

Backgrounds

A M N E S I A C

Some portion of your past has been swallowed by nothingness. The missing time could be a short interval—mere days or weeks gone from your memory—or you might have only vague hints at best of who you are and where you are from. Flashes of déjà vu are common, taunting you with recollection, but they almost always slip away, as ungraspable as the mists of Druskensvald. An injury, some traumatic experience, or the magical workings of a spell or curse could be the culprit behind your amnesia.

Feat: Memory Starved (see page 115)

Skill Proficiencies: Choose two (see below)

Tool Proficiency: Choose one (see below)

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) book (personal notes), ink, ink pen, traveler's clothes, 11 gp; or (B) 50 gp

SCATTERED MEMORIES

You don't choose skill proficiencies or a tool proficiency when you select this background, and you don't choose any languages other than Common during character creation—these are parts of your past that you are missing. Instead, you can pick one of those proficiencies or languages during play at any time. The knowledge might return in a spontaneous flash, even as you make a roll that relies on the proficiency, or slowly emerge as you struggle to solve a problem. Once you choose one

of these features, you can't choose another one until you gain a level.

The GM might rule that you can choose a new recalled feature early if something reminds you of your past, such as finding a piece of evidence from your missing memories or experiencing an event similar to one you have forgotten. Of particular value is an event relating to one of the story threads or trinkets presented below.

BUILDING AN AMNESIAC

Any character can face misfortune or a choice that steals their memory. Consider how your character came to lose their memory. Was it lost through injury or illness, or did something more sinister steal it with a toxin or curse? You might decide to leave this choice up to the GM, letting you as a player discover the cause alongside your character.

Suggested Story Threads. This background presents a paradox when considering threads to weave through a campaign, since the character may not remember them. Work with the GM to create some leading events or people that can serve as constants to trace a path through the void of the character's past, especially if the GM can insert existing nonplayer characters into the thread to strengthen these connections. The Amnesiac Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of these threads.

Amnesiac Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 You have recurring dreams of someone you might recognize on your adventures.

2 You absent-mindedly doodle the same design or symbol over and over.

3 A friend has been traveling the provinces of

Druskenvald with a caravan, searching for any hint of your past as they do.

4 A rhyme or song you've never heard before comes to mind when your thoughts wander.

5 Rainbow colors, such as those on a soap bubble or oil slick, fill you with unexplained terror.

6 You have a fragmented recollection of traveling to a remote place in the mountains.

Amnesiac Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Amnesiac Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Amnesiac Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 Half of a tarnished silver ring with a partial inscription in a language you don't understand

2 A music box that plays a sad tune you recognize but can't identify

3 A short note addressed to you signed with a name you don't recognize

4 A thin silk scarf with a fading scent that stirs familiarity

5 A toy horse with unfamiliar initials inked on it

6 A locket whose portrait is burnt and unrecognizable

CRIMSON ASPIRANT

You have delved into the forces that animate all life—even those that counterfeit life, such as Constructs and Undead. Many of these studies concentrate on the nature of blood and its power to sustain life and transmit vital essence, binding the soul to the flesh. You might have apprenticed under a sly-hearted mentor or a secret cabal focused on understanding or even manipulating life and death. You may have learned from a detailed treatise that you've put into practice, daring to become

versed in the forbidden arts.

Feat: Crimson Ritualist (see page 113)

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Medicine

Tool Proficiency: Herbalism kit

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Herbalism kit, dagger, fine clothes, healer's kit, 3 vials, 10 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A CRIMSON ASPIRANT

Characters who value study and learning, as well as those with a capacity to heal the injuries and illnesses of others, readily become crimson aspirants. More physically inclined characters can be drawn to the teachings of blood to tap into their increased vital energies, as can those who are sickly or weak in hopes of overcoming that adversity.

Suggested Story Threads. The Crimson Aspirant Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Crimson Aspirant Story Threads

1d6 Thread

- 1 Sometimes when you bleed, you hear whispers from your fallen blood that tease with meaning.
- 2 You were trained by a remote monastery, but your mentor ushered you out one morning in a panic and sent you away.
- 3 A plague carried in the blood defies cures, and you must find its origin.
- 4 Your mentor, who inducted you into the secrets held within life and blood, vanished suddenly.
- 5 Your studies reveal a spate of anemia cases, some ending in death, as the predations of blood-drinking monsters.
- 6 A loved one, such as a paramour or sibling, has died, and your studies hint at a way to bring

them back.

Crimson Aspirant Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Crimson Aspirant Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Crimson Aspirant Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

- 1 A glass pendant with a single drop of blood suspended within
- 2 A long scroll with an anatomical study and description of how life energy flows through the body
- 3 A handkerchief with a blood drop pressed into the center
- 4 A polished bloodstone for balancing vital energy
- 5 A vial of blood that never coagulates or dries
- 6 A small box of ashes said to be from a martyr who was falsely accused of vampirism and burned at the stake

CROSSROADS GAMBLER

You've made your bones on games of chance, and one day your games crossed the line into something far more serious. You might have played for your soul against a Fiend, matched wits with ancient forest Fey in a riddle contest, or rolled dice with the fabled Mister Crossroads.

Feat: Fate Gambler (see page 114)

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Insight

Tool Proficiency: Choose one kind of gaming set

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Gaming set (same as above), caltrops, fine clothes, fine wine (bottle), 23 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A CROSSROADS GAMBLER

Characters who live by their wits, such as rogues and bards, find the call of a crossroads gambler appealing, though anyone could find themselves in the position of playing for stakes higher than they could ever imagine... or pay. A spellcaster who conjured the wrong entity may find themselves a gambler. The desperate who sought out a mysterious figure to throw dice and match wits for power or salvation can find their fates bound to the crossroads.

Suggested Story Threads. The Crossroads Gambler Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Crossroads Gambler Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 Someone you thought was a friend tricked you into making your bargain.

2 You've found that if you go too long without making a wager, your luck starts to turn sour.

3 You only feel alive in the midst of a contest.

4 You lost your bet, and you're on the run from the thing surely coming to collect.

5 Someone close to you made a wager and lost. You made your deal to try and find them.

6 You've been gambling for a long time, and you're tired. Now all you want is a way out.

Crossroads Gambler Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Crossroads Gambler Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Crossroads Gambler Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A lucky coin made of a strange material, such as green steel or bone

2 A battered, blood-stained six of hearts playing card

3 A torn journal page of a long-missing gambler who was hopeful to win their fortune from a being they describe but fail to name

4 The preserved foot of a rabbit, owl, or weasel

5 A six-sided die that somehow seems to have too many 2s when closely examined

6 A silver-plated ivory chess rook

CULTIST

You have been inducted into a secret society that venerates or pursues power from some otherworldly source. The cultists might serve as minions of an entity they worship, or they may seek to understand and claim its might for their own. Depending on the malevolence of the cult's patron or the malefic purposes they may serve, cultists could be a force of wickedness or a group of closely bonded and dedicated people who pursue a common, if esoteric, goal.

