

# **Jester's 4E Rules Pamphlet**



**For use with the RAVEDLOFT Campaign Setting**

# Introduction

Welcome to *Jester's 4E Rules Pamphlet* for the RAVENLOFT CAMPAIGN SETTING.

## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT IS

**Updated Rules:** This booklet contains optional rules for playing a 4e D&D game in the world of *Ravenloft*.

**Advice:** Included is advice on using and applying the rules, adjudicating when and when not to use them.

**Modular:** Much of this document is designed to be flexible. GMs should use what they want and ignore what they don't.

## WHAT IT IS NOT

**Replacement:** This is in no way a replacement for any of the previous *Ravenloft* products. At least one version of the Campaign Setting is required, and strongly encouraged.

**Mandatory:** If you want to run the game with just the official books or 3e rules feel free.

**Excuse not to buy:** Support the game, WotC, and your FLGS. Keep D&D alive for the next generation. Piracy is wrong and illegal folks!

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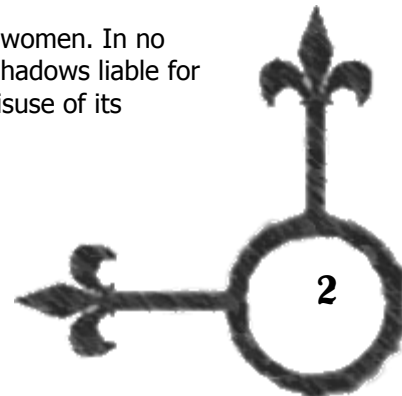
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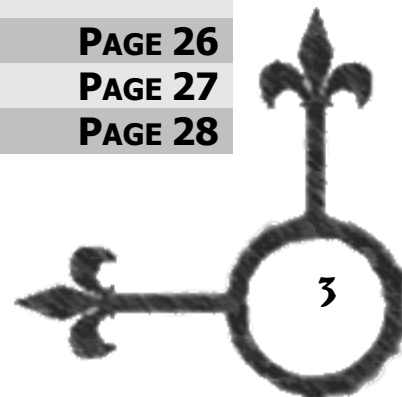
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## Fear and Horror

Fear and Horror checks are made when confronting the unknown and unnatural, typically facing monsters or magic.

Fear and horror effects only occur when a character encounters a monster, spell effect, or scene that is unlike one ever encountered before. Once something has been confronted it is less frightening and horrifying; a character that has faced undead is less disturbed by other walking corpses. However, certain monsters may require a new check: just because a character has fought lowly and mindless zombies and skeletons does not mean they are prepared for an intelligent and powerful vampire.

Unlike other attacks on the PC, fear and horror checks are made using the PC's own attacks against themselves: their own mind attacks itself! Do not apply any implement or proficiency bonuses to the attack roll. All bonuses to the PC's Will defence apply normally.

### Fear and Horror Attack

- ◆ Attack against the self
- ◆ The PC's Intelligence vs. the PC's Will defence

### FEAR

Also known as shock, panic, or terror; characters feel fear when physically threatened or in a combat situation. Typically, a person or thing is frightening.

### WHEN TO MAKE A CHECK

**Unknown Foe:** When the character is unaware of the nature of their enemy, or is mistaken regarding its nature. This check is made when the mistake becomes apparent.

**Unprepared:** If confronted by something that the character does not feel ready, prepared, or equipped to fight. The check is made when the lack of preparation becomes apparent.

**Deadly Enemy:** If a character has fought a foe before and been easily defeated, they still have to make a Fear check when confronting it. This

applies even if they know its true nature and are prepared. The check is made when the foe is identified.

**Surprise Round:** Being surprised is shocking and often calls for a Fear check. The check is made at the beginning of the surprise round. Combat advantage applies to the attack roll for the Fear check.

### WHEN TO NOT MAKE A CHECK

**Same Name:** Monsters of the same name never require additional checks; if a character has faced a cannibal zombie they do not require a fear check from a Strahd zombie.

**Defeated Earlier:** If the character is facing something that is similar to something they have previously defeated, then they do not require a Fear check.

**Prepared:** If a character has planned for the encounter and feels ready and prepared to fight, they do not require a Fear check.

### FEAR IN ENCOUNTERS

**Not an encounter:** Fear is never an encounter and never awards

experience. It is simply a condition akin to environmental effects, such as terrain. It is not a hazard in its own right.

**Out of combat:** Fear should rarely be used outside of combat encounters. Characters can be frightened, but the effects seldom last long enough to have any impact. If used during a skill challenge, characters might instead suffer a -1 penalty to all Skill checks (save ends).

**Frightened Monsters:** In rare situations it might even be appropriate to have opponents be frightened. This might occur if the PCs surprised their foes or had soundly defeated them in the past. Elite or Solo monsters should never be subject to Fear checks.

### Fear

*As man becomes monster your heart pounds against your ribcage and you hands and knees shake.*

**Mental Assault:** Your mind turns on itself when confronted with the terrifying.

### Trigger

The character is confronted with a thing of fear.

### Attack

**Immediate Interrupt** Personal

**Targets:** Every defending creature.

**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Will

**Hit:** Character suffers -1 penalty on attack rolls

(save ends).

**Miss:** Character can act normally.

**Critical Hit:** Character also loses a Sanity point.

### Special

The unknown is more terrifying than what is known.

Before making a Fear check, a character can choose to make a Monster Knowledge check to identify their attacker.

If this roll succeeds the character receives a +2 bonus to their Will defence. If this roll fails they receive a +2 bonus to their attack.

A character can choose not to attempt the check.

## HORROR

Also described as repugnance, revolt or dread; a character usually feels horror outside of combat, when not physically threatened. Typically, a place or event is horrifying.

### WHEN TO MAKE A CHECK

Horror checks are required of a character when they enter an area considered horrifying or when they make a Perception check to notice a detail or fact that inspires dread. Horror checks might also be required after a successful Knowledge check reveals the unnatural.

Horror checks are less clear-cut than Fear checks. There are no hard rules for when a Horror check is absolutely needed. Horror does not

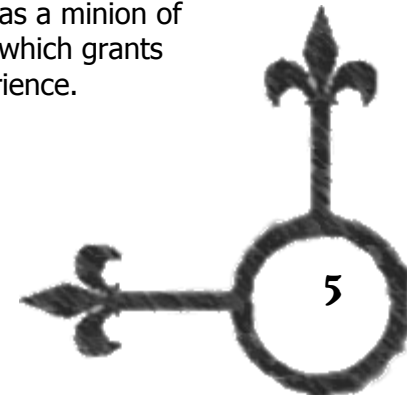
need to be overt or obvious, subtle wrongness can be just as horrifying.

Characters can feel horror when confronted with extreme violence or the supernatural, either witnessing it directly or coming across the results. Characters also feel horror when they encounter something that seems impossible, defies logic, or questions their beliefs and assumptions of the world.

There is something darkly ironic about horrifying situations, where the assumed reality is not so and the true situation is the exact opposite of the expected. Finding a dead body is mildly horrifying, but finding one in a place believed to be a safe haven is truly horrifying and worth of a check.

### HORROR IN ENCOUNTERS

**In-combat:** Horror can be used in combat, possibly with the horrifying event triggering the encounter, but requires several changes: there are no negative effects for a missed attack and characters that suffer a critical hit are not stunned. Treat the Horror check as a minion of appropriate level which grants appropriate experience.



**Trap:** Horror checks can also be considered traps, awarding experience as a trap of appropriate level. Horror check traps make a secondary attack (Intelligence vs. Will) on the target and deal ongoing psychic damage 5 + 2 per tier (save ends).

**Skill challenge:** Horror checks – but not Fear checks – can be made into an encounter by increasing the Countermeasures to a skill challenge of an appropriate difficulty and complexity. This awards experience as a skill challenge. Horror challenges should be rare and occur at crucial moments, such as when time is of the essence or for key dramatic effect.

### Horror

*Watching the events unfold through the glass your mind screams silently as you feel your legs grow weak.*

**Mental Assault:** Your mind turns on itself when confronted with the impossible.

### Trigger

The character is confronted with a scene of horror.

### Attack

**Immediate Interrupt** Personal

**Targets:** Every observing creature.

**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Will

**Hit:** Character is surprised.

**Miss:** Character is dazed (save ends).

**Critical Hit:** Character loses a Sanity point and is stunned (save ends) and surprised.

### Counter Measures

- ◆ As a free action, the victim can make a Moderate Endurance check to grant themselves a saving throw against the surprised condition.
- ◆ An adjacent character can make a Moderate Insight check to grant a saving throw against the surprised or stunned conditions.
- ◆ An adjacent character can make a Hard Bluff or Diplomacy check to grant a saving throw against the surprised or stunned conditions.
- ◆ An adjacent character can make a Hard Heal check to grant a saving throw against the surprised or stunned conditions. Reduce this to a Moderate Heal check if the character has the Psychiatry feat.

## SAMPLE HORROR CHALLENGES

### Dramatic Reversal

Level equal to party

### Skill Challenge

*You play with your drink for a moment, looking at the frothy liquid in the polished mug. You can clearly make out your reflection in the glass, and the rest of your party's. Then it dawns on you: the half-dozen other patrons in the bar don't have a reflection!*

After a successful Perception check you fall into stunned silence. You attempt to recover from the terrifying shock in time to flee or warn your companions.

### Complexity

3 (8 successes, before 3 failures)

### Success

If the PCs overcome the skill challenge they recover from their paralyzing horror in time to make the first move. They have two rounds to position themselves.

### Failure

If the PCs have 3 failures, they cannot recover in time and their opponents have two rounds to position themselves.

### Complete Failure

If the PCs have 3 failures and no successes they dramatically fail. In addition to the standard penalties for failure they also lose 1 Sanity.

