

Substance, Shadow and Spirit

Emissaries of the Dread Faiths
by Dion Fernandez

*Behold the handmaid of the Lord:
Be it done unto me according to Your word.*

-The Angelus

Much as paladins embody the Platonic ideals of Virtue in Ravenloft, so do the emissaries embody the will of the unseen gods of the Dread Realms. A divine emissary is what we may call the "right hand" of the gods: they are divine warriors called to serve their god and to spread their ideals in ways their patron deems favorable.

Though the paladin and the emissary have certain aspects in common with each other, there are striking differences between the two. Paladins in Ravenloft embody the faceless concept of Virtue, while emissaries of the dread faiths embody the favors of their patron deity. Paladins are born to holiness, while emissaries receive the call of their patron deity through visions and epiphanies in the course of their lives, regardless of their patron's alignment.

Emissaries are rare: incarnations of the gods (be they real or not in the Land of Mists) appear only once in a generation. As such, it is highly recommended that there be not be more than one emissary within any given campaign.

Part One: Emissaries of Instinct and Reason

In this and the next few installments of **Substance, Shadow and Spirit**, emissaries of each of the gods detailed in the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting* would be presented. This installment would focus on divine emissaries of the Wolf God and the Morninglord.

Consort of Daybreak

Emissary of the Morninglord

When the sun sets and the shadows set in, rare is the person who would stand up against the encroaching darkness of the Barovian night. Even the most valiant warrior would not survive the shadows unscathed by fear.

In this heart of Ravenloft the Consorts of Daybreak thrive, called by the Morninglord to bring hope to a terrified people. The Consort, however, lives a double life of being a champion of the masses by day and slayer of the unliving by night; this split-life between day and night creates in her a sort of uncertainty. Through it all, the Consort must also live under the fact that, when she least expects it, the unseen powers of the night would finally come for her and take her away, or she herself might become one with them.

Hit Die: d10

Requirements

To qualify as a Consort of Daybreak (Cdb), a character must fulfill the following

criteria:

Alignment: Chaotic good, neutral good or chaotic neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Feats: Courage, Dead Man Walking, Stealthy.

Skills: Hide 5 ranks, Move Silently 5 ranks, Spot 5 ranks.

Special: Must be called by the Morninglord to serve as a divine warrior under its name, or at least have a divine revelation of the Morninglord.

Class Skills

The Consort of Daybreak's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Heal (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (lore skills) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Consort of Daybreak prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Although the Consort of Daybreak prefers to use the halfspear, she is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and is proficient with all light armor.

Inner Morning (Ex): On the three hours before the dawn, the Consort of Daybreak becomes bathed in a diffuse glow. This ability functions as if she had cast light upon herself, although she can adjust her brightness to shine anywhere from a 5- to 20-foot radius (with dim light for an additional number of feet equal to the desired glow).

Benefaction of Dawn (Su): Beginning at 1st level the Consort of Daybreak can bestow a supernatural shield on others and/or herself through touch. The recipient of this touch gains Damage Reduction 3/magic, all of which last for 1 hour. The DR increases by 1 for every two Consort levels she gains henceforth. If the Consort is bathed in Inner Morning (see above), then the DR bestowed is increased further by one point. The Consort of Daybreak may choose to apply Benefaction of Dawn among any number of recipients, and she can use this a number of times equal to her level x her Charisma modifier. Benefaction of Dawn does not stack for recipients who already have Damage Reduction against magic. Using this ability is a standard action.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Inner Morning, Benefaction of Dawn	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Turn Undead	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Smite the Enfleshed	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Call of the Powers	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Bane of the Unliving (minor)	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Smite the Enfleshed 2/day	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Aura of Courage, Call of the Powers	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6		2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Bane of the Unliving (major)	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Smite the Enfleshed 3/day, Nova Solis	2	2	2	1

Turn Undead (Su): At 2nd level the Consort of Daybreak gains the ability to turn undead. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier. She turns undead as a cleric of two levels lower would.

