.

This can be between 10-90% of what the follower earns. Adventurers can end up donating quite a large sum of money to their church.

Centres of Worship

If you have a map of your world (or at least a sense of major places within it) you can place churches of various deities within them and come up with a simple scale from 1 to 5 to show how influential the church (and by association, the deity) is in that location.

Affiliated Orders

Some churches have certain organisations or groups associated with them. These could be an order of knights, a cabal of sages, or a den of thieves.

By listing one or two of these for each deity you can not only give more differentiation to your deities, but also expand your campaign world in various ways.

One of these would be to create certain classes accessible only to the faithful.

Holy Symbol

As shown in the article *Holy Symbols* in this issue, you can also create the deities' holy symbols as a way for people to recognise the various gods in your world.



Holy Symbols

Not all symbols were created equal

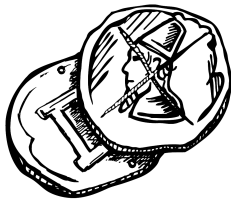
In my own campaign world each deity has their own holy symbol which, when carried or wielded by a cleric or paladin follower, will give a small benefit befitting the deity.

Something you can use for inspiration in your own campaign world.

Below is a list of deities and their holy symbols.

Arinix

Arinix is the god of luck - both bad and good. The priests carry a blessed coin (can be of any denomination)



that has a deep gouge on one side, representing bad luck. Once per month the priest may give this coin as payment, giving the receiver good or bad luck in the near future (50% chance of each). The coin will reappear on the priest's person within the hour.

Arkeris

Arkanites, the followers of the god of night, tickery, and illusions carry a mask which they can wear. It partially covers their face when being used (without any penalties to vision) and can allow the priest to disguise themselves (as per *Disguise Self* spell) once

per day. They do not need to wear the mask unless using the disguise ability.

Damus

Damus is the god of justice, chivalry, and law. His followers usually carry a statue of the god himself holding the sword of justice. Once per day, while clutching the holy symbol, the character can use it to detect lies in a 30ft sphere for 1 minute.

Ferast

Ferast is the god of magic. His followers use a scroll as a holy symbol. This scroll is blessed, is impervious to any damage while on the cleric's person, and will allow the cleric to cast any orison (cantrip) on the cleric's spell list once per day.

Gruan

Gruanites, the followers of the deity of nature, growth and life, carry a living, growing piece of nature. This is usually a tree branch (in the form of a staff) which grows new leaves and is alive. Once per day, it will grow one berry (as per the *Goodberry* spell) on command.



Kalisvar

Kalisvar is the god of battle, war, and patron to warriors. Clerics carry a warhammer to use as their holy symbol (and weapon). The business end is in the shape of a fist. Once per day, the

cleric can add +1 to hit when using this hammer in battle.

Lucindar

Lucindar, the deity of rebirth, fire, and the sun, carry miniature lanterns on their belt, each with a continuous flame inside. This radiates light out to 10ft at all times (unless in magical darkness).

Taliya

Taliya is the goddess of winter and the cold. Her priests carry a solid ice shard which can never melt. This can keep the follower without the need for water for one month if necessary.

Ullarl

Ullarl is the god of death and loss. His priests use a simple black or deep purple disc of metal. It is cold to the touch and can automatically detect any undead within 30ft by growing warmer.

Vaal

Vaal is the god of revenge, pain and suffering. Their holy symbol is a whip. They carry one at all times and are proficient with its use.

Venren

Venrenites follow the god of protection, the weak, and defenseless. They carry a shield as their holy symbol (usually emblazoned with a gauntlet or helmet). Once per day, the cleric can add +1 to their AC, or give someone within 5ft +3 AC, for one round.



Turning Up The Heat

Adding more effects to a cleric's turning ability



Turning is a powerful and useful ability for clerics, but there are really only three results: fail, turn, and destroy.

This article looks at an alternative system for turning undead by adding to those results, giving clerics more options.

Effects of Turning

Several effects have been added to the results of turning as described below. All effects last for 1 minute.

Shaken: A shaken character suffers a -2 penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws.

Dazed: Unable to act normally. A dazed creature can take no actions, but has no penalty to AC.

Stunned: A stunned creature drops everything held, can't take actions, takes a -2 penalty to AC, and loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

Held at Bay: The undead do not flee, but they can also not approach the cleric who attempted to turn them. If the cleric approaches the undead, the effect is nullified.