### Primary Skills

Bluff, Diplomacy, Heal, Insight

### Bluff (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 3 successes)

With soothing lies or exaggerated statements you try and coax the victim out of their shocked state.

### Diplomacy (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 4 successes)

Through carefully phrased comments you ease the victim out of their catatonia.

### Heal (standard action)

Hard DC (1 success, maximum 4 successes)

With knowledge of healing the body, you attempt to free the victim from their own mind.

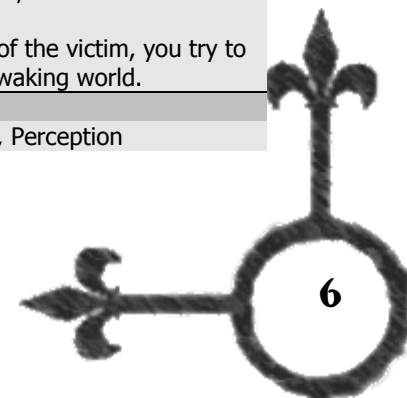
### Insight (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 4 successes)

Using what you know of the victim, you try to pull them back to the waking world.

### Secondary Skills

Endurance, Intimidate, Perception



**Endurance** (standard action)

Hard DC (no successes, maximum 1 attempt)  
Through force of will and stamina you try and shake off your horror. This grants a +2 bonus to the next Heal or Insight check.

**Intimidate** (standard action)

Easy DC (no successes, 2 failures, maximum 1 attempt)  
Through harsh language you attempt to snap the victim out of their shock. This grants a +2 bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy check.

**Perception** (standard action)

Hard DC (no successes, maximum 3 attempts)  
You glance around the room, attempting to learn more about what caused the shock. A success will cancel out one failure.

**Subtle Wrongness** Level equal to party

## Skill Challenge

*A creeping chill slithers down spine. There is something wrong, but you are unsure what.*

After a successful Insight check you are aware something is not right, and you attempt to discover what before it's too late.

**Complexity**

2 (6 successes, before 3 failures)

**Success**

If the PCs overcome the skill challenge they realize what is wrong with the situation and can immediately respond.

**Failure**

If the PCs have 3 failures, they fail to realize what is wrong in time. They lose 1 healing surge from the mental distress.

**Complete Failure**

If the PCs have 3 failures and no successes they dramatically fail. In addition to the standard penalties for failure they also lose 1 Sanity.

**Primary Skills**

Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature, Religion, Perception

**Arcana** (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 2 successes)  
Your knowledge of the arcane might give you a clue to what is happening, determining if magic is in any way responsible.

**Dungeoneering** (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 2 successes)  
Your knowledge of the unnatural might give you a clue to what is happening, revealing any subterranean or pseudonatural involvement.

**Nature** (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 2 successes)

Your knowledge of the natural might give you a clue to what is happening, discovering its presence or its lack.

**Religion** (standard action)

Moderate DC (1 success, maximum 2 successes)  
Your knowledge of the holy and unholy might give you a clue to what is happening, unveiling the divine, blasphemous, or something else entirely.

**Secondary Skills**

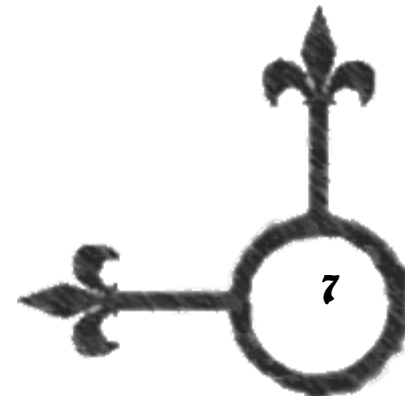
History, Perception

**History** (standard action)

Hard DC (2 successes, maximum 1 attempt)  
You try to recall if this has happened before or remember similar events.

**Perception** (standard action)

Moderate DC (0 successes, maximum 2 attempts)  
Through careful observation you gather clues of what is going on. Instead of judging what you see you simply collect evidence. This grants a +2 bonus on the next check.



## Madness

For Champions in the Mists, insanity is one of the risks involved with being a hero. Characters typically succumb to madness from frequent horrifying images and extreme shocks, one possible result of many failed Fear and Horror checks.

Madness is treated like a disease, a mental illness. Like victims of other diseases, sufferers can improve, worsen, or remain constant.

Unlike other bodily diseases, madness requires an Insight check to determine if the character gets better or grows worse.

### SANITY

Sanity is the method of tracking mental health, similar to how hit points reflect a character's physical health.

Individuals cope with maddening events in their own unique way. Characters begin play with a Sanity score equal to their highest mental statistic: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma. For example, Dagnal has an

Intelligence of 13, a Wisdom of 16, and a Charisma of 8. She begins play with 16 Sanity.

Assaults on the mind, such as Fear and Horror, can cause a character to lose Sanity. Rare monster abilities can also cause mental damage, reducing Sanity.

Sanity can be recovered over extended rests, but cannot exceed its original total. If the mental stat increases, such as through level gain, then a character's maximum Sanity also increases.

When a character drops to 0 or less Sanity they have suffered a severe shock and become insane, developing a mental illness.

### GOING INSANE

When a character reaches 0 or lower Sanity they become insane. The GM decides on an appropriate insanity, modifies one to fit the character, or chooses one randomly. The level of a madness can be adjusted by increasing

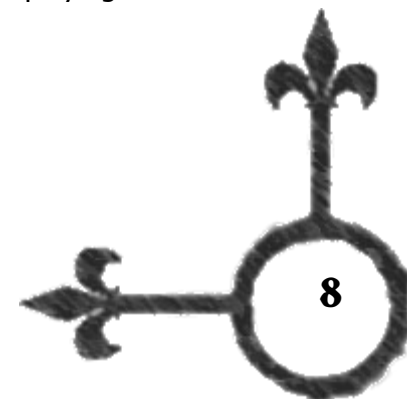
or decreasing the DCs of the Insight checks.

Physical diseases from the DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE can also be adapted into a madness of a similar level by changing the Endurance check to an Insight check. In these cases the symptoms are a psychosomatic illness: not the result of a physical condition but the mind tricking the body.

For example, Blinding Sickness would be an insanity where the victim would slowly lose their vision. The eyes would be healthy and capable of sight (and all Heal checks to physically fix the eyes would automatically fail) but the mind would not allow itself see.

### SAMPLE INSANITIES

Below are some examples of madness effects. These determine the in-game effects of madness, although the player is encouraged to present other symptoms through roleplaying





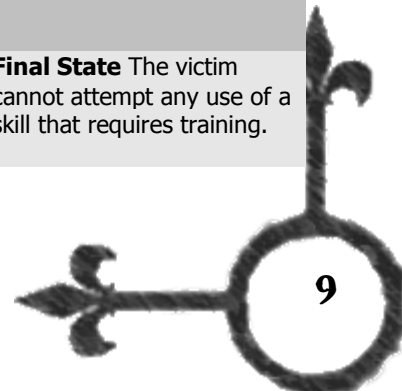
Hallucinations		Level 1 Madness	
<i>You see or hear things that are not there as your mind plays cruel tricks on you.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0	
The victim is cured!		<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 15, maintain DC 10, worsen DC 9 or lower.	
◀	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -2 to all Perception checks.	◀▶	The penalties from the initial effect increase to -5.
			▶ <b>Final State</b> The victim is dazed.

Depression		Level 5 Madness	
<i>You are unmotivated, introverted, and negative towards yourself, perhaps even suicidal.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0	
The victim is cured!		<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 17, maintain DC 12, worsen DC 11 or lower.	
◀	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -1 penalty to all defences until cured.	◀▶	The victim is slowed, lacking the will to move faster.
			▶ <b>Final State</b> The victim is immobilized, withdrawing from the world.

Delusions		Level 9 Madness	
<i>You believe something about yourself that is not true. This might relate to your identity, your race or class, or even your social status.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0	
The victim is cured!		<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 19, maintain DC 14, worsen DC 13 or lower.	
◀	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -1 penalty when using any Daily or Encounter powers.	◀▶	The penalties from the initial effect become -2.
			▶ <b>Final State</b> The victim cannot use racial or class Daily or Encounter powers.

Paranoia		Level 13 Madness	
<i>Your mind is gripped by irrational and terrifying fears, often from mundane.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0	
The victim is cured!		<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 23, maintain DC 18, worsen DC 17 or lower.	
◀	The penalty from the initial effect becomes -1.	◀▶	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -2 penalty to their Will defence until cured.
		◀▶	Each time the victim is bloodied they can be pushed 3 squares until they improve.
			▶ <b>Final State</b> The victim takes a -5 penalty to all saving throws against fear.

Amnesia		Level 17 Madness	
<i>You are unsure of your identity or aspects of yourself.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0	
The victim is cured!		<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower.	
◀	The penalty from the initial effect becomes -1.	◀▶	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -2 penalty when using any Racial or Class power or feature until cured.
		◀▶	The victim suffers a -2 penalty on all trained skills.
			▶ <b>Final State</b> The victim cannot attempt any use of a skill that requires training.



Multiple Personalities		Level 21 Madness	
<i>There is more than one mind in your head, more than one person inside you.</i>		<b>Cause:</b> Sanity reaches 0 <b>Insight</b> Improve DC 27, maintain DC 22, worsen DC 21 or lower.	
The victim is cured!	The victim receives a +5 bonus to saving throws against the initial effect.	<b>Initial Effect</b> Every time the victim is bloodied another personality takes over, until cured. They act as dominated by a random person, player or GM (save ends).	<b>Final State</b> The victim can use Encounter and Utility powers even when dominated.

## RECOVERING

Madness can be recovered through skill checks, specifically the Insight skill.

A check is made after each extended rest to see if a character improves, grows worse, or maintains their condition.