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Consort of Daybreak gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Good, Protection and Sun clerical domains. A non-good Consort replaces the Good domain with the Luck domain. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a cure spell in place of a spell.

Smite the Enflashed (Su): At 3rd level, the Consort of Daybreak may attempt to smite corporeal undead with one normal melee attack. She adds her Charisma bonus (if any) to her attack roll and deals 1 extra point of damage per her Consort level. If she accidentally smites a creature that is not among the corporeal undead, the smite has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day. At 6th level, she may be able to use this ability twice a day. This increases to thrice a day at 9th level.

Call of the Powers (Su): Beginning at 4th level, the Consort of Daybreak's increasing powers and influence attracts the attention of Ravenloft's hidden dark powers. Either one of two things might happen: she is confronted by a powerful (and angry) darklord or she has to roll for a Powers check (15% chance of failure). If the Consort fails any Powers check, then she loses her Consort status (which she can never regain). Every three Consort levels gained henceforth, she again would be called by the Powers.

Bane of the Unliving (Ex): At 5th level, a weapon used by the Consort of Daybreak becomes infused with the sacred ability to destroy the unliving. The Consort chooses a nonmagical weapon in her possession (preferably a halbspear), which then gains a +1 enhancement bonus that deals +1d6 damage against the undead. At 8th level the chosen weapon gains its full potential as a Bane weapon: it gains an additional +1 enhancement bonus and now deals +2d6 damage against the undead. If the chosen weapon becomes lost or destroyed, the Consort of Daybreak must wait the span of a season (roughly three months) before a weapon of similar craftsmanship is divinely bestowed on her.

Aura of Courage (Su): At 7th level the Consort of Daybreak becomes immune to fear, magical or otherwise. Each ally within 10 feet of her gains a +2 morale bonus on their Fear saves. This ability functions as long as she remains conscious, but not if she is unconscious or dead. For every level she gains henceforth, the morale bonus bestowed by this aura increases by +1.

Nova Solis (Sp): At 9th level the Consort of Daybreak can sacrifice a part of herself to help destroy the legions of the undead. As a standard action she can once a day sacrifice 1000 XP from her Consort levels, as a blinding light surrounds her. All undead within a 30-foot radius of her must make a Fortitude save (DC 23) or be annihilated by the Morninglord's divine sunlight. After this effect the Consort becomes weak and tired; she temporarily loses 1d4 Constitution levels, which are regained at a rate of one level per day.

Oath of the Consort of Daybreak

The Consort must be devoted to the downtrodden, even if they shun her. She must also ruthlessly (and secretly) hunt the undead by any means necessary, provided she is faced with no other choice but to destroy them.

Wolfwalker

Emissary of the Wolf God

Few would dare explore the dense forests of the southwestern Core, home to raging packs of ravenous wolves and wolf-like creatures. Here the hidden legions of the Wolf God reign supreme, and woe to those who walk on two legs caught unawares.

But for all the feeble-mindedness of humans, the Wolf God still seems to choose a few followers among them to spread Its word. These few chosen, called Wolfwalkers, are the embodiment of what some believe are the divine aspects of a savage, ferocious deity.

They roam the deep forests, running with packs of howling wolves, spreading the instinctive word of the Wolf God: from personal pleasures and freedoms at best, to frenzied bloodlust at worst. As divine incarnations they are a powerful force to face: it is indeed a tribulation in itself to confront the heart of a heartless beast.

As emissaries of the Wolf God, Wolfwalkers carry wolf skulls as holy symbols.

Hit Die: d10

Requirements

To qualify as a Wolfwalker (Wwk), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Chaotic neutral, neutral evil or chaotic evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Feats: Animal Affinity, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack.

Skills: Handle Animal 5 ranks, Survival 7 ranks.

Special: Must be called by the Wolf God to serve as a divine warrior under its name, or at least have a divine revelation of the Wolf God.