Feat: Cult Initiate (see page 113)

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, choose one (Cultist Affinity table skill recommended)

Language: Choose one (Cultist Affinity table language recommended)

Tool Proficiency: Calligrapher's supplies

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Calligrapher's supplies, costume (cult garb), holy symbol (amulet: cult insignia), traveler's clothes, 10 gp; or (B) 50 gp

Cultist Affinities

Cult Patron Skill Language

Aberration Perception Deep Speech

Celestial Religion Celestial

Fiend (Demon) Religion Abyssal

Fiend (Devil) Religion Infernal

Fey Nature Sylvan

CULT VENERATION

Cults propitiate beings of otherworldly power in hopes of sharing in that potency. Choose what type of cult you joined, such as the following.

Aberration. Alien creatures with inscrutable mindsets and motivations. Many originate from outside the known multiverse.

Celestial. Beings of the Upper Planes, and paragons of order or benevolence. Many can be overbearing and uncompromising.

Fiend (Demon). Creatures of utter evil and destruction that want to see all worlds and planes burn.

Fiend (Devil). Beings of cunning wickedness who prize structure and obedience. They seek to subjugate others and condemn souls.

Fey. Capricious beings often associated with nature and emotional extremes. They can be beautiful, terrible, intoxicating, and horrific.

BUILDING A CULTIST

Cultists are often lost souls—individuals severed from the fabric of society whose cult became a manipulative, surrogate family. Consider if your character agrees with the aims of the cult, if they fled the group, or if they remain for infiltration purposes.

Suggested Story Threads. The Cultist Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Cultist Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 You learned that the cult that took you in manipulated you throughout your life.

2 A member of your cult betrayed and killed your

leader and mentor.

3 Your cult's activities aroused the ire and superstition of locals, deserved or not.

4 You followed a loved one into joining the cult, trying to find out what happened to them.

5 You met someone who forced you to see the cult you always venerated in a different light.

6 You joined the cult to save yourself from an incurable illness or other certain doom.

Cultist Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Cultist Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Cultist Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A sealed scroll of esoteric knowledge

2 A steel ball bearing etched over its entire surface with your cult's sacred text

3 A crystal that feels strange to the touch

4 A ritual knife stained with blood, sap, or oils

5 A set of copper tattoo needles

6 An embroidered cloth half mask

DRUSKENVALD DWELLER

You hail from one of the thirteen baneful provinces of Druskensvald. You might be a member of the unique species known to originate from those diverse biomes, or you may be of a different heritage altogether. The skills and culture of your home (summarized below) shape your knowledge and early experiences.

Feat: Choose one Crooked Moon feat (see page 113)

Skill Proficiencies: Survival, choose one (Province Affinity table skill recommended)

Tool Proficiency: Choose one (Province Affinity table tool recommended)

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Artisan's tools (same as above), map (Druskensvald's provinces), traveler's clothes, 10 gp; or (B) 50 gp

Province Affinities

Province Skill Tool

Ardengloom History Herbalism kit

Astramar Arcana Navigator's tools

Bubonia Medicine Poisoner's kit

Chernabos Deception Calligrapher's supplies

Edwardia Investigation Tinker's tools

Enoch Nature Leatherworker's tools

Kalero Performance Musical instrument

Olmars Arcana Cartographer's supplies

Nerukhet Persuasion Weaver's tools

Pholsense Religion Mason's tools

Picco Performance Woodworker's tools

Syndramas Athletics Cook's utensils

Zulrogg Survival Herbalism kit

BUILDING A DRUSKENVALD DWELLER

Any sort of character can be a Druskensvald dweller.

When you make your character, decide if you belong to the species associated with your home province, or if you are of another kind who was raised outside the home of most of your species. This decision itself may determine truths about your character to be experienced throughout your journeys in Druskensvald.

Suggested Story Threads. The Druskensvald Dweller Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Druskensvald Dweller Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 You were left on a church doorstep as an infant.

The only clue to your origin is the torn cloak used

as a blanket.

2 You fled your home province after being accused of a crime, whether justly or not.

3 After hearing stories of other provinces, you struck out to see more of Druskenvald.

4 Members of a trade caravan stole something or harmed someone dear to you.

5 You made a desperate pact with an ashborn and now seek to nullify the contract.

6 A vicious bogborn bounty hunter trails you.

Druskenvald Dweller Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Druskenvald Dweller Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Druskenvald Dweller Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A brass needle with a dangling bit of broken thread

2 A dull, rusty sickle with a bone handle

3 A star chart etched onto a crystal plate

4 A wicker doll with bloodstained bead eyes

5 A length of chain that sometimes rattles when left unattended

6 A mummified hand preserved in bog peat

E X P E R I M E N T

You are forever altered in some drastic, physical way, perhaps even made monstrous. A blasphemous fusion of science, alchemy, and magic changed you, possibly to mend some unrecoverable malady, or to test the limits of your biology. The process was a success, at least to a point, but the change left its mark on you. The indelible warping of your form can be a source of fear for those who do not understand what they see.

Feat: Altered (see page 113)

Skill Proficiencies: Intimidation, Medicine

Tool Proficiency: Alchemist's supplies

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Alchemist's supplies, manacles, perfume (to cover chemical smell), traveler's clothes (with hooded cloak), 5 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING AN EXPERIMENT

An experiment can come from any class or walk of life.

Were you kidnapped and altered against your will, or did you volunteer for a heinous procedure? Was the experimenting done purely for discovery, to overcome a worse fate, or for someone to play at being a god?

Whatever the reason, the process is never pleasant, and it always leaves scars—both those you can see and those that have marked your very soul.

Suggested Story Threads. The Experiment Story

Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Experiment Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 A particular song stirs feelings of sadness and overwhelming anger in you, reminding you of the process that changed you.

2 A portion of your altered body is very clearly grafted from a different person, and they might want it back.

3 Another person was changed alongside you. They fled before you left, urging you to do the same.

4 You have recurring nightmares of the procedure you endured, sometimes seeing glimpses of faces in the dream that you don't recognize.

5 Your physical difference invites curiosity and attention, which for some reason is more disturbing than disdain or fear.

6 A peculiar symbol is branded on or near your alteration.

Experiment Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Experiment Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Experiment Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A syringe with a faintly glowing purple residue

2 A wrench that is the only one that fits a bit of simple machinery built into your body

3 A sheaf of chemical-stained parchments covered in incomprehensible notes and schematics

4 A spool of silver thread that matches stitches in your altered body part

5 A metal hip flask with strange runes scratched into one side

6 A smooth stone that comforts and soothes you when you hold it tightly

G H O S T L I G H T P A S S E N G E R

Once, even before your most recent travel to Druskensvald, you rode the deathly train known as the Ghostlight Express. Your memories of that journey might be hazy and dreamlike, or they could be sharp and jarring in their clarity. You learned some of the workings of the ghostly engine and formed a connection with the conductor and fellow travelers that has stayed with you. At times, you are even more comfortable with the dead than the living.