Once a character has recovered from madness, either on their own or with assistance, their Sanity rises to 1, even if it was a negative number.

## FINAL STATE

And once the final state has been reached, the character is irreparably insane. A character in the final state can no longer improve on their own; they no longer make Insight checks to improve.

Someone who has reached the final state of madness cannot be cured

without outside assistance or by magical rituals.

## RITUAL

At any time in the madness, it can be removed through the Cure Madness ritual. Neither the Cure Disease nor Remove Affliction rituals have any effect on mental illness.

If used on someone suffering from mental illness, the Cure Madness ritual instantly removes any insanity and raises the victim's Sanity to 1. If used on a sane individual it restores all lost Sanity.

## AIDING RECOVERY

The Heal skill is usually ineffective for treating mental illness, even for individuals trained in the skill. Unique training is required for treating insanity and removing madness.

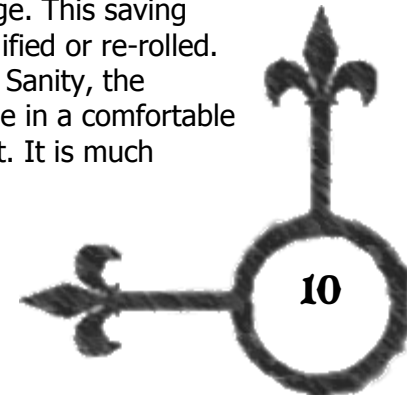
If you have the Psychiatrist feat you can use your Heal check to help an ally recover from madness (see JESTER'S 4E RAVENLOFT PLAYER'S GUIDE). This works like using the Heal skill to treat a disease, see the PLAYER'S HANDBOOK for more information.

## REGAINING SANITY

Sanity is not as easily recovered as hit points and physical health; mental wounds are slow to recover. Full recovery from insanity is a slow process.

After each extended rest a character can make a saving throw. If it succeeds a point of Sanity is restored. If it fails the characters' sanity does not change. This saving throw cannot be modified or re-rolled.

To reliably regain Sanity, the extended rest must be in a comfortable and safe environment. It is much



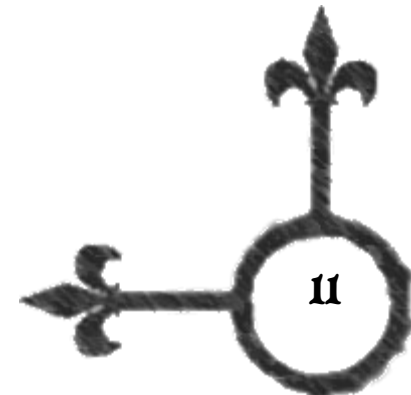
harder to regain a grip on reality when resting in an ancient crypt, haunted manor, or gloomy castle: in such places saving throws to regain Sanity suffer a -5 penalty.

Similarly, it is impossible to regain Sanity naturally in alien and inhuman locals such as antediluvian ruins, tunnels of Bluetspur, or fiendish lairs.

Characters trained in treating mental illness (those with the

Psychiatrist feat) can also aid in the recovery of Sanity. A DC 15 Heal check grants a +2 bonus to the next saving throw to regain Sanity.

The Cure Madness ritual can also instantly restore any lost Sanity.



# Curses

Similar to both disease and madness, curses debilitate a character. A character is not exposed to a curse; they do not become cursed by spending time with a cursed individual. Someone must specifically inflict a curse on the victim.

## LAYING CURSES

Anyone can lay a curse on someone. They are not tied to level or class or race, although the Vistani are a noteworthy exception and their curses are legendary.

Curses are fuelled by the Dark Powers: they are wished upon someone and the Powers make it occur. Curses are more than someone simply exclaiming "damn him", but the result of intense emotion, typically grief or anger.

## CURSE CRITERIA

**Wronged:** For the Dark Powers to take notice, the invoker must truly, and honestly believe that they have been wronged.

**Emotional:** The invoker must be experiencing extreme emotion, such as rage, sorrow, jealousy, or remorse. There must also be a strong desire for vengeance or justice.

**Spontaneous:** Curses are not planned and rehearsed. They are a sudden response to an abnormal situation.

**Powerless:** The Dark Powers seldom fulfill curses that the individual is capable of carrying out. Curses are the revenge and damnation of the impotent.

## BESTOWING A CURSE

To bestow a curse, the invoker must make an attack roll against the chosen victim.

Typically, this attack roll is Charisma vs. Will, the offended party's force of personality against the target's mind. However, Wisdom can also be used at the GM's discretion. The Dark Powers also compensate for differences in experience. When laying a curse, the target's level is used and not the invoker's. For example, a level 2 blacksmith's son is killed because of

the actions of a level 10 fighter. The blacksmith's curse is his Charisma + 5 (half the fighter's level) vs. the fighter's Will defence.

### Curse Attack

- ◆ Charisma (+ 1/2 target's level) vs. Will

Targeting a curse is not limited by line of sight, distance, time, or even precise knowledge of the target. The target of a curse could be unknown, although it is easier if the target is known and the curse is tailored for that individual.

## CURSE MODIFIERS

The curse attack roll can be subject to a number of unique situational modifiers. All other combat modifiers do not apply.

Situation	Modifier
No escape clause	-2
Target unknown	-1
Easy escape clause	+1
Friend injured	+1
Friend killed	+2
Curse layer is a Vistani	+2
Curse tailored for target	+2

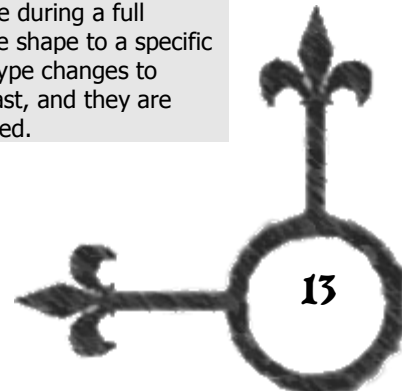
Family member injured	+3
Family member killed	+3
Curse is dying words	+4
Poetic justice	+4

Below are some examples curses. These determine the in-game effect,

although players are encouraged to demonstrate other effects through roleplaying

## SAMPLE CURSES

<b>Curse of Misfortune</b>		<b>Level 2 Curse</b>	
<i>Everything you attempted turns disastrous as fortune refuses to favour you.</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will	
<b>Endurance</b> Improve DC 15, maintain DC 10, worsen DC 9 or lower.			
The curse is lifted!	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim takes a -1 penalty to all attacks and skill checks until lifted.	The penalties from the initial effect become -2.	<b>Final State</b> Every time the victim rolls a natural 20 they must re-roll and take the second result.
x	◀▶	▶	
<b>Curse of Weakness</b>		<b>Level 6 Curse</b>	
<i>Your arm grows infirm making it hard to hold up your weapon and, eventually, yourself!</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will	
<b>Endurance or Athletics</b> Improve DC 17, maintain DC 12, worsen DC 11 or lower.			
The curse is lifted!	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim takes a -2 penalty on all weapon damage until lifted.	The victim becomes weakened.	<b>Final State</b> The victim is immobilized, too weak to move.
x	◀▶	▶	
<b>Curse of Madness</b>		<b>Level 10 Curse</b>	
<i>You are afflicted with an insanity that cannot be cured by mundane means.</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will	
<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 21, maintain DC 16, worsen DC 15 or lower.			
The curse is lifted!	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim suffers a -2 penalty on all Perception checks until lifted.	Each time the victim is bloodied their actions become random. They might make a basic attack, move randomly, flee, or act normally (save ends).	<b>Final State</b> The victim's actions are always random. They might make a basic attack, move randomly, flee, or act normally (save ends).
x	◀▶	▶	
<b>Curse of the Beast</b>		<b>Level 14 Curse</b>	
<i>The fool moon rises and you find yourself howling at fur spreads across your body.</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will	
<b>Insight</b> Improve DC 23, maintain DC 18, worsen DC 17 or lower.			
The curse is lifted!	<b>Initial Effect</b> On the three nights of the full moon, the victim is easily enraged. They are marked by the last enemy to deal damage to them.	When outdoors during the three nights of the full moon, the victim is feral and attacks the nearest creature in line of sight.	<b>Final State</b> The victim becomes an animal when outside during a full moon. They change shape to a specific animal form, their type changes to medium natural beast, and they are considered dominated.
x	◀▶	▶	



<b>Curse of Hunger</b>		<b>Level 18 Curse</b>	
<i>No matter how much you eat, it is never enough to satiate your hunger.</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will <b>Endurance</b> Improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower.	
The curse is lifted!	<b>X</b> <b>Initial Effect</b> The victim loses one healing surge that cannot be regained until lifted.	◀▶	The victim becomes weakened.
		▶	The victim passes out and falls unconscious.
			<b>Final State</b> The victim dies.

<b>Curse of Vengeance</b>		<b>Level 22 Curse</b>	
<i>The darkest of curses, the life slowly from you until you finally perish.</i>		<b>Attack:</b> Charisma vs. Will <b>Endurance or Heal</b> Improve DC 29, maintain DC 24, worsen DC 23 or lower.	
The curse is lifted!	<b>X</b> The victim regains one of its lost healing surges.	◀▶	<b>Initial Effect</b> The victim loses two healing surges that cannot be regained until lifted.
		▶	The victim only regains half the normal number of hit points from healing effects.
			<b>Final State</b> The victim loses all their healing surges.

## RECOVERING

While similar to diseases and madness, a curse cannot be cured through skill checks. After each extended rest, a check is made that can allow the victim to maintain or improve their condition, but not completely remove the curse.

## RITUALS

The Remove Affliction ritual is only partially effective: it cannot permanently remove curses laid by the Dark Powers, except if the curse lacks an escape clause, or if the curse is contagious and the target is a secondary victim.