Class Skills

The Wolfwalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Wolfwalker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Wolfwalker gains no armor proficiencies nor weapon proficiencies. She is, however, proficient with all unarmed attacks such as slam, bite or claw.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Sight the Unseen, Track	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Wild Shield +1 AC	--	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Wolfboon Touch	0	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Wild Shield +2 AC	1	--	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Lupine Cohort	1	0	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Wild Shield +3 AC	1	1	--	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Lupine Cohort x2	1	1	0	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Wild Shield +4 AC, Morpheus Lupus	1	1	1	--
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Morpheus Lupus 2/day, Lupine Cohort x3	2	1	1	0
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Wild Shield +5 AC, Morpheus Lupus 3/day	2	1	1	1

Track: The Wolfwalker automatically acquires Track as a bonus feat, assuming she does not already have this feat.

Sight the Unseen (Ex): At 1st level the Wolfwalker gains the Scent and Low-light Vision special qualities inherent among the Wolf God's worshippers.

Wild Shield (Su): Beginning at 2nd level the Wolfwalker receives a divine gift of protection from the Wolf God, which replaces her need for manmade armor. She gains a natural AC of +1, which increases further by +1 for every two levels she gains henceforth.

Wolfboon Touch (Su): Beginning at 3rd level the Wolfwalker can bestow a supernatural augmentation of abilities on others and/or herself through touch. The recipient of this touch gains +1 on her AC, attack rolls and saves, all of which last for 1 hour. The Wolfwalker may choose to apply Wolfboon Touch among any number of recipients, and she can use this a number of times equal to her level x her Charisma modifier. Using this ability is a standard action.

Spells: Beginning at 3rd level the Wolfwalker gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Animal, Strength and Trickery clerical domains. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a cure spell in place of a spell.

Divine Health (Ex): At 4th level, the Wolfwalker gains immunity to all diseases, including supernatural and magical diseases.

Lupine Cohort (Su): At 5th level the Wolfwalker gains the service of an exceptionally strong wolf. Once per day as a full round action she can use her holy symbol to call this ally which remains with her for two hours per Wolfwalker level; it may be dismissed any time as a free action. The wolf appears always in full health each time it is called. Calling a lupine cohort is a conjuration (calling) effect. Should the wolf die, another exceptionally strong wolf simply takes its place within the next three days, without any penalty to the Wolfwalker herself. Every two levels henceforth, the Wolfwalker can summon another wolf under her service. Thus at 9th level she can call three wolves at once, call one wolf three times a day, or call two wolves while calling another one later in the day. If the Wolfwalker has an evil alignment, she summons dire wolves instead of normal wolves. Ravenloft rules apply on the summoning of animal companions.

Damage Reduction (Ex): At 6th level the Wolfwalker gains Damage Reduction 4/silver. This increases by 4 for every level gained henceforth.

Morpheus Lupus (Su): At 8th level the Wolfwalker gains the ability to turn herself into wolf form and back again once a day. This ability works similar to the Wild Shape ability that druids have. At 9th level she becomes able to assume wolf form twice per day, and at 10th level she can do so three times per day.

Oath of the Wolfwalker

The Wolfwalker is free to do what she wills, but she may never intentionally kill even a single lupine creature. Doing so results in becoming "prey" in the eyes of the Wolf God and Its followers.

Part Two: Emissaries of the Grand Scheme and the Gray Realm

In this and the next few installments of **Substance, Shadow and Spirit**, emissaries of each of the gods detailed in the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting* would be presented. This installment would focus on divine emissaries of the Ezra and the Eternal Order.

Anchor Knight

Emissary of Ezra

The Mists of Death fell silent, then the Voice spoke, once more. "Enter the Mists as You must, Mortal, but not as You are. Your kind has no place here. To enter the Mists, you must become as one with the Mists. Never again shall You leave them. Will You forever sacrifice Yourself to watch over these few mortals?"

Spoke Ezra, "Such is My role in the Grand Scheme. So must it be."

-The Books of Ezra Book 1, xii-xiii

Each creature in the Dread Realms, be it a normal man or a legion of the night, has its own part to play in the Grand Scheme of things. This teaching has become the foundation of the powerful Church of Ezra that now stretches nearly throughout the Core.