Turned: As per normal rules.

Destroyed: As per normal rules.

Turning Check

To check what maximum hit dice and effect you can have on undead you need to make a turning check.

Roll D20 + cleric's level + Charisma mod

Turning Undead Table

Check Result	Most Powerful Undead Affected	Maximum Effect
0 or lower	Cleric level -4	Shaken
1-3	Cleric level -3	Dazed
4-6	Cleric level -2	Stunned
7-9	Cleric level -1	Stunned
10-12	Cleric level	Held at bay
13-15	Cleric level +1	Held at bay
16-18	Cleric level +2	Turned
19-21	Cleric level +3	Turned
22+	Cleric level +4	Destroyed

The result is the maximum number of hit dice you can affect. For example, If your result was 15 and you're a 3rd level cleric, you could affect undead up to 4HD (cleric level +1).

And you would be able to hold the undead at bay or any lesser effect.



Turning Damage

After finding out the maximum HD of undead you can affect, it is time to determine the number of undead you can affect.

Roll 2D6 + cleric's level + Charisma mod

That's how many total hit dice of creatures you can affect, keeping in mind you cannot affect undead above a certain HD.

If there are any HD left over after the initial damage is dealt, then the cleric can apply one lesser effect on a remaining undead.

Example 1

Tenaziir, a 3rd level cleric of Lucindar (CHA mod of +1), encounters 3 ghouls. He decides to attempt to turn them.

Holding up his holy symbol he wills the power of Lucindar on to the beasts.

He rolls his initial turning check and gets an 18 - enough to turn undead up to 5HD. More than enough for these 2HD ghouls. He can also turn them (or any lesser effect).

The player then rolls his turning damage: getting a total of just 10.

This is enough to be able to turn all three of the ghouls (who have a total HD of 6).

Example 2

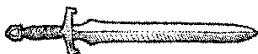
Tenaziir, now an 8th level cleric of Lucindar (Charisma mod is now +3), is surprised and surrounded by four spectres (7HD undead).

The player rolls a total of just 14 for his Turning Check. High enough to affect the spectres, but unfortunately he can only hold them at bay.

He rolls turning damage and gets a total of 16. He can hold two at bay, and with 2HD left over the player decides to apply a lesser effect - stunned - to the third.

Paladins and Turning

Paladins add half their level when making the turning checks and calculating turning damage.



Organized Chaos When Faiths Fracture

By Gary Smith



Chaos is not only the catalyst for change, but it's also fundamental in the continued viability of a faith.

Many will say that it doesn't make

any sense to have a faith be chaotic in a RPG.

How could a chaotic faith survive?

This comes down to the ebb and flow of entropy and its effect on organized religion.

People are a paradox.

We are a social animal that demands hierarchy - we listen to others that are more authoritative than ourselves. In many cases all it takes is a symbol to demand our compliance, such as a lab coat or a uniform.

However, there is a large portion of people who do not comply with the status quo, they upset the balance and tip the scales.

Real World Example

To use a real world example, we can look to Christianity as a perfect ebb and flow of entropy and how it affects religion.

The history of Christianity itself is not without its own state of entropy, as even the Orthodox faith, the de facto oldest structure of Christianity, had to claw its way and fight through the various factions to become recognized as "the one way"...

Only to fall into the same state of decline with various groups breaking off and forming their own faiths revolved around the same ideas.

Fantasy Faiths

Faiths within a fantasy world are generally bizarrely unified.

One could argue that this could be because an active deity would be able to supply decrees in a more concrete fashion. But the fallacy of that concept is that deities operate under the same thought structure as mortals: the alignment system.

Considering the concept outlined in the game's cosmology, deities are as dependent upon worshipers as much as worshipers are dependent upon them.

This power dichotomy allows for a more free flow exchange of concessions. If a deity is too stringent in their structure, they may lose worshipers to another deity who will hold sway with their willingness to be flexible or different ideals altogether.

Since deities require worship as some sort of sustenance, they will view the change of worship more like a different flavor of food.

This doesn't mean that they won't be willing to accept the previous worship that was once afforded to them, but it does mean that some things will change as splinter factions form.

But why does it seem like law invariably turns into chaos only to eventually be reined in again in a strange ebb and flow of ideas and demands?

It's nature, our very own, which comes from our need to blaspheme: to control something we were never meant to control... ideas.