Feat: Ghostlight Medium (see page 114)

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Tool Proficiency: Smith's tools

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Smith's tools, bullseye lantern, fine clothes, oil (3 flasks), 5 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A GHOSTLIGHT PASSENGER

Every person in Druskensvald travels the Ghostlight Express at least once, but very few form the deep and lasting connection that you have. Your first trip on the train might have been a near death experience from which you were saved, or perhaps you did die in earnest but were resurrected later.

Characters attuned to spirits or the lands of the dead, such as clerics, paladins, or those who had brushes with death, are the most common to exhibit this deep connection.

Suggested Story Threads. The Ghostlight Passenger Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Ghostlight Passenger Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 Sometimes when you dream, you find yourself back on the Ghostlight Express in more than just a dream image.

2 Your first journey to the lands of the dead was confusing, but you realized you now may be able to find the departed spirit of a loved one once thought lost forever.

3 A specific spirit returns to speak to and through you repeatedly.

4 People sometimes speak to you as if they know you but later have no recollection of the conversation.

During those moments of recognition, they know details from your visits on the Ghostlight Express.

5 You sometimes see people in your travels who you recognize from your time on the Ghostlight Express.

6 Someone greeted you with knowledge of your first journey on the Ghostlight Express, but you don't

remember them.

Ghostlight Passenger Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Ghostlight Passenger Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Ghostlight Passenger Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A slate board smeared with erased chalk, where you sometimes find words scratched

2 A lump of coal that never burns away and gives off wispy smoke

3 A torn ticket stub that is slightly translucent

4 A dented train conductor's whistle that only the dead can hear

N I G H T S T A L K E R
Once you were prey, stalked by a monster through the dark of night. Now, you are the hunter, and the things which you once feared will learn the true meaning of dread. You have become far deadlier, hungrier, and crueler than the monster that once hunted you. You are, yourself, the monster now—a fearsome creature once thought to slake its hunger on you or those close to you. You survived, and your would-be killer will have its own destruction in turn.

Feat: Hunter of Hunters (see page 114)

Skill Proficiencies: Stealth, and one other of your choice from the following list: Arcana, History, Religion, Nature

Tool Proficiency: Leatherworker's tools

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Leatherworker's tools, book (one creature type), hooded lantern, hunting trap, oil (3 flasks), traveler's clothes, 8 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A NIGHT STALKER

Consider how you joined the hunt against the creatures of the night. Did you lose someone close to you or

survive an attack? Perhaps you were raised in a family line of dedicated hunters. Rangers, rogues, and barbarians make fearsome night stalkers, as does any character with a passion to oppose these deadly creatures.

Suggested Story Threads. The Night Stalker Story

Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Night Stalker Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 You're hunting the creature that slew your loved ones.

2 You started your hunt with zeal but quickly find that you're losing your stomach for it.

3 As you learn more about the creatures of the night, you discover that some of your initial thoughts about them were wrong.

4 You failed to stand up to a creature and saved yourself instead of someone else. Now you try to make up for that shame.

5 The monsters you hunt terrify you to your soul, and you lash out to deny your fear.

6 Your fervent hunt is a cover for your desire to become something more than mortal.

Night Stalker Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Night Stalker Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Night Stalker Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A necklace of yellowed fangs

2 A series of letters showing a person's personality sharply eroding into incoherence and raving

3 A knife made from a massive creature's claw

4 A casting of a monstrous footprint

5 A hide or pelt from a vicious beast

6 A glass eye that normal animals shy away from

REFLECTED WANDERER

You were once whole, but part of you has been separated from your being and now also wanders the world. This aspect of you took your reflection and shadow with it, and it travels about as a mirage that looks identical to you. You know this other self is out there—you can feel it—but what it wants and why is lost on you. Sometimes you encounter a stranger that knows you—for good or ill—though you’ve never met them before, and you can’t help but wonder if they met the other you.

Feat: Unreflected (see page 115)

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Investigation

Tool Proficiency: Disguise kit

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Disguise kit, mirror, traveler’s clothes, 16 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A REFLECTED WANDERER

Any character can be a reflected wanderer. How was it that your being came to be divided? How much do you understand about your situation? Are you truly who you think you are, or are you, in reality, the very castoff reflection of your other self?

Suggested Story Threads. The Reflected Wanderer Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Reflected Wanderer Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 A close, long-term relationship went suddenly sour as if you wronged the other person.

2 Your other self leaves you messages and signs

as it travels, sometimes seeming fond and other times resentful.

3 Animals are unsettled by you, becoming skittish and restless in your presence.

4 You're wanted for several minor crimes you never committed, though eyewitnesses named you. Over time, more crimes of increasing severity occur.

5 Someone you've been at odds with begins treating you with more respect and kindness.

6 Mirrors sometimes crack when you touch them.

Reflected Wanderer Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Reflected Wanderer Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Reflected Wanderer Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A shattered hand mirror

2 An invitation to a powerful person's home whom you've never met

3 A locket with your silhouette painted in it on both sides, facing each other

4 A short, derisive letter from yourself that you don't remember writing

5 A brooch delivered to you that you didn't purchase

6 A piece of chalk that writes in a different color than it appears to be

R E S T W A R D E N

In a place closer to the lands of the dead than the living, those who tend the eternal rest and disposition of the deceased are held in a mixture of high esteem and apprehension. You have plied the trade of the gravedigger, the mortician, and the embalmer. There are times when you have been the only one to say a kind

word in honor of those who passed. The depredations of the Undead are well-known to you, and you don't suffer their meddling in the rest of your charges.

Feat: Grave Keeper (see page 114)

Skill Proficiencies: Religion, Survival

Tool Proficiency: Mason's tools

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Mason's tools, hooded lantern, oil (3 flasks), shovel, soap, traveler's clothes (with thick gloves and dark-colored hood), 10 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A REST WARDEN

Rest wardens tend to be either a dour and somber lot or—in contrast to their trade—are filled with the vibrance and joy of life. Those who understand the thin thread between life and death or who possess the strength to dig graves beneath moonlit skies and tend the bone orchards where the dead sleep are called to serve as rest wardens.

Suggested Story Threads. The Rest Warden Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Rest Warden Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 A strange figure commissioned you to carve a headstone for someone who is very much in the prime of life.