As the Anchorites serve as Our Guardian's missionaries, so do the Anchor Knights serve as Her enforcers. These soldiers of faith come close to being true paladins, tasked by some divine devotional drive to protect and heal Her faithful (and only Her faithful) against the evil Legions of the Night. It is in the belief of the Anchor Knight that if she performs her duties well, if she has proven herself worthy in the Grand Scheme, she too may be able to join Ezra in the Mists.

Hit Dice: d10

Requirements: To qualify as an Anchor Knight (AKn), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Lawful neutral, lawful good, neutral, lawful evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Feats: Courage, Improved Initiative, Negotiator.

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Heal 4 ranks.

Special: Must be called by Ezra to serve as a divine warrior under Her name, or at least have a divine revelation of Ezra.

Class Skills

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Nebular Touch	--	--	--	--
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Turn Undead	0	--	--	--
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Mistform Membrane	1	--	--	--
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Shield of Ezra	1	0	--	--
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4		1	1	--	--
6th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Nebula Obscura	1	1	0	--
7th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Ezra's Watch	1	1	1	--
8th	+8	+6	+2	+6		2	1	1	0
9th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Nebula Obscura 2/day	2	1	1	1
10th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Personal Transubstantiation	2	2	2	1

The Anchor Knight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

The Anchor Knight also gains a sect-dependent class skill, as follows: Lawful neutral (Levkarest)-Appraise (Int), lawful good (Mordentshire)-Gather Information (Cha), neutral (Port-a-Lucine)-Knowledge (arcana) (Int), lawful evil (Nevuchar Springs)-Intimidate (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Anchor Knight prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Anchor Knights are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor, and with all types of shields (except tower shields).

Nebular Touch (Ex): As a manifestation of the Anchor Knight's abilities, any object she touches becomes surrounded by a thin, cold mist that lasts for 1d6 rounds. The effects of this ability are mostly cosmetic in nature, unless certain circumstances prove otherwise.

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Anchor Knight gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Healing, Mists and Protection clerical domains. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a spell.

Turn Undead (Su): At 2nd level the Anchor Knight gains the ability to turn undead. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier. She turns undead as a cleric of one level lower would.

Mistform Membrane (Su): Beginning at 3rd level the Anchor Knight can bestow a supernatural deflection on others and/or herself through touch. The recipient of this touch gains a translucent mist-like membrane around her, providing a +1 deflection bonus on her AC that lasts for 2 hours. The Anchor Knight may choose to apply Mistform Membrane among any number of recipients, and she can use this a number of times equal to her level x her Wisdom modifier. Using this ability is a standard action.

Shield of Ezra (Su): At 4th level the Anchor Knight receives proof of Ezra's favor by manifesting Her shield once a day. The shield is a translucent, glowing mist that

surrounds the Anchor Knight, and which lasts for one round per two Anchor Knight levels. Depending on the Anchor Knight's level, this shield manifests as follows:

Lawful Neutral: DR 8/+1 against all physical attacks.

Lawful Good: DR 12/+3 against all metal weapons.

Neutral: +5 to both Fortitude and Reflex saves against damage-dealing spells.

Lawful Evil: +5 to all Will saves against mind-affecting spells and effects.

Nebula Obscura (Su): At 6th level the Anchor Knight can be one with Our Guardian and take the form of the Mists. Once a day she can assume *gaseous form*, which she casts as a sorcerer of 12th level. The spell acts as detailed, except as follows: she can assume this misty form for a whole hour (unless she wills herself back to tangibility), in which she gains a speed equal to her land movement rate and DR 20/magic.

At 9th level she can call Nebula Obscura an additional time a day.

Ezra's Watch (Ex): At 7th level the Anchor Knight's enduring devotion to Ezra guarantees that she may never be threatened by serious harm. The Anchor Knight becomes immune to critical hits by weapons with an enchantment of +3 or less.