If used on a curse that lacks an escape clause the ritual can lift the curse, but the caster suffers a -5 penalty on their Heal check.

Even if used on an un-removable curse, the Remove Affliction ritual returns the victim to the initial effect. If the ritual is used on a victim suffering only the initial effect then it temporarily lifts the curse for one day.

## AIDING RECOVERY

Successful use of the Heal skill can help someone suffering from a curse. This works like using the Heal skill to treat a disease, see the PLAYER'S HANDBOOK for more information.

## LIFTING CURSES

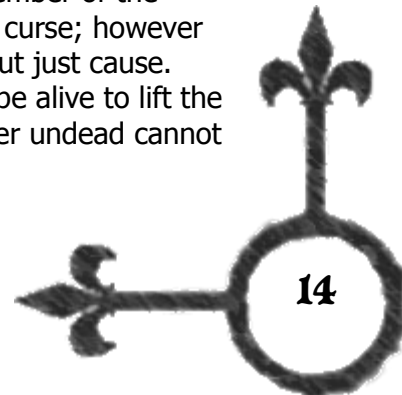
The only way to recover from a curse is to have it lifted. Other methods, like rituals, only offer temporary relief.

## THE INVOKER

At any time the curse can be lifted by its invoker. They must be willing to do so and not subject to bribery, duress, or enchantment.

Only the individual who laid the curse can revoke it, with the exception of the Vistani. Any member of the same family can lift a curse; however they seldom do without just cause.

The person must be alive to lift the curse. Spirits and other undead cannot



lift curses, even if the Speak with Dead ritual is used. The sole exception is if the curse's victim is also dead, in which case the curse can be revoked to allow the victim passage to the afterlife.

### **ESCAPE CLAUSES**

Almost all curses have an escape clause: a conditional statement that allows them to be lifted. Very rare is the curse without any escape clause or limits.

Some escape clauses are a single deed, while others are a lengthy task or condition. Once the action or task is completed, the curse is instantly lifted and all effects are removed. Example clauses are "until you climb the highest peak in the land" or "until you perform a hundred noble deeds."

Other escape clauses may be continued behaviour. As long as the behaviour is maintained the curse is in remission, and the victim suffers no ill effects. However, if the behaviour stops the curse instantly returns. For example, the clause "while you speak with your sword" might mean the victim is not cursed as long as they attempt peaceful resolution before violence.

Time limits are a lesser form of escape clause, where the victim must suffer for a set length of time. The traditional length is "a year and a day." Time limits are often paired with continued behaviour.

Many escapes clauses are phrased as metaphors or poetry. There might be a specifically intended meaning or interpretation, but sometimes a reasonable attempt can also lift the curse. Vague escape clauses offer loopholes that can be exploited or offer multiple options. The fighter cursed with the clause "while you speak with your sword" might find the negative effects sidestepped if he uses an axe. Final adjudication remains with the GM.

### **VARIANT CURSES**

Not all curses are identical, some have alternate effects or rules, and some are more complicated to remove.

### **HEREDITARY CURSES**

Most curses only affect a single individual. However, curses can be worded to affect a target's entire bloodline. These curses are passed down through a family line.

Unless otherwise specified, hereditary curses only affect the firstborn child. However, curses can be tailored to affect the firstborn male child, all male children, the oldest living child, etc.

Hereditary curses always have an escape clause and always have to be tailored to the individual.

### **CONTAGIOUS CURSES**

Some very rare curses can pass from one individual to another. The curse of lycanthrope is the standard example.

Typically, contagious curses can only be contracted from the subject of the original curse and not those who have been infected with the curse. A few very rare curses can spread endlessly.

The exception to the above is contagious hereditary curses, which can also be passed along by the descendants of the original target.

Contagious curses can only be lifted from secondary victims once it has been lifted from the original victim. However, some contagious curses can be lifted when the original victim has been killed.



Contagious curse can be lifted normally through the escape clause or through the Remove Affliction ritual.

## DESIGNING CURSES

When designing a curse to use on a PC, certain things should be considered.

**Drama:** Curses should be atmospheric and dramatic.

**Hurt not kill:** Good curses should hinder a PC, not immediately remove them from the game.

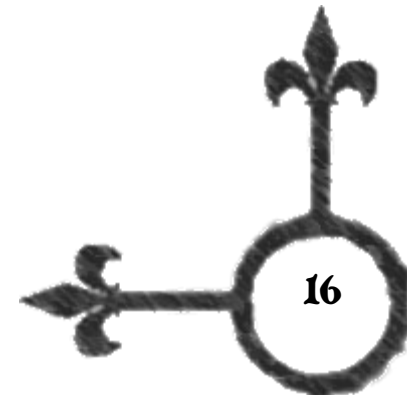
**Escape clauses:** Curses used on a PC should always have an escape clause, preferably one with multiple options that encourage creativity.

**Fit the crime:** The curse should reflect the original offence.

**Game mechanics:** Actual curses should avoid mention game mechanics and terms.

**Character not player:** Curses should not be used to punish a player or control disruptive behaviour.

**Response:** GMs should avoid planning curses, or setting out to specifically curse characters.





## Powers Checks

Those who commit evil deeds are blessed and cursed by the Dark Powers: the enigmatic forces that hold sway over the Land of the Mists.

When someone commits an evil or questionable act there is a random chance the Dark Powers are watching.

### MAKING CHECKS

A Dark Powers check is essentially a Perception check against a PC. The GM makes the check against a set DC; if he succeeds then the character has caught the eye of the Dark Powers.

#### Powers Check

- ◆ Base DC 15
- ◆ Single d20 roll, nothing added except modifiers below.

A Powers check is a straight d20 roll: the Powers do not add ½ their level or any bonuses from statistics. A natural 20 is not an automatic success.

Powers and skills use have no impact on the Power's Perception roll. A PC cannot use Stealth or turn invisible to avoid detection. The only

things that can affect a Powers check is the character's motive and conditional modifiers, listed in the chart below. These modify the DC of the check, raising or lowering it depending on the modifier.

A character cannot oppose or impact a Powers check in any way, such as by forcing a re-roll. They are either seen or they are not.

Favourable Conditions	DC Modifier
Character is Evil	+1
Character is Chaotic Evil	+2
Sanctioned	+1
Selfless Motives	+2
Misled	+2
Little or no Forethought	+1

Unfavourable Conditions	DC Modifier
Character is Good	-1
Character is Lawful Good	-2
Selfish Motives	-1
Discouraged	-2
Premeditated and planned	-1

**Alignment:** The Powers seem less concerned with evil people doing evil things. Or perhaps they simply respond

more to pure individuals doing impure things.

**Sanction/ Discouraged:** If a society, culture, or religion sanctions or approves an action, then the Powers are less likely to take notice. If the act is actively discouraged – morally or legally – then it has a better chance of attracting attention.

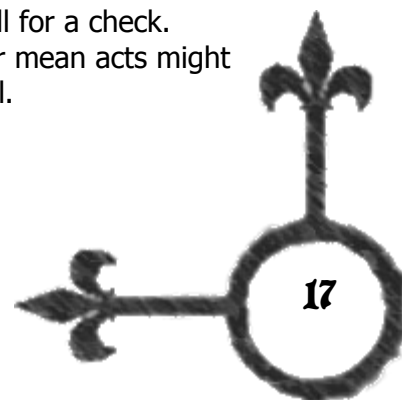
**Selfless/ Selfish:** Good intentions are not an excuse, but they are still slightly less damning than bad intention.

**Misled:** Being mistaken or ignorant is less likely to draw the Powers' gaze than knowingly committing wrong.

**Forethought/ Premeditated:** The impulsive, while often still worthy of damnation, is less likely to seem worthy of the Powers than a planned, calculated deed.

### WHEN TO MAKE A CHECK

Dark Powers checks are only made when a character commits an evil act. Only truly evil acts call for a check. Immoral, cowardly, or mean acts might not necessarily be evil.



The frequency of Powers checks is left up to the GM. Some may prefer a game that emphasises the continual struggle against corruption or the inevitable fall into darkness. In these cases Powers checks should be more common.

Other GMs might prefer a more heroic game and overlook grey actions done for the greater good. These games would have fewer checks.

Examples of grey areas are theft, lying, looting bodies and threats. A darker game might view petty theft as worthy of a check and taking gold from a fallen foe as desecration. A more heroic game might overlook the PCs shaking down and threatening an informant.

*The mood and themes of the campaign or adventure should determine what is immoral and evil and what is grey.*

A GM should never feel bound to roll a Powers check just because the rules demand it. However, there are some general suggestions when checks are required.

**Other punishment:** If an alternate punishment would better fit the crime or campaign then do not make the check.

**Evil Victim:** PCs should not be punished for playing the game, which generally includes killing the bad guy and taking his stuff.

**Multiple Crimes:** If a PC performs multiple crimes over a short period the DM should not feel obligated to make a check for each action. One or two modified checks should be fine. If the Powers were not watching for the most serious crime it is unlikely a smaller secondary act would attract their attention.

**Ability Use:** A DM should avoid handing out Powers checks for the use of class features or powers. Powers checks should result from the character's choices, not the player's choices.

**Flimsy Justification:** A plausible in-character explanation is reason to debate making a check. But an excuse that stretches credibility is reason to make a check.

**Drama:** If the scene and campaign is grim and gritty, a Powers check might aid the atmosphere.

**Lust for Power:** If the character longs power, it might be appropriate to make a check. However, if the *player* wants extra power, checks should be avoided.

**Silly:** If it would be silly for the action to lead to a failed check do not make one. There should be no darklords of Floating Discs.