To tie this more closely to RPGs, you want to look at the structure of a chaotic mindset.

Those splintering of ideas do not usually happen en masse. A fleck of worshipers break off from the ideas of one person and then it begins to spread amongst others.

Editor: For a fine example of this look to Issue 2's article on *Ullarl: Deity of Death & Loss* and the newer Life Faithful faction.

These cults of ideas would invariably start small, but it wouldn't be long before the chaos would slowly shift into neutrality as more and more people began to adhere to the ideal structures of the one who started the cult, while hanging on to some of the older customs and beliefs.

Much longer after that, when those ideas become mainstream; worshippers begin to try to control and codify them into a designated way of belief and establish a form of hierarchy.

Once this happens ideas become solidified into Canon and thus law is reborn.

Deitific Thought

When you consider a deity, you can never place them on the same level as people. The so-called alignment structure is not the same for them as it is for people because they're thought processes are far more pragmatic.

While a deity can have a chaotic alignment in their own right, they can most definitely have a very lawful stable of worshipers, just as a good deity can have worshipers, or even leaders, or varying alignments.

Application

To make a more believable setting, create factions within the governing body of churches.

Take the time to consider how a specific element of a god can be twisted into a juxtaposed position.

Consider how this belief structure is covering the land and how a splinter cell can start eroding those foundations and plot the course of its downfall and rebirth into something new and continue to organize that chaos.



Weapon Spotlight

This month we look at the mace.

Mace

The mace is an iconic clerical weapon. In older editions, clerics could only use blunt weapons and the mace always seemed the best option.

In our own world, three broad types existed: footman's mace, which was shorter; the horseman's mace, which was longer for reach; and the two-handed mace, which was longer still.

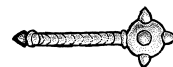


Mace Table

Weapon	Damage	Type
Footman's Mace	D6*	Simple
Horseman's Mace	D8*	Simple
Two-Handed Mace	D10*	Martial

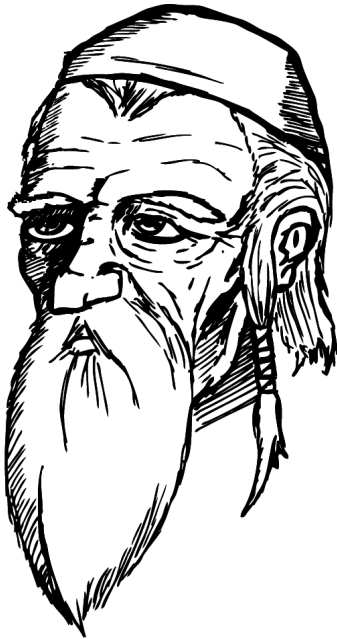
There are two broad types of maces: ball or knobbed maces and flanged maces. The latter were developed in response to heavier plate armour and were good at causing more damage to heavily armoured opponents.

* Using my system for weapon versus armour damage (see article *Weapon Vs. Armour* in Issue 3), you may give a character with a flanged mace advantage on damage rolls Vs. plate armour.



Wayward Followers

Punishments for followers who lose their way



Thanks to two of my patrons, Roll to Save & AlexTheMapMaker, for suggesting this article.

Gods are sometimes fickle beings.

They desire their followers to, well, follow their teachings and live up to their ideals.

Especially their clerics (and paladins), who they give spells, blessings, and other powers to.

So, what happens when the cleric in the party is not living up to their beliefs?

Well, the deity may punish them.

A word of warning: this is one area where DMs need to tread carefully as players may not realise they are doing anything wrong.

Warnings

The first thing to do is to give a warning. This could be in or out of game, but I find it better to be warned in-game. There are a couple of ways you can do this.

Dreams

Characters could receive a dream while they sleep, giving them a scene where their character is lacking any powers in a dire situation, trying to tie it to what the follower did to anger his deity.

I have used dreams before for this exact reason. For both clerics and druids.

Reverie

If the character is an elf, then you could give them a vision during their 4-hour meditation session one night.

If this doesn't work, then you may need to try an out-of-game chat.

Effects

If the follower refuses or ignores the warnings, then it is time they feel the effects of their deity's displeasure.

Possible effects will differ from deity to deity and can be linked to their portfolio. The god of death, for example, may cease resurrecting the cleric's companions.