2 In a time of desperation, you once accepted a sizeable bribe to look the other way when someone robbed a grave.

3 You spent time learning from Yorgrim, gravedigger and caretaker of the Maidenmist Cemetery.

4 Someone violated graves under your watch and stole away with the corpses.

5 You comforted a child at their parent's funeral and have taken a protective shine to them.

6 A loved one once rose from the grave as an Undead creature. You vowed to bring them to their final rest.

Rest Warden Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Rest Warden Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Rest Warden Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A prayer slip and seal covered in verses to protect the departed

2 A charcoal rubbing of a gravestone epitaph

3 A coffin nail that always ends up bent, no matter how many times you straighten it

4 A dried flower cleaned from one of the first graves you tended

5 A length of rusty iron chain and padlock

6 A sealed bottle containing a final breath

R E V E L E R

For a time, you traveled with the Lord of Fools' strange and unsettling revelry. Whether you are still welcome in that company, or you've struck off on your own, your time with the troupe revealed some of its nature to you—that the Lord of Fools serves some great entity who prizes humor and merriment, often at the expense of the mighty. But he is no mere jester. Beneath the mask of mockery and merriment is a mad creature who demands sacrifice.

Feat: Reveling Fool (see page 115)

Skill Proficiencies: Performance, Stealth

Language: Choose one (Abyssal recommended)

Tool Proficiency: Choose one kind of musical instrument

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Musical instrument (same as above), ball bearings, costume (jovial character with a laughing mask), hunting trap, manacles, 3 torches (for juggling), traveler's clothes, 10 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A REVELER

The simultaneous beauty and uncomfortable truth of the revelers is that they can be anyone. Hidden by their masks and costumes, one's friends, family, servants, or lords could be capering about the ribbon-twined pole and leading impressionable folk away when the revel withdraws. How might a reveler behave differently in each guise?

Suggested Story Threads. The Reveler Story

Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Reveler Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 Posters depicting drawings of your reveler guise have started showing up in towns after the fool's revel leaves.

2 Once you learned the truth of the revels—that some of the people who vanish ostensibly to join the revel are sacrificed—you seized the first chance to slip away.

3 Recently, more people than usual have gone missing from towns in the revel's wake.

4 Crows, owls, and other birds seem to cackle and laugh in your presence.

5 You have grown suspicious that another reveler has a sinister motive concealed by their

jester's guise.

6 You left the revel when you caught a glimpse of the wickedness lurking beneath the Lord of Fool's jovial veneer.

Reveler Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Reveler Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Reveler Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A small wind-up bell that you can conceal in the palm of your hand with a button to activate it

2 A dented metal spray bottle

3 A string of colorful handkerchiefs tied together

4 A tarnished silver bell that sometimes refuses to jingle

5 A pair of boots or slippers that squeak comically with each step

6 A short scepter or baton with a horn on the cap

SCHOLAR OF THE FORBIDDEN

Delving into the brittle pages of ancient tomes and weathered tablets carved with blasphemy, you have unearthed secrets of eldritch beings of unfathomable might. Most of their meaning slips like whispers out of your grasp, but you have seized both forbidden knowledge and cursed power from them. The deeper you plunge into depravity, the more certainty you feel that you are not there alone.

Feat: Dread Speech (see page 114)

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Intimidation

Language: Choose one (Deep Speech recommended)

Tool Proficiency: Calligrapher's supplies

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Calligrapher's supplies, book (a topic of arcana), ink, ink pen, lamp, oil (3

flasks), paper (10 sheets), 2 gp; or (B) 50 gp

BUILDING A SCHOLAR OF

THE FORBIDDEN

Wizards and warlocks make the most common scholars of the forbidden, but any character who stumbles onto the dread truths waiting beneath the surface of reality can find themselves walking the path. The secrets you unveil could threaten to destabilize any number of powerful beliefs and organizations, which makes you dangerous to them.

Suggested Story Threads. The Scholar of the Forbidden Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Scholar of the Forbidden Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 A wealthy patron paid you handsomely to research what led to your discoveries, and they want what you found.

2 When you spoke aloud the first secret word you deciphered, you passed out and woke hours later to find your lips cracked and blackened.

3 Something has been following you since you uncovered the illicit secrets. You sense it always behind you, drawing closer.

4 Your shadow converses with you when you're alone, acting as a debate partner and sounding board in your studies.

5 The reflections of your eyes are black voids, but no one else seems to notice.

6 An order of inquisitors or witch hunters hound you wherever you travel, seeking to silence you and your discoveries forever.

Scholar of the Forbidden Trinkets. When you

make your character, you can roll once on the Scholar of the Forbidden Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Scholar of the Forbidden Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

1 A broken fragment of a stone table carved with symbols that seem to slither and writhe

2 A desiccated bit of tentacle

3 A small soapstone idol that always seems to end up in your pocket, bag, or otherwise on your person

4 A book bound in Humanoid skin with blank pages that absorb ink or other pigments

5 An alien eyeball floating in a jar of preservative fluid

6 An antique amulet with indecipherable symbols, that whispers at the edge of consciousness when worn

WICKERWEAVER

You know the ancient rites kept alive by secretive druids and hedge practitioners in the shadowed groves of the primordial forests. Remedies and hexes woven into wicker charms can stave off misfortune and ward away evil. They could just as likely invite gloom and the ire of the old spirits.

Feat: Charm Twister (see page 113)

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Nature

Language: Sylvan

Tool Proficiency: Weaver's tools

Equipment: Choose A or B: (A) Quarterstaff, weaver's tools, basket (with dry reeds ready to weave), book (druidic lore), iron pot, traveler's clothes, 19 gp; or (B)

50 gp

BUILDING A WICKER WEAVER

Compassionate characters driven by a deep connection to the land and a passion to protect it become wicker weavers. Druids of other circles might trade knowledge with the Circle of Wicker. Healers and guardians alike may seek out the Old Ways for remedies and protective charms to ward off evil. Not all who come to the wicker craft do so with noble intent—some, broken by spite and twisted by their pain, wield the power of the wicker into malicious revenge, lashing out with curses bound in twig and bone and inflicting the wrath of the forest upon those who wronged them.

Suggested Story Threads. The Wicker Weaver Story Threads table suggests events and people who can be the start of story threads for your character that weave through the campaign.

Wicker Weaver Story Threads

1d6 Thread

1 One of the charms you created ensured a baby was born healthy, and their family sends you small but heartfelt gifts.

2 Your mentor who taught you the craft has become increasingly withdrawn and uncharacteristically agitated.

3 An order of druids, the Circle of Wicker, taught you their ways. You aren't certain why.

4 Someone offered you a shocking sum of coin to twist a wicker charm for them. You're tempted but unsettled by the unwarranted generosity.

5 You traded a wicker charm for a child's toy that bound misfortune to its owner. You must keep it until you can sell it, it's stolen, or you lose it.

6 You wove a hex into a wicker charm to punish a criminal, and they nurse that grudge still.

Wicker Weaver Trinkets. When you make your character, you can roll once on the Wicker Weaver Trinkets table instead of on the normal starting Trinkets table.