## HOW TO MAKE A CHECK

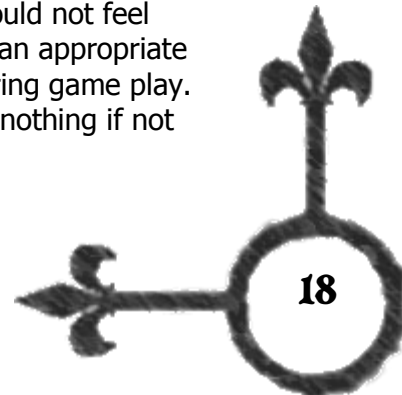
When the GM decides an act is worthy of a Dark Powers check he simply rolls.

GMs should avoid letting Powers check slow down the game. Do not calculate the crime, its severity and the number of Corruption points before even making the check. Avoid calculating all the possible modifiers before making the roll.

GMs should roll the d20 and only consider modifiers if warranted. If the die roll is a "3" then no amount of modifiers will matter. If the roll is a "16" then the situation bears consideration.

GMs are advised to wait on assigning Corruption points, even if additional points would lead to a higher Stage of Darkness. A break in the game or between sessions is the perfect time to assess the type and severity of the crime.

Likewise, GMs should not feel pressured to think of an appropriate dark gift or ability during game play. The Dark Powers are nothing if not



enigmatic and sometimes their blessings are subtle and slow.

## FAILURE

Once a character has failed a Dark Powers check GMs begin by figuring out the severity of the evil act and the type of crime. The severity determines the amount of corruption while the crime determines the type of corruption that befalls them.

## SEVERITY

The severity of the evil act determines the stain on the character, as represented by *Corruption Points*.

There are five levels of severity for each action: trespass, offence, sin, violation, and atrocity. These are described below.

**Trespass:** These acts result in no lasting harm or have short-term consequences.

**Offence:** These acts create minor or inconvenient damage. They are easily reversible or self-correcting.

**Sin:** These acts cause long-term damage or have lengthy consequences but result in no permanent harm. Reversing these actions is difficult or time-consuming but quite possible.

**Violation:** These acts cause lasting and permanent harm that is hard to reverse or repair, typically being a hard and lengthy process.

**Atrocity:** These acts cause irreparable and permanent harm. They cannot be reversed or undone.

## TYPE OF CRIME

The crime's type determines the eventual benefits and curses that accompany the Dark Powers' attention.

All evil actions are divided into four broad categories: Violence, Betrayal, Blasphemy, and Black Magic.

**Violence:** These are crimes against a person or group. Examples include bullying, extortion, assault, torture, and murder.

**Betrayal:** These are typically crimes against a person or organization. These include revealing deep secrets, perjury, character assassination, gaslighting, or selling-out an ally.

**Blasphemy:** These are crimes against a faith or god. Examples include violating a tenet, breaking an oath, grave robbing, defacing a holy item, and defiling a holy site.

**Black Magic:** These are violations of the natural order. Examples are

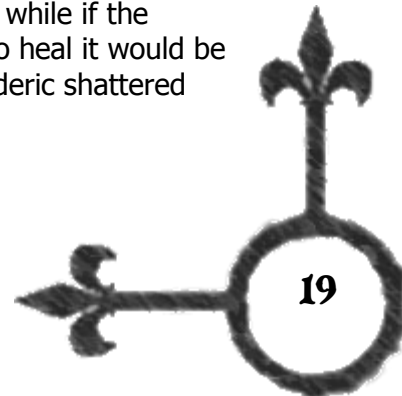
laying a curse, raising the dead, allying with unnatural creatures (such as undead, fiendish, or pseudonatural), using dark rituals, creating an unnatural creature, or the creation or use of an evil artifact.

## IDENTIFYING THE CRIME

When a character fails a Dark Powers check the DM must first decide what type of crime it was and its severity. If a character's actions qualify as multiple crimes use the most severe as the base.

For example, Roderic, a cleric of Ezra, assaults his brother. Firstly, as a follower of the Home Faith, Roderic has violated the teachings of his religion and thus has committed a Blasphemy. It could also be argued that assaulting family is a Betrayal. However, Roderic most obvious and serious crime is one of Violence.

The severity depends on the consequences of the action. In the above example the consequence would be how soundly the brother was beaten. If the injuries were minor it would be an Offence, while if the wounds took longer to heal it would be a Sin. However, if Roderic shattered



his brother's leg, crippling him, it would be a Violation.

Actions can qualify for more than one category. In the above example, Roderic committed both Violence and Blasphemy. Another example would be if someone turned against their church, which might be a Betrayal and a Blasphemy.

Each action is considered separately. For related yet separate actions only use the most severe. For example, a burglar breaks into a home to steal valuables but is caught, so the thief kills the owner. The check would only apply to the worst crime: the murder. No corruption points would be gained for the burglary, which is a separate act.

### **CORRUPTION POINTS**

Every failed Dark Powers check results in Corruption Points, although the exact number is random. The Dark Powers work in mysterious ways.

Corruption Points represent a character's spiritual taint, the darkness of their soul. The more points they gain the more they have been swallowed by darkness.

- ◆ At creation, characters begin with 0 Corruption Points.

- ◆ Each failed Powers check grants a base of 1d4 Corruption Points.
- ◆ Greater severity adds additional dice of Corruption Points.
- ◆ Each additional crime adds an additional 1d4 Corruption Points.
- ◆ The player rolls the total dice and adds the result to the character's total Corruption Points. This becomes their new total.

<b>Severity</b>	<b>Additional Dice</b>
Trespass	0
Offence	+1d4
Sin	+2d4
Violation	+3d4
Atrocity	+4d4

In addition to the above, other factors can also add more Corruption Points. These include who the victim of the crime was their number. These are shown on the table below and add additional dice equal to their severity.

Returning to the previous example, at minimum Roderic committed a Violent Offence and a Blasphemous Trespass; the Violent act is the base crime as it is the most severe. Roderic gains 2d4 Corruption points (base 1d4 + 1d4 for severity). However, because he also committed a Blasphemy at the

same time he rolls an additional 1d4 bringing his total dice to 3d4.

However, poor Roderic, having assaulted his own brother, would have committed an additional violation adding an extra 3d4. This raises the total dice he has to roll to 6d4!

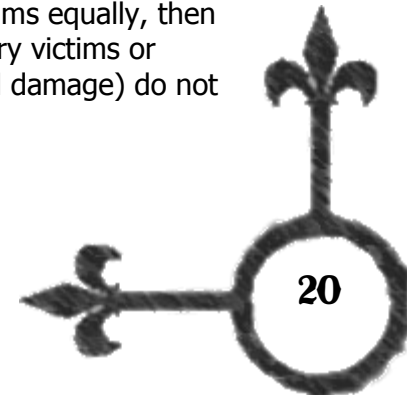
### **EXTRA FACTORS**

As mentioned above, additional factors can increase the total dice. These are based on whom the victim was or the number of victims. These are dependent on the character's knowledge. If they were not aware of these factors when they committed the crime then they do not apply.

**Alignment:** The alignment of the victim becomes a factor only if it was known or suspected. If the offender had no idea of the victim's alignment then this does not apply.

**Relationship:** This is the known or suspected familial relationship between victim and assailant. If the relationship was unknown or disguised then this does not apply.

**Number:** If the base crime affected multiple victims equally, then this applies. Secondary victims or bystanders (collateral damage) do not apply.



Extra Factor	Trespass	Offence	Sin	Violation	Atrocity
Victim's Alignment	Evil	Unaligned	Good	Lawful Good	Innocent
Relationship to Victim	Enemy	Ally	Friend	Family	Lover
Number of Victims	1	2-4	5-7	8-10	11+

## STAGES OF DARKNESS

There is a hierarchy of taint, determined by ones' Corruption points. The more Corruption points a character has, the farther they are along the path to evil.

Total Points	Stage
–	Innocent
0	Pure or Redeemed
1-10	The Temptation
11-15	The Caress
16-20	The Enticement
21-25	The Embrace
26+	The Descent

**Innocent:** This is a rare stage. Not only has the character never failed a Powers check, they have never done anything to warrant one. Furthermore, they have never been exposed to the supernatural (made a Fear or Horror check). Most adults lost their innocent well in their adolescence.

PCs do not start out as innocents except through GM approval, and likely

lose their innocence early into their first adventure.

**Pure:** The character has never had a Corruption point. While they may have done something worthy of a Dark Powers check, they have never failed one.

PCs typically start at this stage unless the GM approves otherwise.

**Redeemed:** The character has failed and gained Corruption points but managed to remove them, cleansing their soul. However, they will never be truly Pure again.

PCs can start at this stage with GM approval.

**The Temptation:** In the Temptation, one's soul is stained but they have not truly fallen to darkness. They have not been cursed or blessed with dark gifts.

**The Caress:** In this stage the Dark Powers have given the character a reward for their actions along with an almost inconsequential penalty.

**The Enticement:** The character's gift increases, but the cost is much higher and apparent. A little piece of humanity is lost.

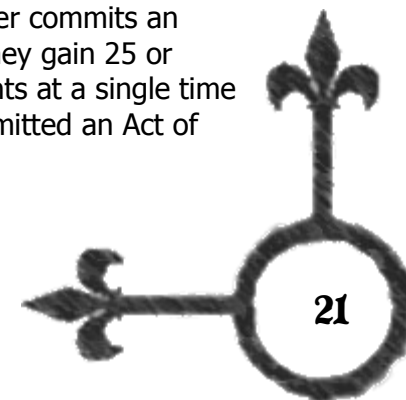
**The Embrace:** Well on their way to true darkness, the character is now much more than human; they are capable of inhuman and supernatural feats. Sometimes this inhuman nature is apparent, other times it is veiled.

**The Decent:** The character is lost to darkness, their soul is irrevocably tainted. Typically, they become an NPC under the control of the GM.

## ACT OF ULTIMATE DARKNESS

Some deeds are unforgivable and leave a stain on one's soul that can never be removed. These are Acts of Ultimate Darkness.