Possible Effects:

1. The cleric stops receiving certain spells. If the cleric used a spell in a way that went against the dictates or teachings of the church, or used a banned version of a spell (on a scroll, for example), then a certain (useful) spell could be withheld
2. If a cleric refuses to use a spell or other ability on someone who was in need, the cleric may find that spell withheld.
3. Whole level of spells or all spells may be withheld in extreme circumstances
4. Certain powers like turning undead may fail to function, leaving a cleric exposed to a dangerous situation
5. Other followers of the same religion may receive warnings against helping the cleric, having received dream visions of their own
6. The deity may curse the cleric. This curse could take the form of reduced ability scores, penalties on saving throws, or losing an item

Penalties like these should be a last ditch attempt to get the cleric or follower back on track and focused on the deity's beliefs.

If you, as GM, continue to have issues with a PC not following the dictates of their deity, then an out-of-game discussion may be needed.

Align Your Campaign

Another Look at Alignments



Alignments are slowly being phased out of the game, which is a shame as they can have a variety of uses.

Newer players to the more recent editions find no use with them, but I feel this could be due to misunderstanding of what alignment is, and what it can be used for.

Back in OD&D, there were but three alignments: chaotic, neutral, and lawful.

This is a much simpler version than the nine alignments there are in more modern versions (AD&D onwards).

I like both, and it comes down to the style of campaign you are running which you implement.

Alignments in 5e are mostly useless, mechanically speaking, as the new rules have stripped out any real mention of alignment or have any use for them.

Try finding the *Know Alignment* spell in 5e.

Alignments however, can work in several ways beyond what is in the PHB and DMG.

Organisational Alignments

One way you can use alignments in your campaign is for groups and organisations.

Use it as a shortcut for organisations like Nations, cults, guilds, NPC parties, etc.

This gives you a quick way to know how that organisation or group will react.

Once you know this, you can then roleplay any more nuanced individuals later.

For example, you could have a city that is lawful good, a militia which is lawful neutral, a thieves' guild which is neutral evil, a group of three witches who are chaotic good and the barbarians outside the city who are chaotic neutral.

Whenever the PCs encounter a particular group you have a quick idea on how to play them.

The militia may not take kindly to bribes, for example. While the witches will have no real love of the law or the watch who try to enforce it.

The descriptions of the alignments in 5e PHB are actually pretty concise and well-written, and will serve our purpose admirably.

Lawful Good creatures can be counted on to do the right thing as expected by society.

Neutral Good folk do the best they can do to help others according to their needs.

Chaotic Good creatures act as their conscience directs, with little regard for what others expect.

Lawful Neutral individuals act in accordance with the law, tradition, or personal codes.

Neutral is the alignment of those who prefer to steer clear of moral questions and don't take sides, doing what is best at the time.

Chaotic Neutral creatures follow their whims, holding their personal freedom above all else.

Lawful Evil creatures methodically take what they want, within the limits of a code of tradition, loyalty, or order.



Neutral Evil is the alignment of those who do whatever they can get away with, without compassion or qualms.

Chaotic Evil creatures act with arbitrary violence, spurred by their greed, hatred, or bloodlust.

Using these you can see how the groups mentioned above could react.

The average citizen in the city is LG and can be “counted on to do the right thing.”

Meanwhile, the militia, which is lawful neutral, will “act in accordance with the law.”

Members of the thieves’ guild, which is neutral evil, will “do whatever they can get away with.”

The witches, who are chaotic good, will “act as their conscience directs” (whether that is lawful or not).

Finally, the barbarians outside the city, who are chaotic neutral, will “follow their whims, holding their personal freedom above all else.”

With very little work you have a fair idea how each of these groups will respond - at least initially - to the PCs and their actions.

Individuals can be roleplayed based on these alignments or something completely different as the GM sees fit.



Paladins

Rethinking the Spiritual Warrior



When you imagine a paladin it is often in shiny plate armour, sword and shield in hand, with a lofty sense of their own importance.

Well, you can still have the latter and redesign your paladin to fit in more with the deity they represent.

Unfortunately, we have become accustomed to a one-size fits all mentality when it comes to these holy warriors and this need not be the case.

After all, a paladin is usually dedicated to a particular aspect of worship as much as a cleric is.

It stands to reason, just like a cleric can be built differently, so too can a paladin.

A paladin of a war god would be different from a paladin of the goddess of agriculture.

Something to also keep in mind is that a particular deity may not have a paladin order at all.