Wicker Weaver Trinkets

1d6 Trinket

- 1 A crescent woven from wicker and laced with silver wire
- 2 A glass bauble that was the first payment you received for your hedge wisdom
- 3 A Tiny figure made of acorn caps from the oldest oak in the woods
- 4 A rough-forged knife with an etched blade
- 5 A snake skull in a wicker cage
- 6 A battered stuffed animal missing one eye
- 5 A pocket watch that runs backwards
- 6 A battered train conductor's hat

Cultist

It is common knowledge that the wildlands of Rodozem are full of all manner of perils. Less well known, however, are the menaces that dwell under the denizens' noses. From sprawling, bustling cities to small villages, every settlement could bear the seed of corruption beneath even the most immaculate of veneers. Spread across the wide lands of Rodozem, secret societies and religious cults follow their own unique doctrines, worshiping evil entities, following vile dogma, and practicing forbidden rituals. For example, many such cults are dedicated to spreading Chernobog's corrupting gospel. Their members irrationally follow the destructive agenda of the Lord of Darkness, even though eventually it will spell their own inevitable ruin. People also flock to charismatic leaders who dare to oppose the gods,

criticizing their vision and principles, revealing them as immortal beings with cosmic powers ruled by fickle tempers akin to mortal adolescents. There are also factions who have forsaken the Starborn in favor of mysterious ancient vestiges, beings described as primordial powers that existed long before the gods were born.

Other obscure entities are godly beings whose names lay almost forsaken under the patina of countless summers, yet their spirits still haunt the world.

Whatever the type of cult, your character was raised in a secretive environment where their parents, family, and peers practiced unconventional, taboo, and, in most cases, illegal religious activities. Many such groups are religious in nature and are dedicated worshippers of evil gods or entities, which is widely forbidden across Rodozem. They are forced to establish their underground churches in hidden locations and have secret meetings while appearing as a regular member of society to the public eye. Alternatively, the cult could be a secluded commune isolated from society completely, or only interacting for essentials to survive.

Importantly, cults don't always have malevolent agendas.

Your character's cult could be a more esoteric sect of a conventional religion that follows unconventional doctrines or practices obscure and hermetic rituals.

But no matter the cult's purpose, your character grew up in a small, secluded community on the fringes of society or in a secretive league living a double life.

Rank and Role

Your character's role and place in this secluded community defines them. They might have been brainwashed by their family or the cult leader, believing that the rest of the world is living in a lie and only their tightly knit sect sees the truth. Alternatively, they may not have fallen

victim to the gaslighting, keeping their more rational and realistic worldview—such a character might have

Appendix E

Character Backgrounds

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escaped the clutches of their cult, constantly hunted by the other members. Your character could be haunted by the horrors they have seen or done and is now looking for redemption, absolution, or simply survival. They could still be an active cult agent with a secret agenda, as well. If so, work with your GM to weave a backstory that prevents your character's possibly evil alignment from interfering with and sabotaging the gameplay of the party. A character still active in a cult could be an important, high-ranking member—or even the leader—of a small local sect.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose two among Arcana, Deception, Insight, Persuasion, or Religion.

Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan's tools

Languages: Choose one among Abyssal, Celestial, Deep Speech, Draconic, Infernal, Primordial, or Sylvan.

Equipment: Three scented ritual candles, a tinderbox, a symbol representing the entity of your cult, a hooded lantern, a flask of oil, a set of traveler's clothes, and a ritual robe

Feature:

Mark of the Fanatic

As a past or current member of a secret cult, you are well versed in the covert nature of such organizations. You can immediately spot the secret messages and signs hidden in plain sight left by other cultists. You may not always understand their meaning, but a local cult's activity is always apparent to you. In addition, you can recognize people who belong to a cult that worships the

same entity as yours by a specific and unique trait, mark, or mannerism. You possess intimate knowledge of the cult's practices, rites, and goals.

Suggested

Characteristics

Whether your character is an active member of a secret society or a runaway from a fanatical cult, they had a unique upbringing. Their devotion to or defiance against their secretive community is a driving force in their life and played an important role in shaping their personality.

Personality Trait

The friction between my public and private lives sometimes makes social interactions confusing for me, so I prefer to avoid them when I can.

I am used to a life of obedience. I don't look people in the eyes when I speak to them.

I rarely talk about my past, my family, or my upbringing.

I am very keen on spreading the teachings of my sect. I try to always promote it, especially to people who follow the traditional doctrines of the same deity.

I've lived in relatively simple conditions, so even the most basic commodities seem luxurious or unnecessary to me.

I have a relevant tale or parable about almost any situation...or at least I think I do. I gladly offer an inspiring and insightful story, even if no one asked for it.

I always think I'm being followed. I find it hard to trust people out of fear that they might be agents or hirlings of the cult I barely escaped from.

I practice little rituals and superstitious rites in

my day-to-day life. I try to perform them in private to avoid awkward social situations.

D8

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Ideal

Conviction. I am the mouth and arms of my patron entity (or leader) in this world, and I must continue their work in any way possible. (Lawful)

Defiance. I will not stand by the lies and deceit of any cult leaders and I'll do anything to drag people off that path. (Chaotic)

Determination. My faith in my cult and its purpose is so strong that I'll defy any societal laws that obstruct my actions. (Chaotic or Lawful)

Apocalypse. The patron entity or the leader of our sect proclaims that the end of the world is nigh.

I wholeheartedly believe them and think that the world deserves it. I would do anything to witness and be a part of the end-times. (Evil)

Truth. I have doubts about the beliefs of my religious community. I am willing to sacrifice a lot to uncover hidden knowledge about the mysterious entity that we worship. (Neutral)

Destiny. There is no force powerful enough to direct me on a different course than the destiny bestowed to me by the entity we follow or by our leader. (Any)

Bond

I would go a long way to protect the secret of my cult's existence.

I'm willing to wait as long as it takes to receive the enlightenment that will define my destined path.

I owe my life to one of the members of my former cult who helped me escape its fanatical clutches.

I admire our cult leader and constantly refer to their actions as an example. I'll do anything to earn their praise.

My meaning in life is to maintain and boost my cult's reach.

I perform a common vocation or craft—such as dancing, painting, or athletics—as part of my double life. This activity means a lot to me—it is the only thing that keeps me connected to a more simple and normal lifestyle.

D6

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There is only one true way, and it is revealed in the doctrines of my sect. I dismiss other religious beliefs and philosophies as hoaxes or misguided at best.

I am obsessed with the main goal of my cult.

All other aspects of my life can be sacrificed to manifest it.

5

6

Flaw

I am dangerously gullible. It is easy to convince me to believe almost any story or teaching, even the most ridiculous ones. Especially the most ridiculous ones.

I am extremely cautious and suspicious of people who don't belong to my sect. I'm quick to assume the worst of them.

I always hide behind a mask and present myself as someone that I'm not. I'm afraid to expose my true identity and self to the world.

Blind believers are beyond redemption. I offer them nothing but swift justice and no mercy if they have done gruesome deeds for their leader or patron entity.