If a character ever commits an action so foul that they gain 25 or more corruption points at a single time then they have committed an Act of Ultimate Darkness.



If a character ever commits an Act of Ultimate Darkness their alignment shifts to Evil or Chaotic Evil and the GM should consider their removal from the campaign. They can also become an NPC under the control of the GM.

If it is decided that the character should not be removed from play, then the character is instead irrevocably corrupted. They are now forever bound to darkness. They can never lower their total Corruption points below 11: they must always be touched by the Powers.

### **DARKLORDS**

To become a darklord, an Act of Ultimate Darkness must be committed. There are no darklords who have committed a multitude of small sins.

The exception is characters with 26 or more Corruption points who slay the lord of a domain. At the DM's discretion, the character might become the new darklord.

Becoming a darklord must be even more foul than a normal Act of Ultimate Darkness. A good rule-of-thumb is 35 or more Corruption points for a single action for someone to become the ruler of a domain.

### **TYPES OF CORRUPTION**

There are four types of corruption, with each tied to a particular crime. When a character first moves to a higher Stage of Darkness, the type of crime determines the corruption and the related powers and curses.

Characters are not limited to a particular type of corruption. It is possible to be a unique mix of the various types and have varied dark gifts. Likewise, characters can shift between types of corruption, altering their gifts.

### **PHYSICAL CORRUPTION**

The result of crimes of *violence*, physical corruption alters the body. The change is obvious and apparent; there is little subtlety in physical corruption.

Physical corruption typically increases strength, often at the cost of agility or speed. It also often impacts the mind, with violence leading one to become a hulking but dim-witted brute.

It is also possible to become quick and agile yet frail and thin. The dexterous can be unintelligent, but most tend to be more impulsive,

lacking caution and common sense more than brain.

**Related Skills:** Acrobatics, Athletics, Endurance, Stealth.

### **SOCIAL CORRUPTION**

Related to *betrayal*, social corruption affects the personality and interpersonal abilities. While not blatantly physically deformed there might be inhuman features and telltale traits.

The socially corrupt often excel at lies and deception, or are charming smooth talkers. They often have unnatural abilities and power that affect or influence others.

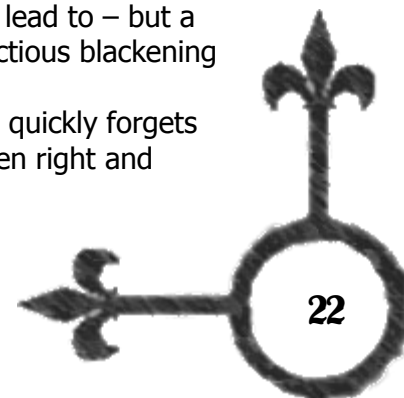
They might also be socially awkward and repulsive, repugnant to be around. Their mannerisms might betray their inhumanity.

**Related Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Streetwise.

### **SPIRITUAL CORRUPTION**

*Blasphemy* results in the befouling of the soul. This is more than the generic corruption of the spirit – which all failed Powers checks lead to – but a total and almost infectious blackening of the soul.

A corrupted spirit quickly forgets the difference between right and



wrong. It opens a dark spiritual door, often giving prenatal sight and wisdom.

In contrast, the spiritually dead become dull and poorly motivated, yet relentless when with their single-minded goal.

**Related Skills:** Heal, Insight, Perception, Religion.

### **MENTAL CORRUPTION**

Tainting of the mind is the result of *black magic*. Similar to madness, this is incurable mental deviation.

Corruption of the mind brings forbidden knowledge and opens up the brain's many locked doors. There is the possibility of devious intelligence, unrestrained by morality and decency.

Or the madness could be all-consuming. The mind is free but random, moving chaotically between ideas and possibilities without the grounding force of reality.

**Related Skills:** Arcana, Dungeoneering, History, Nature.

### **GIFTS AND POWERS**

Failed Dark Powers checks grant a character power, which only increases with their further corruption.

Each Stage of Darkness brings additional dark gifts from the Powers, rewards for ill deeds, which carry a heavy price.

The exact gift is decided by the GM, based on the crime that led to the increase in corruption.

### **THE CARESS**

The smallest of gifts, those who know the Caress know the temptation for further gifts.

The Caress grants a +2 bonus to one skill and a -2 penalty to a different skill. Alternatively, it could be a +1 bonus to two skills or a -1 penalty to two skills.

### **THE ENTICEMENT**

The dark gift increases, now the Dark Powers offer a reward useable in battle.

The Enticement might grant the character a +2 bonus to damage with specific a weapon, or damage type. Alternatively, it might grant a +1 bonus to attack rolls with a specific keyword.

However, the character also suffers from a penalty. This might be a Vulnerability 2 to a particular damage type, a -2 penalty to damage with

other weapons or damage types, or a -1 penalty to a defence.

### **THE EMBRACE**

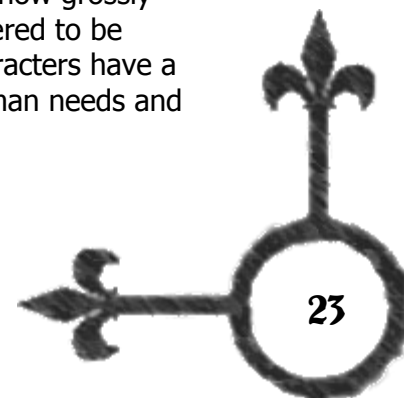
Humanity slips away as one is Embraced, the shadow now stains their soul granting supernatural powers.

The character gains a new Utility power, usable once per encounter. This Utility power should be similar to powers of a level equal to a character's second-highest Utility power.

When a character increases they can swap this power out for a related one of higher level. They cannot replace a racial or class power. This new Utility power cannot be used to regain a power.

For example, a 15th level character's highest Utility power is level 12, so the power granted by the Embrace would be the equivalent of a level 10 power.

However, the character now suffers a dreadful curse. This often takes the form of a vulnerability. If they were already vulnerable, it is now greatly increased. Many are now grossly inhuman and considered to be monsters. Other characters have a compulsion, or inhuman needs and desires.



At this stage, some characters even gain a new keyword, such as aquatic, reptile, shapechanger, spider, or undead.

### **THE DECENT**

The character has fallen: they are now a creature of the night. Whatever small, shred of humanity they have left is buried under unfathomable darkness.

Any PC that reaches this stage should become an NPC and control of the character is passed to the GM. They are now and forever a monster.

Their alignment instantly shifts to evil or chaotic evil. The character's origin changes from natural to one or aberrant, elemental, fey, immortal, or shadow. Their type might even switch to magical beast or animate!

### **REDEMPTION**

Corruption, once gained, is difficult to remove. The soul starts out white, but once black is added it can never be more than grey.

Corruption points can slowly be lowered, as long as a character does nothing to gain more or risk the Dark Powers' attention. There are a few different methods a character can

employ to reduce their Corruption points.

### **TIME HEALS ALL**

If the character makes number of extended rests without doing anything worthy of a Powers check they can lower their total Corruption points by 1.

The number of extended rests required is equal to the character's total Corruption points. Therefore, if a character with 15 points manages to take fifteen extended rests without doing any act worth of a check their total lowers to 14. They must now go two weeks without a Dark Powers check to lower their total to 13.

If a character does anything worthy of a check, even if they escape notice, they must begin again.

### **GOOD DEEDS**

Every time a character performs a heroic, selfless good deed for little or no reward their soul becomes clearer. The deed must be worthy of the character and carry some personal risk. Helping a multitude of old ladies across busy streets will not cleanse the soul of a Paragon tier hero.

Good deeds are defined as quests of a challenge close to the character's level. Each quest qualifies as a single

good deed. Even if the quest included multiple small heroic and positive actions it is still a single good deed.

Minor quests or sub-quests reduce a character's total Corruption points by 1. Major quests reduce a character's total Corruption points by 1d4+1.

### **SELF SACRIFICE**

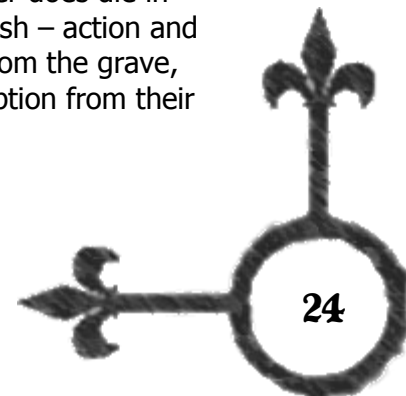
If a character ever attempts the ultimate sacrifice, exchanging their life for another's, they greatly cleanse their soul.

Heroic self sacrifice lowers a character's total Corruption points by 3d4+1.

Taking damage in place of another character is not enough and does not count as self sacrifice; the character must be in real danger of dying. They must expect to be reduced to negative hit points, if not almost outright slain.

If one does lay down their life for others, they can rest a little easier knowing their actions have cleansed their soul, possibly enough for a more peaceful rest.

Even if a character does die in some heroic – if foolish – action and manages to return from the grave, they still gain redemption from their deed.





## Sample Paths

When someone falls to the shadow they begin down a Path of Corruption.

Below are some sample paths that can be used as written or used as a basis for new paths.

### PATH OF THE BRUTE

The result of crimes of violence and aggression, this path turns the sinner into a hulking, inhuman monster.

Bullies, thugs and those who take pleasure from hurting others often find themselves on this path.

### THE CARESS

The character becomes bulkier and slightly more powerful, capable of impressive feats of might.

- ◆ +2 enhancement bonus to Athletics skill checks.
- ◆ -2 penalty to Acrobatics skill checks.

### THE ENTICEMENT

They grow even larger, bodies almost distended and stretched. Brutes of this stage reach the limit of human potential.

- ◆ +2 enhancement bonus to weapon damage rolls.