Unique Traits

To gain one of the following traits, a paladin gives up some of their more traditional traits. This could include being limited in their armour selection or their ability to turn undead. In exchange, they gain an additional trait at 1st level.

Death

Granted Power: You turn undead as a cleric of your level.

Restriction: You are restricted to wielding simple weapons.

Healing

Granted Power: You cast healing spells at +1 caster level.

Restriction: You are restricted to wielding simple weapons.

Knowledge

Granted Power: You cast divination spells at +1 caster level.

Restriction: You are restricted to only wearing light or medium armour.

Luck

Granted Power: You gain the power of good fortune, which is usable once per day. This ability allows you to reroll one roll that you have just made before the DM declares if the roll results in success or failure.

Restriction: You lose your ability to turn undead.

Magic

Granted Power: Use scrolls, wands, and other devices with spell completion or spell trigger activation as a wizard. For the purpose of using a scroll or other magic device, you are treated as a wizard.

Restriction: You are restricted to wearing only light armour.

Nature

Granted Power: You can *speak with animals* or *speak with plants* once per day.

Restriction: You are restricted to wielding simple weapons.

Protection

Granted Power: You can generate a protective ward as a supernatural ability. Grant someone you touch a resistance bonus equal to your cleric level on his or her next saving throw. The protective ward has a duration of 1 hour that is usable once per day.

Restriction: You lose your ability to turn undead.

Strength

Granted Power: You can perform a feat of strength as a supernatural ability. You gain a bonus to Strength equal to your cleric level. The power lasts 1 round, and it is usable once per day.

Restriction: You lose the lay on hands ability.

Appearance



It is important for a paladin to not only follow the deity's ideals, but also be a good representative of the faith.

While a paladin of war may wear the best plate armour, a paladin of a deity of thieves may use weapons with more finesse than a two-handed sword.

While a paladin of the deity of travel, like Dusrin (see *Issues 3 & 4* of this zine), would likely wear light armour to not impede their movement at all.

What will your next paladin look like?

Location, Location, Location!

This month we will take a closer look at Riverbend.

Town of Riverbend

Riverbend is a town located along the Snowmelt River, where the road from the south meets the river.

Places of Interest

Riverbend is known for two things: brandy floats and a prison. This highlights the eclectic nature of the town.

The town also has a number of temples and shrines to numerous deities.

Temples

There are three temples within the city.

Lucindar

The Temple of the Guiding Light is part temple, part lighthouse. This multi-purpose building sits on the very tip of the central landmass where the two rivers combine. The lighthouse is maintained by the resident cleric, **Lightbringer Torvald of the Church of Lucindar** (see *Personalities of Riverbend* later in this issue). It shines a continuous light at all times out into the river to alert boating traffic of the islands.

Ullarl

Located on the corner of Market streets and Quay streets, the temple to the deity of death and loss looms large.



Built from ebony stone slabs, it supports a large holy symbol - a purple disc - on the front of the building, above the front doors.

The head cleric is a giant of a man called **Loss-Seer Farlkin** (*Hu M Cleric NG; Growing the church, Ashen skin and well-kept beard; Somber*). He has managed to grow the local congregation and manages all funeral rites in town and surrounds, even those of the prisoners from the local jail.

Ferast

The god of magic has a small church in Riverbend, sitting at the end of South Road, which comes off Eastern Way.

See *Temple of Ferast* later in this issue.

The head cleric is **Magehand Farlin Silverhair**, who is also a mage of some power.

Both temples have a sizable library attached to them, featuring tomes and scrolls on local history and events, as well as more clerical teachings.

Shrines

A couple of shrines exist in Riverbend.

Gruan

On the outskirts of town sits a small tree stump with ancient runes carved into it. This is a shrine to the deity of nature, Gruan. It has been maintained and serviced by a young woman by the name of **Seanna**.

Dusrin

Dusrin, the deity of travel and messengers, maintains a small shrine in Riverbend, connected to the local stables, located just outside the east gate.

A squire, and follower of Dusrin, **Ignal of Myrbridge** (*Hu M Paladin LG; Ladies man, Tanned and buff; Jaunty*), maintains the shrine and tends to the horses the church has stabled here.

Cabal of the Celestial Star

A long dead, and recently resurrected cult, this shrine is located along one of the main sewer tunnels under the town.