Bogatyr

Apprentice

"Bogatyr" is as much a title as it is a calling. Bogatyrs are the unsung heroes in the world, guardians devoted to protecting the natural from the dark and evil supernatural. It takes years of training, devotion, research, and practice for one to earn the honor of the title. These guardians don't belong to any kingdom or creed, but are an independent order with their own laws, traditions, and goals. Those who wish to become a bogatyr must first be accepted by a distinguished member. The most outstanding of those hopefuls are assigned a mentor that best suits their skillset. An apprentice begins their training with hours of dry reading, combing through heavy tomes on simple and dangerous monsters alike, as well as ancient techniques and secrets for fighting the endless forces of evil. Once the apprentice passes their first test of knowledge, martial combat training begins, by which time most apprentices break under the pressure—which is what the training is designed

to do. Those who persevere and complete their preparations earn themselves the title of Bogatyr Apprentice. Commonly, the apprentice's first few missions are supervised by their mentor. Once the mentor deems the student ready, the apprentice is sent on a solo mission where their skills and knowledge are put to the final test—the real and unforgiving world. To become an apprentice of such esteemed, renowned masters of monster slaying, one must see past one's own self and understand the bigger picture of how monsters form and survive within the Great Cycle. Then, and only then—with time, devotion, and experience—can one even be considered to become a full-fledged bogatyr.

When choosing this background, speak to your GM to determine where your base of operations is. Have you arrived from a small, local faction of bogatyrs, or a larger settlement with a more concentrated force? Is this your first solo mission? What missions have you done with your mentor, if any? What type of creatures (such as werewolves, fiends, vampires, or other supernatural creatures) have you encountered before, and which do you specialize in fighting?

Skill Proficiencies: Choose two among Acrobatics, Arcana, Athletics, Perception, or Survival.

Languages: Two of your choice

Equipment: A Bogatyr Apprentice badge, a book of monster lore (GM determines the contents), a hunting trap, a set of manacles, a flask of holy water, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp

Feature:

Prepared Hunter

When you need to recall a piece of information about a specific type of monster (or any other type of creature, at the GM's discretion), if you don't already

know the information, you know where to look for it or who to speak with to obtain it. Depending on the type of knowledge and information you seek, the GM may rule that the piece of knowledge is obscure, hidden, or even destroyed.

Suggested

Characteristics

Bogatyr Apprentices are defined by their devotion to eradicating the forces of evil. An apprentice values the knowledge stored and guarded throughout the ages about the monsters lurking in the dark corners of the world, as it is invaluable for any good monster slayer.

Personality Trait

I am ready to face any challenge to become a bogatyr of legends.

I believe the forces of evil are a broad category, and people can fall into it as easily as monsters do.

I find interactions with monsters easier to resolve than social ones.

I have read every book about monsters and the forces of evil that I can get my hands on, and I freely offer my knowledge about such matters.

I allow nothing and no one to stand between me and my target.

D8

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Ideal

Greater Good. No matter the cost, somebody always needs to fight the forces of evil. (Good)

Hunter. There is no time for emotions in the

monster-slaying business. (Neutral)

Glory. I wish to one day be the greatest bogatyr that ever lived. (Chaotic)

Knowledge. The way to obtain power and selfdiscipline is through knowledge. (Neutral)

Aspiration. One day I will be someone's mentor. (Any)

Determination. Sometimes, to hunt better, you become what you hunt. (Evil)

D6

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Bond

I owe my life to my mentor, who taught me how to fend for myself.

Ever since I was ordained as a bogatyr apprentice, I find it is my duty to fight the forces of evil.

I respect and trust my mentor. Their teachings show me how to survive and protect others from evil.

I have spent my entire life searching for the answer to an important question: what makes something evil?

A friend was murdered in front of me, so I've dedicated my life to punishing those who prey on the weak.

I'm fully committed to my role as a bogatyr apprentice. Anything that goes against the order must be eradicated.

Flaw

Obtaining hidden or secret knowledge is worth

the trouble I might get into.

Most run away in the face of evil. I run toward it.

I speak without thinking about how my words will affect others.

I have dark and bloodthirsty thoughts that I bottle deep inside.

I always assume the worst of people.

I trust in my cause more than I trust people.

Hajduk

Hajduk kinships are tight, family-like independent groups who live off the wild and protect those who can't defend themselves. Instead of living under a particular banner or faction, they have found ways to live in harmony with the denizens of the forests and understand the unspoken rules of the wild. While anyone can become a hajduk, they survive as one large, insular family (called a kinship), so it's difficult to earn their trust, let alone become one of their number.

The hajduk cause is usually a noble one, but at times it requires sacrifice and bloodshed when fighting against oppression and tyranny. They take from those who greedily acquire too much and give to those who've been unjustly left too little. The hajduk kinships live in harmony with nature and respect its cycle, preferring to escape the artificial chains that are the laws of urban society. They leave their verdant camps to fight for justice in civilized places where corruption and oppression grip the hearts of mortals, striving to bring the ancient natural balance back to places where civility has festered into tyranny. Most folk see them as heroes willing to fight establishments for the people—not for themselves, but for the good of all.

Hajduks usually operate in small guerrilla groups,

ambushing supply convoys, freeing wrongfully imprisoned captives, and even planning and executing major coups against tyrannical leaders. What makes them so dangerous is their ability to infiltrate political and social organizations with cunning and ease. They don't wage wars or go into military battles, instead relying on stealth, careful planning, and strategic positioning.

Specialty

As a hajduk, you spent your time learning how to survive in the wild. In addition, you've been taught how to operate stealthily, employing strategy and tactics in a fight rather than brute strength. Instead of charging in, you bide your time, waiting for the perfect moment to strike, then disappear without a trace. You know how to infiltrate organizations, act as an informant for your kinship, and relay important details to the leader of your guerrilla group.

As someone who has made the wild your home, you're familiar with magical creatures and beasts. Your experience in the wilds lets you act as something more than a freedom fighter—you are the bridge between cities and the magical wilderness, and you can enlighten others about the unspoken guidelines of the forest and the creatures that abide by them.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose two among Animal Handling, Deception, Nature, Perception, Stealth, or Survival.

Tool Proficiencies: Choose one from cartographer's tools, disguise kit, forgery kit, or woodcarver's tools.

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: A grappling hook, chain (10 feet), hempen rope (50 feet), a signal whistle, a two-person tent, a sling, a net, a set of travelers clothes, and a pouch containing

Feature:

Call of the Hajduk

As a hajduk, you know a special verbal signal that you've learned to use in times of need. Creatures friendly toward you or your cause recognize the sound and can heed the call. To use the signal, you must spend 1 hour traversing the wilderness while making the sign—which can be a word, an imitation of an animal, or another sound that best suits your hajduk style. A friendly creature that recognizes the sound and chooses to help does so to the best of its abilities by guiding you, providing useful information, or sheltering you from danger. The GM determines whether a creature answers your call, if it's willing to help you, or if it can help in the capacity you require. Examples of creatures that could answer the signal include wood elves, awakened beasts or plants, another hajduk, or a fey creature.