- ◆ -1 penalty to Will defence.

### THE EMBRACE

Now grotesquely muscular, the brute is inhumanly strong. However, their size is slow and awkward, their bodies large and hideous.

- ◆ -2 penalty to Stealth skill checks.
- ◆ -2 penalty to all Intelligence and Charisma-based skills.
- ◆ -1 penalty to Intelligence and Dexterity ability checks.

### Brute Might Utility 6

*You brace yourself and put your back into it.*

#### Encounter ◆ Martial

#### Standard action

#### Personal

**Effect:** You gain a +2 power bonus to Strength-based skills and ability checks until the end of your next turn.

### Brute Power Utility 10

*Nothing slows you down for long.*

#### Encounter ◆ Martial

#### Free action

#### Personal

**Effect:** Reroll one Athletics check you just rolled. Use the new result.

### THE DESCENT

The character becomes a hulking monster such as an ogre or troll.

### PATH OF THE SNEAK

Violent crimes lead to this path; however the crimes tend to be more subtle and less clumsy or overt.

Murderers, thieves, muggers and assassins sometimes find themselves on this path.

### THE CARESS

They are slight and lean, becoming quicker and more flexible than most folk.

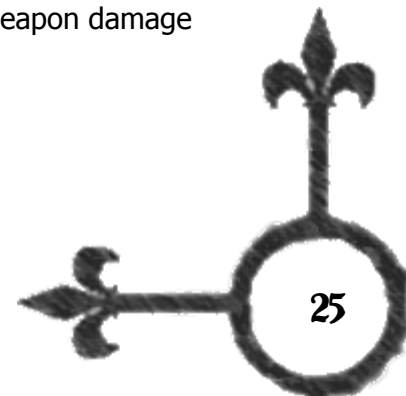
- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics skill checks.
- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to Stealth skill checks.
- ◆ -1 penalty to Athletics skill checks.
- ◆ -1 penalty to Endurance checks.

### THE ENTICEMENT

The sneak is scrawny and perpetually hunched over, with long, thin limbs.

- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to AC and Reflex defence.
- ◆ -2 penalty to weapon damage rolls.

### THE EMBRACE



Their features seem narrow and stretched, from their long fingers to jutting nose. They are fast and hyper but physically weak.

- ◆ -3 Penalty to all Strength-based skills and ability checks.
- ◆ Whenever an effect has force movement (push, pull, or slide) you can be moved 1 square more than normal.

<b>Scutter</b>	<b>Utility 6</b>
<i>You slip to the side, avoiding violence.</i>	
<b>Encounter ♦ Martial</b>	
<b>Immediate Interrupt</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Trigger:</b> An enemy moves adjacent to you	
<b>Effect:</b> You can shift a number of squares equal to your Dexterity modifier.	

<b>Quick Dash</b>	<b>Utility 10</b>
<i>You quickly scramble across the floor.</i>	
<b>Encounter ♦ Martial</b>	
<b>Minor action</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Effect:</b> Until the end of your next turn, your speed increases by 5.	

### THE DESCENT

The character becomes a lurking creature such as a wererat or an ettercap.

### PATH OF THE SERPENT

Vile liars and tricksters fall prey to this path, the result of crimes of betrayal.

Their time as snake oil salesmen becomes a poetic fate.

Those that turn their back on what they believed in or sell out their friends and confidants belong on this path.

### THE CARESS

The character's tongue grows long and thin, the tip seems to fork every so slightly.

- ◆ +2 enhancement bonus to Bluff skill checks.
- ◆ -2 penalty to Diplomacy skill checks.

### THE ENTICEMENT

With their tongue clearly forked their skin becomes smooth, losing much of its body hair. Their eyes may become a pale yellow.

- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to damage rolls with powers that have the Acid or Poison keyword.
- ◆ -1 penalty to damage rolls with powers that have the Psychic or Radiant keyword.

### THE EMBRACE

Hair falls out and scales become more apparent, while the characters eyes are yellow with dark slit pupils.

- ◆ Vulnerable 10 Radiant.

<b>Snakeskin</b>	<b>Utility 6</b>
<i>The blow slides of your slick scales.</i>	
<b>Encounter ♦ Martial</b>	
<b>Immediate Reaction</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Trigger:</b> You are hit by an attack	
<b>Effect:</b> Reduce the damage by 4 + your Dexterity modifier.	

<b>Slitter</b>	<b>Utility 10</b>
<i>From the Mists, Ezra moves to save you.</i>	
<b>Encounter ♦ Martial</b>	
<b>Minor action</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Effect:</b> You ignore difficult terrain until the end of your turn.	

### THE DESCENT

The character becomes a yuan-ti or lizard-folk.

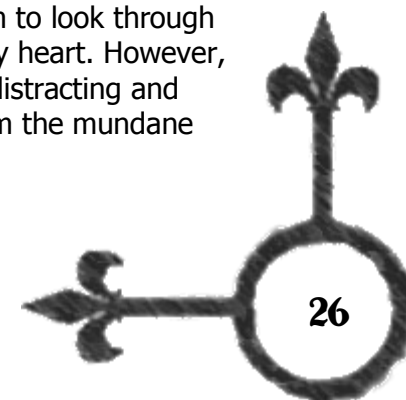
### PATH OF THE SEER

Crimes of blasphemy against religion and faith lead to this. This path blackens the spirit and the aura.

This path is one for corrupted leaders and religious figures, or dark cultists with foul religions.

### THE CARESS

The blasphemer has insight into the soul, their eyes seem to look through people into their very heart. However, this second sight is distracting and pulls them away from the mundane



- ◆ +2 enhancement bonus to Insight skill checks.
- ◆ -2 penalty to Perception skill checks.

### THE ENTICEMENT

Seers know your secrets, or at least it seems like they do. They know how to hurt you and are less concerned with themselves.

- ◆ +2 enhancement bonus to damage rolls with powers that have the Psychic keyword.
- ◆ -1 penalty to AC and Reflex defence.

### THE EMBRACE

Eyes are windows to the soul, and those on this path can peer into them, glance into the past and future.

- ◆ Vulnerable 5 Radiant.
- ◆ -2 penalty to all Charisma-based skills and ability checks.

### Soul Leech

Utility 6

*You drain the life-force from a nearby ally.*

**Encounter** ◆ **Divine, Healing**

**Minor action**

Range 5

**Target:** One ally

**Effect:** The target loses a healing surge and you regain hit points as if you had spent a healing surge plus your Charisma modifier.

### Inner Knowledge

Utility 10

*You know the secrets of inner health.*

**Encounter** ◆ **Divine**

**Minor action**

**Personal**

**Effect:** You make a saving throw with a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier.

### THE DESCENT

Those on the path of the Seer do not become physical monsters. Instead, they become more and more in touch with the spirit world, the Pale.

Many willing transition to undead and rise from the grave following their death. Others simple consort with the unloving or beings from other realms.

### PATH OF THE LUNATIC

The result of Black Magics and crimes against the natural order of the world, these find their minds shattered from dealing with the unnatural.

Black magicians and those who consort with aberrations or raise undead might find themselves on the path of the lunatic. Those that seek knowledge that was not meant to be known also follow this path.

### THE CARESS

Lunatics look as others do, except their eyes might be wild and their expression crazed. They are known to

say unusual things and make curious comments.

- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to Arcana skill checks.
- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to Dungeoneering skill checks.
- ◆ -2 penalty to Nature skill checks.

### THE ENTICEMENT

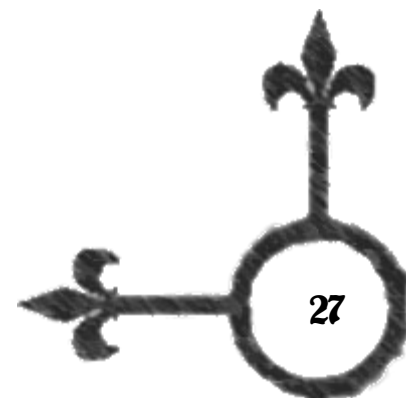
Well on their way to full insanity, the character might find things inexplicably funny, giggling at the most inappropriate of moments. They often talk about people or place that do not exist, or are commonly believed so.

- ◆ +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls with powers that have the Fear keyword.
- ◆ -2 penalty to damage rolls with powers that have the Psychic keyword.

### THE EMBRACE

Fully insane, lunatics see everything differently from the sane; they live in a world of illogic and chaos where cause and effect are suggestions.

- ◆ Vulnerability 10 Psychic.



**Gibbering Gab** **Utility 6***Your impossible words seem convincing.***Encounter** ♦ **Arcane, Charm****Minor action** **Personal****Effect:** You gain a +5 power bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks until the end of the encounter.**Forbidden Knowledge** **Utility 10***Your insight into the world is unparalleled.***Encounter** ♦ **Arcane****Immediate Interrupt** **Personal****Effect:** You are considered trained in the five knowledge skills until the end of the encounter. You also gain a power bonus to a check equal to your Intelligence modifier.**THE DESCENT**

The character becomes an insane madman that can no longer live in human society. Others become more than human, being twisted into hideous aberrations.

**PATH OF THE MENTALIST**

Those that defy the natural order can sometimes discover secrets of the mind.

Those that strike deals with the unholy and unnatural of power and knowledge proceed down this path.

**THE CARESS**

Those on the path of the mentalist are knowledgeable and wise, but cold and distant. They are often unemotional and intensely focused, to the point of obsession.

- ♦ +1 enhancement bonus to Arcana skill checks.
- ♦ +1 enhancement bonus to History skill checks.
- ♦ -1 penalty to Nature skill checks.
- ♦ -1 penalty to Religion skill checks.

**THE ENTICEMENT**

Growing every colder and more distant, mentalists disdain others. Their superiority and arrogance knows little bounds.