It was constructed by the druid **Wyst** (see *Personalities of Riverbend* in Issue 4 of the zine) to establish the cult once more. The cult believed (rightly so) in certain celestial alignments and their ability to bring about magical surges.

The shrine is a stone carving of a celestial starscape.

Wyst has recently reinvigorated the cult and is actively recruiting members from the thieves' guild and beyond.

The real motivation for Wyst is to use the upcoming power surge in nature magics to destroy the town of Riverbend and claim the ruins as his own.

Personalities of Riverbend

Lightbringer Torvald of the Church of Lucindar is a sun-scorched middle-aged

man who has lived his whole life in Riverbend. He relies on outsiders' stories and tales to keep informed.

Seanna is an orphan who has grown up living it rough on the streets of Riverbend. She has taken it upon herself to upkeep the shrine to Gruan and can be found there on most days. She has a talent for calming animals. She survives by weaving baskets using reeds from the riverbank, which she sells at the local market.

Ignal of Myrbridge has been sent by his liege to watch over this shrine as punishment for a few late night indiscretions. He resents being here but loves horses so care for them well.

Magehand Farlin Silverhair (*Hu F Cleric LG; Magical studies, Lithe; Detailed*) is the head cleric of Ferast in Riverbend. She takes her role very seriously and often takes the council of Greyhand Malcar (see below).

Greyhand Malcar is the town's resident wizard and follower of Ferast. He has trained many local youngsters in the ways of wizardry. His current apprentice is a lightfoot halfling by the name of **Sinz**.

Sinz (*Ha F Wizard LN; Pleasing her master, Long brown hair; Skeptical*) is the current apprentice of Greyhand Malcar. She spends most of her time on errands for her master or hold up in his tower, studying her tomes and cataloguing the mage's new acquisitions.

Temple to Ferast

A Look Inside a Magic Sanctum

Part temple, part meeting hall, the temple to Ferast is built to be a place where great minds can come together to share knowledge and discuss topics of the day.

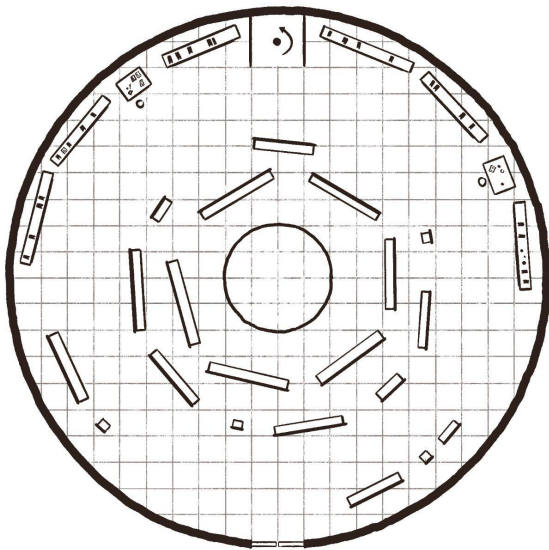
Many mages stop here on their travels.

Run by **Magehand Farlin Silverhair**, the temple is open to all who seek knowledge but she is particularly keen on meeting fellow mages.

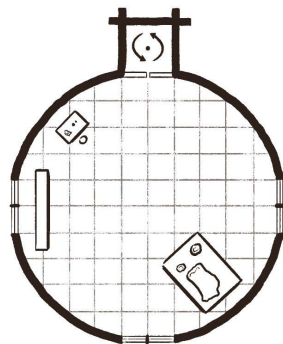
There are often “round table” discussions at all hours (something the local residents protest to), discussing anything from new spells, to the location of certain material components, to local laws and news.

Shelves of books line the circular wall of the temple, creating a mini-library of sorts, which are freely available to mages and alchemists who are part of the church.

You can find D6+1 wizards or alchemists here at any one time. Roll D12 to determine their levels.



Ground Floor

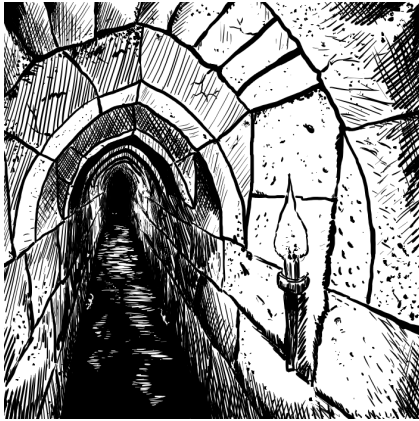


First Floor

Twisted Table

Starting Your Adventures

By Tale of the Manticore



Random tables allow the GM to be surprised by the game world along with the players. This edition of Twisted Tables is a bit different.