Suggested

Characteristics

Hajduks are led by their devotion to fight injustice. They respect the natural cycle and denizens of the wild, utilizing their knowledge of nature to continue their secret fight against usurpers and tyrants.

Personality Trait

I protect those who can't do so themselves as if they're my own siblings, and I don't expect anything in return.

I believe nature is the wisest teacher if you listen and observe its teachings.

I always like to have a trick up my sleeve.

I live by my deeds, and I use my actions to inspire those around me.

Fighting for what is right sometimes comes at a great cost—a cost I'm prepared to pay.

I've lost too many friends in the fight against corruption, so I cherish and keep the few I have close to me.

When an opportunity presents itself, I don't pounce on it. I wait for the most advantageous moment for maximum effect.

I trust no authority except that of the forest and that of my kinship.

D8

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Bond

I will always remember the faces of the people I first helped as a hajduk. Everything I steal goes toward something bigger than myself.

What I am today I owe to my kinship.

I was taken away from my family when I was young, so I became a hajduk to give those like myself the opportunity to have a family.

I will do anything to protect the hajduk kinship and my friends.

I fell in love with a member of an organization that my hajduk kinship is trying to sabotage.

My hajduk kinship was brutally murdered and I was left to watch them die. Vengeance will be mine.

D6

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Flaw

I am slow to trust and quick to assume everyone is out to con me.

There is no such thing as a fair fight. I either kill or get killed.

I can't help but take things I like, even if they don't belong to me.

Sometimes I let my friendship sabotage my work.

I allow emotions to cloud my judgment.

I am jealous of those who surpass me in my work.

D6

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Ideal

Mercy. Everybody has redeemable qualities.

Even the tyrants I stand against deserve a second chance. (Good)

Anarchy. Order is an illusion created by those with power to control those without. (Chaotic)

Altruism. The happiness on the face of the people I help is the greatest payment I can ever receive. (Good)

Devotion. Lives given for a greater cause are not lost, but required. (Lawful)

Freedom. I will not allow tyrants to subdue the

people. (Chaotic)

6 Balance. I take it upon myself to relieve people of their spare change—only when they have too much—and spread it amongst the poor. (Any)

BANDIT DEFECTOR

You were once a member of the Bandit Coalition, moving from place to place, ambushing and robbing passing merchants. Something made you decide that path was no longer worth pursuing, and you left that life behind. But quitting the Bandit Coalition isn't so easy.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: Disguise Kit, one type of Gaming Set or Musical Instrument

Equipment: a knife, a cooking pot, a winter blanket, an object you received as your cut from a successful robbery, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp

Bandit Specialty

The Bandit Coalition is a rather loose organization of rogues and brigands, but there is still a degree of specialization within the ranks. This ensures that everyone knows what their job is and lessens confusion in the heat of a robbery. You can select your bandit specialty from the Bandit Specialty table, or roll randomly.

d6 Bandit Specialty

1 Lookout

2 Lifter

3 Thug

4 Runner

5 Hustler

6 Captain

Lookouts typically watch the roads for any signs of Perch Guard patrols, signalling the team to bail if a heist looks too risky. They also keep an eye out for potential marks.

Lifters are the specialist thieves of an operation. They are usually as adept at pick-pocketing as they are at sneaking up behind a cart to liberate its valuables.

Thugs are the muscle of a bandit group, and use their size and strength to intimidate merchants into giving up without a fight. They also keep other bandits in line, at the captain's discretion.

Runners are the messengers and scouts of the Coalition, serving to smuggle pilfered goods to fences. Additionally, they pass information throughout the different camps of the organization. Their job often finds them working alone which makes them particularly vulnerable.

Hustlers are inveterate con-artists. Through careful planning and execution, their diversions can keep cart drivers occupied just long enough for the lifters to do their work, or create a seamless opening for an ambush.

Captains are the glue that holds each bandit team together, providing leadership, and stamping out dissent where necessary, often with force. They are figures that inspire with their skill and bravado.

Feature: Bandit Routes

As someone who once assisted in countless highway robberies, you are familiar with the roads of the Wood and escape paths used by bandits. When you are not in combat, you (and companions you lead) can travel between locations that cut through forested areas twice as fast as your speed would normally allow.

Suggested Characteristics

Those who have chosen to leave the Coalition behind have not made the choice lightly. Some wrestle with their doubts, still caring deeply about the friends they left behind, while others have forsaken their former lives entirely.

d8 Personality Trait

1 I am plucky and confident in my abilities,

at least, that's what I want others to think.

2 I often crack jokes to lighten the mood.

3 I like to keep my secrets, and those who try to pry into my life irritate me.

4 I have trouble sleeping unless I'm on the ground (or floor) in my bedroll.

5 I picked up many stories during my time on the road, and I have one for every occasion.

6 You mess with my friends, you mess with me.

7 I never really had a plan in life, I tend to just go with the flow.

8 I'm as cautious as they come.

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d6 Ideal

1 Repentance. I've done terrible things in the past, and I want to try and make up for them. (Good)

2

Nature. I've seen what's happening to the forest, and it's bigger than all of us. We're all doomed unless we do something about it. (Neutral)

3

Friendship. My friends are like family to me, and I'll keep trying to do right by them until the end. (Good)

4

Self-Preservation. Any good rat knows when it's time to flee a sinking ship. I want to be clear of the Bandit Coalition when it goes down. (Evil)

5

Compassion. The struggle between humblefolk and birdfolk will only lead to more bloodshed. It needs to stop somewhere. (Good)

6 Freedom. I just want to be free to live my own life, and make my own way in the world. (Chaotic)

d6 Bond

1

I did some hard time in Alderheart's prison, and the perch guard who arrested me still has it out for me.

2 I stole something valuable from the Captain of my unit. I'm in big trouble if they ever find me.

3 I harbor a terrible secret that might change how people think of me if it got out.

4 I still sympathize with the Coalition's aims, I just believe there's a better way.

5 My friends in the Coalition didn't understand why I had to leave. They've branded me a traitor.

6

I had people in the Coalition who looked up to me as a leader. They might still follow me, if I could only reach them.

d6 Flaw

1 I'm always ready to bail when something goes wrong.

2 Whenever I see something valuable, I can't help but think of a way to steal it.

3 It's hard for me to trust people. I've been burned before.

4 I have a problem with authority. Nobody tells me what to do.

5 There's a warrant out for my arrest.

6 I have a bad habit that I picked up on the road.

GROUNDING

Despite the inherent vertical aspects of birdfolk culture, you have always felt safer and more at peace with your feet firmly planted on the soil. You are practical and level-headed, but due to your different perspective on the world, other birdfolk

see you as quirky or unsettling. Your unique insight allows you to connect with the humblefolk who live under the forest canopy in ways perch-dwelling birdfolk cannot.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Insight

Tool Proficiencies: one type of Artisan's Tools

Languages: one of your choice

Equipment: a set of Artisan's Tools (one of your choice), a walking stick, a trinket from another culture, traveling clothes, and a belt pouch with 5 gp

An Odd Bird

Among birdfolk you are somewhere between an oddity and an outcast. Some consider your aversion to heights a rejection of birdfolk culture, leading many to find you off-putting.