- ♦ +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls with powers that have the Illusion keyword.
- ♦ -1 penalty to attack rolls with powers that have the Force keyword.

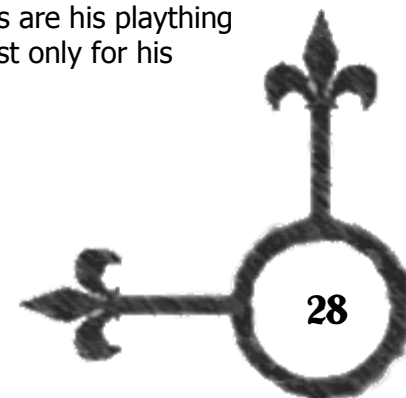
**THE EMBRACE**

Their mind becomes truly unique, an untapped well of power. Others are fools, blind to their own potential and slaves to their pathetic needs and fears.

- ♦ Vulnerability 5 Force.
- ♦ -2 penalty to all Charisma-based skills and ability checks.

**Sudden Mirage** **Utility 6***With but a thought convince others the surroundings are not what they seem.***Encounter** ♦ **Arcane, Illusion, Zone****Standard action** **Close** burst 2**Effect:** The zone is difficult terrain until the end of your next turn.**Surface Thoughts** **Utility 10***Your mind peaks into theirs, gleaming their next move.***Encounter** ♦ **Arcane, Illusion****Minor action** **Personal****Effect:** You gain a +6 power bonus to AC and Reflex defence until the end of your next turn.**THE DESCENT**

The character is still human, but a megalomaniac. Minds are his plaything and other people exist only for his amusement.



## The World

The Land of the Mists is influenced by the will of the enigmatic Dark Powers. The natural laws of the land are not the same as other worlds and realms.

There are a number of restrictions and variations on the rules and the way the world works.

### GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

PCs playing in the Land of the Mists have restrictions, additional rules for what can or cannot be done.

### ALIGNMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

Similar to the Mists' clouding of the future, all attempts to use divination to determine the moral alignment or nature of a creature fail.

No creature's true nature (their race, type, or origin) can be discerned through any power or ritual. Sometimes the attempt fails obviously (or spectacularly), while other times the result is whatever would be most beneficial to the target, such as a divination revealing a vampire as a mortal or an elf as human.

### BORDERS

No powers, abilities or rituals can affect a domain's border in any way. If the border is closed nothing can cross the border or affect anything on the other side. No form of ritual portal or power – racial or otherwise – will allow someone to escape from a sealed domain.

Additionally no powers, abilities or rituals can cross a Misty border. Powers function between the open borders of connected domains but not between domains separated by the Mists, even if there is a Mistway. A character could cast a spell across an open border but not through the Mists.

Even rituals, such as *Linked Portal*, can only be used between connected domains. One could travel across the Core or a Cluster through a portal, but not between the Core and a Cluster or to an Island.

### DIVINATION

The Mists cloud even the future, and attempts at divination can be hazardous.

Attempts to discern the future or the correct course of action are often

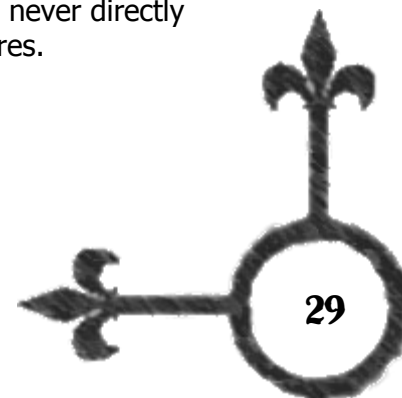
vague and attempts that are based on morality (the right thing to do, the good choice) automatically fail.

Rituals such as *Observe Creature*, *View Location*, *View Object*, or *Wizard's Sight* carry additional risks. Monsters, if they detect the attempt, can attempt to make ranged or close attacks with the Gaze or Charm keywords on the caster.

Other rituals, such as *Consult Mystic Sages*, *Consult Oracle*, *Hand of Fate*, *Voice of Fate* are often vague or misleading. The Dark Powers have influence over the fates and often attempt to be deliberately misleading. However, the rituals will still never give outright false information, if the response cannot be misleading or vague then the attempt simply fails.

The Vistani are a notable exception to the restrictions on divination. Vistani who possess *the Sight* are unhindered by the restrictions placed on others. However, Vistani can never directly divine their own futures.

### PLANAR TRAVEL



Most planar travel is impossible from the Land of the Mists, only the border realms are accessible. All attempts to journey to distant planes fail.

The reverse, however, is not true; it is possible to enter the Mists from other worlds. Portals and gateways function normally inward, but they are strictly one-way.

### **RAISING DEAD**

The dead do not rest easy in the Mists and souls that have passed beyond are not easily reachable, except through the most powerful of magics.

In *Ravenloft*, the *Raise Dead* ritual requires a Heal or Religion check. If someone is partially raised (the ritual is complete but die as a result of the check) they return as an undead of equal level to the character.

### **THE PLANES**

There are a number of worlds that exist beside the natural world of humans and cities. These are often unnatural and magical places. For the common folk these are legends and myth, the subject of wild and terrifying tales.

These coterminous and overlapping realms can be reached through the *Planar Portal* and similar rituals.

### **DREAMSCAPE**

The world of dreams and nightmares, the unconscious minds of mortals and most natural beings journey to this realm each night.

It can be reached by physical travel over the Nocturnal Sea, to the island known as the Nightmare Lands. Here the waking world overlaps with the dream world.

Those trained in special meditations are capable of projecting their minds into the Dreamscape while awake; this is known as dreamwalking.

### **FAERIE**

A wild and savage place of endless, ancient forests and fantastic creatures, Faerie is the home of fey beasts such as elves, dryads, sprites, nymphs, and leprechauns.

Faerie is accessible through the deepest parts of unexplored forests, and through rings of mushrooms (fairy rings) or stone circles. Travellers who fall asleep in such places are known to awake in Faerie. Time passes curiously in Faerie, with travellers emerging

days, weeks, or years after they entered but only hours older.

The domain of Sithicus exists simultaneously in Faerie and the normal world, and it is possible to journey between the two worlds through that shadowy and enchanted wood.

### **THE PALE**

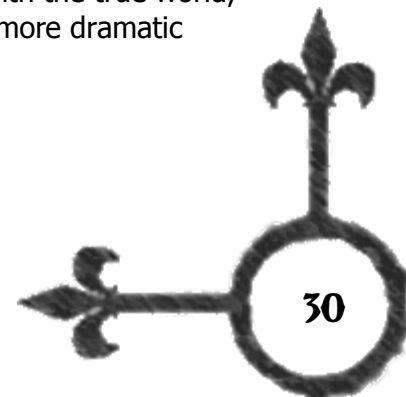
The Darkonian name for the world of the dead, but it is known by other names in other places. The Pale is where the spirits of the dead journey immediately after death before moving on.

The Pale is a dark, bleak, colourless version of the true world. In the Pale everything is old and nothing new, entire cities seem ancient and on the verge of collapse.

Ghosts and other spirits seem able to move between the Pale and the natural world, and it is said that the Mists occasionally lead people to the Pale.

In the domain of Necropolis the Pale is overlapping with the true world, although with much more dramatic effects than normal.

### **SHADOW RIFT**



The Shadow Rift is not a true plane, but rather a conjunction, a nexus of other planes. All four worlds seem to connect in the Rift. There is no Faerie or Pale counterpart to the Shadow Rift.

The Rift can be reached from any plane and any plane can be reached from it, although one cannot easily choose which world they are entering when they leave the Rift. While the Shadow Rift is difficult to enter from the natural world, reports hint it may actually be easier to enter from Faerie.

The curious and immortal Arak of the Shadow Rift are equal parts fey and shadow, and do not seem to sleep themselves, and instead step into their own dreams.

## RESONANCE

Every action has a consequence, especially in the Land of the Mists. Resonance is a type of Fantastic Terrain.

Resonance is the result of these intense emotions; actions fuelled by these strong emotions can affect the very land, imbuing an area with a memory. Areas of resonance are often places of great importance, sites of

great evil or heroism, or places of tragedy.

### EMOTIONAL

Emotional resonance is the most common, places where the land itself imparts emotion.

When someone enters a place of emotional resonance they experience the relation emotion. A site of a great tragedy such as a betrayal or murder might fill visitors with an inexplicable sadness or anger.

Sites of strong positive emotions grant a +1 bonus per tier to attack rolls using powers with the Charm keyword.

Sites of strong negative emotions grant a +1 bonus per tier to attack rolls using powers with the Fear keyword.

### ETHEREAL

Ethereal resonance is a memory of events imbued into the area. Ghostly, insubstantial figures re-enact the scene.

This replaying of events sometimes occurs when new observers enter the area or on a daily basis. Some weaker resonances only repeat on the anniversary of the incident.

Sites of ethereal resonance provide concealment. Additionally, creatures with the insubstantial or phasing properties, such as ghosts, treat areas of ethereal resonance as difficult or even challenging terrain.

### SINKHOLES OF EVIL

Of all examples of resonance, none are more terrifying than *sinkholes of evil*. These areas are tainted with darkness, the very soil has been corrupted by the act that occurred. Only the worst and most malicious of deeds creates a sinkhole, typically Acts of Ultimate Darkness, major betrayals or mass murder.

Sinkholes of evil are given a rank, from 1-5. Sinkholes have an aura of 10 squares for every rank. A rank 3 sinkhole has a negative aura of 30 squares from the centre of the sinkhole.

A character in the aura takes 5 extra damage from all necrotic attacks and takes a -2 penalty to saving throws to end ongoing necrotic damage. All evil and chaotic evil creatures in a sinkhole gain Resist radiant equal to the rank of the sinkhole.