If you are bored with starting your PCs in a tavern, or slaving in a salt mine, or even something lame like as prisoners of a tribe of goblins, check out the ideas that follow.

Most of them require minimal prep, but they are all deliberately incomplete – you'll need to use your own creativity to keep them going. When you are ready to start a new campaign, simply roll a D8 and consult the following entries:

1: Gladiators: The party members start out as indentured gladiators in the minor leagues (see *Location, Location, Location!* in Issue 3). They may know each other or be

strangers. Go through a few small fights and equip them with better items as they win.

After these combats, they go to a major event. Uh oh! The overzealous promoter has somehow captured a minotaur (or other fearsome, unbeatable beast) and loses control of it during the event. It goes haywire and, if the PCs are smart enough to stay out of its way, cleaves a path to freedom that the PCs can easily follow and start their adventuring lives.

2: Delivery Service: The players begin as employees of a noble or merchant or followers of the Dusrin, the deity of travel and messengers (see *Issues 1 & 2*). They deliver sensitive packages (information, valuables, people, etc) across hostile territory. They may or may not be somehow bonded by sacred oath, magic or something else. Opportunities for adventure occur when a package is lost, (accidentally?) opened, or if the PCs are captured.

3: Work for your Supper: The PCs begin at an inn where they have agreed to trade labour for room and board. After a few hours of carrying heavy sacks of grain to the basement, a commotion is heard at the top of the stairs. The inn has been raided by bandits, monsters, or something else!

Will the players hide or help? What's behind the attack? Are the innkeepers more than they appear to be? Perhaps they have treasure or information... or is there something hidden out of sight right there in the basement?

4: Tomb Raider II: Recently some tomb raiders returned to town looking haunted and badly injured. They quickly sold their haul and left town, never to return. What did they find that was so harrowing? The merchant who bought their stolen treasure also has their map. And most importantly, the tomb is only partially explored.

The merchant will hire the party to go back and finish exploring it and will give them a copy of the map for an equal share of whatever they find within.

The raiders would not mention what it was that made them leave while there were still treasures to be found, but they did tell him that if he were to use the map, he had better bring along a priest...

(See the *D8 Dungeon Generator* in Issue 1 to help generate the tomb.)

5: The Stuff of Dreams: Tell players upfront that the opening scene is a dream. Any characters that die do not really die. Any XP gained is really gained. Any treasure found is lost... except for a special necklace/ amulet/ ring/ whatever.

When the character who touched it first wakes up, they are still wearing it! There's a special symbol engraved on it. Perhaps a local (or not so local) scholar could tell them what it means... Oh, and all of the PCs will quickly discover they all had the same dream. What the heck!?

6: The Suzanne Collins: The PCs are all members of a community who fought – and lost – a war with a neighbouring power

many years ago. As punishment, every 7 years, (# of PCs) tributes are required to be sacrificed in the “Maze of the Horrors” which of course was built by the victorious neighbouring power to teach their rivals a lesson. Our PCs are the unlucky souls who drew the ‘winning’ lottery tickets. They are delivered, and sealed within.

7: The Bag-Enders: The PCs are hired to steal something back from a monster of some kind. The monster should be overpowered and wise PCs will not try fighting it. Each PC has been hired for a specific and rare skill (class ability, spell, proficiency, language, etc) that will be tested at some point in the adventure. The skills should dictate the adventure design.

8: Stop, Thief!: The PCs are at a market stall, or at church or a funeral, or some public event. Someone bumps into one of the PCs and ... hey... the gold necklace that their father/mother/whoever gave them is gone! The other PCs are friends or good Samaritans, so when the thief dashes off, the PCs pursue. They are led through alleyways and then down into a sewer system, and so begins a ‘dungeon’ crawl through thieves’ guild territory. This is a good ‘quick start’ because most of the PCs will not be fully armed and armoured, so there's no need to waste time shopping.

Allow each PC a weapon, but no armor, plus 2 items they might logically be carrying in the chosen locale. The family heirloom will be part of the ‘treasure’ if they succeed in winning it back, so it should be fairly valuable – possibly even magical.

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