Choose how your community regards you or roll on the table below to determine how you fit in.

d6 Community Place

1 I am considered weak or unskilled and many treat me like a fledgling.

2 I am looked upon as a traitor to my people.

3 My family wants me to return to the perch, but I just can't.

4 I am not welcome back in my home perch.

5 I am viewed as an oddity, someone for others to laugh at and tease.

6 I have found a new community on the forest floor.

Feature: Find Another Path

Since you have lived your life close to the ground, you are familiar with the undergrowth in the same way other birdfolk are familiar with the canopy. You can always recall the general layout of the terrain around you while traveling along the forest floor. If your path is ever blocked by an obstacle that requires you to climb or otherwise gain height to circumvent it, you can always find a way around, so long as such a path exists. Additionally, you are adept at finding shelter in the

Wood while traveling, and can usually locate a suitable safe shelter (a cave, a tree hollow, or bramble thicket) somewhere on the forest floor for you and up to five other creatures.

Suggested Characteristics

Birdfolk who are grounded often find ways to cope with their aversion to canopy life. Some have completely forsaken their old lives in favor of new ones in undergrowth communities, while others keep ties with family and friends in the perches where they were born.

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d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I always second guess my choices.
- 2 I have learned to not let the comments of others affect me.
- 3 I'm eager to show the benefits of my unique perspective.
- 4 I'm slow to trust someone new, but open up over shared hardships.
- 5 I manufacture difficult situations to prove my abilities.
- 6 I get embarrassed easily, even when someone tries to compliment me.
- 7 I will deny my fears to everyone.
- 8 I want to see how others handle situations I'm afraid of.

d6 Ideal

- 1 Adversity. Others think of me as weak, but I will prove my worth with hard work and determination. (Lawful)
- 2 Encouragement. I try to seek out and support others like me who are seen as outcasts. (Good)
- 3 Exploration. I yearn to experience unique cultures and discover new places. (Chaotic)

4 Safety. In this dangerous world, it's best to keep your head down and stay cautious. (Neutral)

5

Rebellion. Who cares what others think of me, so long as my actions reflect how I feel in my heart? (Chaotic)

6

Compromise. The best way to respect each other's differences is to find a solution that doesn't exclude anyone. (Good)

d6 Bond

1 My family has been the subject of ridicule ever since I left my home perch.

2 A bully from my childhood now holds a position of power in my home perch.

3 I follow the teachings of a wise outcast I met in my travels.

4 I feel kinship to a culture outside my own.

5 I won't tolerate anyone who insults me or my friends.

6 I have found a new family on the forest floor, and they mean more to me than anything.

d6 Flaw

1 I am incapable of action when I'm at great heights.

2 I lash out at the slightest insult.

3 I keep a distance from others so they won't learn of my fears.

4 I project my insecurities onto others.

5 I am uncouth and mannerless.

6 I find hard to trust other birdfolk.

WIND-TOUCHED

There are legends within the Wood, of birdfolk blessed by the wind who are destined to soar over any and all obstacles.

When a chick is born with special markings or unique

feather patterns, or when they survive a dramatic childhood event, some folks brand them “Wind-Touched”. Though a few dismiss the notion of the Wind-Touched as superstition, others heap reverence upon those believed chosen. According to legend, one who is touched by the wind will never feel at ease anywhere but high in the forest canopy, with the wind in their feathers.

Skill Proficiencies: Acrobatics, Performance

Tool Proficiencies: one type of wind Musical Instrument

Languages: you can speak as well as understand Auran

Equipment: a wind Musical Instrument (one of your choice), an ornate cloak, a symbol of the wind, common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp

Title and Blessing

For some birdfolk, the moniker of Wind-Touched is merely a title, a symbol of their devotion to the wind and the natural world. Others have been told since birth that they were blessed by the wind, much in the way the Amaranthine Reya was in the old tales. Decide what your character believes, or roll on the table below to understand how they feel.

d6 Acceptance

1 I am truly blessed and have power over the wind itself.

2 I am devoted to the wind spirits, in action and title.

3 I believe in nature and goodness.

4 I will work tirelessly to earn the respect of those who give me this title.

5 I accept this honor but have my doubts.

6 I feel nothing for this title, and carry it against my will.

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Feature: Supernatural Presence

Whether or not you are truly Wind-Touched, there are

folk all across Everden that believe that you have been divinely blessed. If you make a show of power or skill that can be attributed to the wind or air, such as feats of acrobatics or commanding unseen forces, those believers will be bolstered by your supernatural presence. They will support you and, depending on how well you have convinced them of your powers, treat you with reverence and possibly even worship.

Suggested Characteristics

The wind-touched are revered by believers and scrutinized by skeptics. For better or worse, they find themselves in a world of expectations they struggle to live up to.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I never back down from a challenge.
- 2 I always end up being the center of attention.
- 3 I am gifted by the wind and destined for greatness.
- 4 I have no time for those who doubt me.
- 5 I seek out challenges to test myself.
- 6 I am better than everyone else.
- 7 I avoid showing my power at all costs.
- 8 I remain humble despite my blessing.

d6 Ideal

- 1 Responsibility. The powers I have been gifted with are meant to serve the common good. (Good)
- 2 Heroism. The wind chose me to be a brave warrior and leader, so shall it be. (Lawful)
- 3 Egotism. My powers situate me above others. The masses should know their place. (Evil)
- 4 Mysticism. Connected to nature, I speak for the wind and divine its will for others. (Neutral)
- 5 Cynicism. What matters isn't whether or not my powers are genuine, but what advantages I can reap because of that belief. (Evil)
- 6 Naturalism. The wind speaks to my soul, and I am

bound to go wherever it directs me. (Chaotic)

d6 Bond

1 I am guided by a wise elder who prepares me for my destiny.

2 I am estranged from my parents who don't believe in my blessing.

3 I seek to discredit the person who burdened me with this moniker.

4 I live in the shadow of my mentor, seeking their approval.

5 I have a sibling who is not blessed, which causes tension

6 I am one with the wind. Personal relationships are fleeting.

d6 Flaw

1 I can't accept another's suggestion once I've set my path.

2 I expect nothing less than reverence from common people.

3 I blindly trust in the power of my blessing.

4 I am overly concerned about how others see me.

5 I will prove my worth, even if it means putting myself and my friends in danger.

6 I am burdened with responsibility, and find it hard to make even the simplest decisions.

Coupled with Power

While this background primarily focuses on the beliefs and perceptions of yourself and your community, pairing this background with a character who actually can manipulate the wind through magic could potentially set them up to become a holy figure, a prophet, or a fabled hero.

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