Personal Transubstantiation (Ex): At 10th level the Anchor Knight achieves a perpetual state of flux between two worlds, emulating the mythical decision of Ezra to become one with the Mists. The Anchor Knight becomes permanently incorporeal: she can now only be harmed by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance of ignoring damage from any corporeal source. She can pass through solid objects at will, and her own attacks pass through armor.

Oath of the Anchor Knight: s she embodies the concepts of the Grand Scheme, the Anchor Knight's driving force is duty. She must devote herself to works that uplift those who believe in Ezra's teachings. The Anchor Knight still helps non-believers, but she does not prioritize them.

Vanguard of the Veil

Emissary of the Eternal Order

*Come to us, not in vicious nightmare
but in gentle dream.*

*Come to us, not to chide in anger,
but to prod in gentleness.*

*Come to us, not to take for death,
but to give hope to the living.*

*Come to us, not to haunt,
but to help us remember.*

-Prayer for the Dead

Darkest Night, Necropolis

For almost half a millennium now, Darkon has anchored its spiritual fears on the Eternal Order, gods of death who patiently wait in the mythical Gray Realm for the day when They and Their subjects would reclaim the land that the living had stolen as their own. These fears were more than magnified in the Grim Harvest of 750, when the great city of Il Aluk fell sway to the cold influence of Death. Now, more than ever, Darkonians grimly await the nearing Hour of Ascension when they, too, would succumb to the powers of the Gray Realm.

It is this fear that drives Vanguard of the Veil: though they are called by the Eternal Order, they nevertheless see to it that the Hour of Ascension is continually postponed in the lands of the living. The Vanguard are a desperate lot, having walked through the cold dimensions of the Gray Realm, and having returned, not triumphantly, with the scars of proof.

Hit Dice: d10

Requirements: To qualify as a Vanguard of the Veil (VoV), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Lawful evil, lawful neutral, neutral evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Back to the Wall, Cold One.

Skills: Hide 5 ranks, Move Silently 5 ranks.

Special: Must be called by the Eternal Order to serve as a divine warrior under Their name, or at least have a divine revelation of the Eternal Order.

Class Skills

The Vanguard of the Veil's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Vanguard of the Veil prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Vanguard of the Veil are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with light and medium armor, and with all types of shields (except tower shields).

Turn Undead (Su): At 1st level the Vanguard of the Veil gains the ability to turn, rebuke or command undead as a cleric of her level. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Enduring Spirit (Ex): At 2nd level the Vanguard of the Veil receives a +1 bonus on all her Fear saves when faced with the undead. This bonus increases by +1 for every two Vanguard levels she gains henceforth.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Turn Undead	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Enduring Spirit +1	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Spectral Watch	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Enduring Spirit +2	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Spurn Soulless Magic	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Enduring Spirit +3, Voice of the Living	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Pierce Not the Veil	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Enduring Spirit +4	2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Pierce Not the Veil 2/day	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Enduring Spirit +5, Death's Final Wail	2	2	2	1

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Vanguard of the Veil gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Death, Evil and Repose clerical domains. Non-evil Vanguards replace the Evil domain with the Knowledge domain. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a spell.

Spectral Watch (Su): At 3rd level the Vanguard of the Veil's eyes become milky-white, giving her the gift to peer through the ethereal veil that separates the worlds of the living and the dead. Once a day, for the duration of an hour, she can *see invisibility*, which automatically gives her the ability to see incorporeal undead. As long as her eyes remain white, she gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all her Charisma-based class skills, plus a temporary Outcast Rating of +1.

Spurn Soulless Magic (Su): At 5th level, the Vanguard of the Veil gains the ability to resist the wiles of magic cast by the unliving. She applies her Wisdom modifier to all saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities used by the undead (in this case her Will saves are thus doubled).

Voice of the Living (Su): A loud, rebuking shout from a 6th level Vanguard of the Veil can stun for 1d4 rounds any undead within 50 feet who fail a Will save (DC 10 + Charisma bonus + Vanguard class levels).

She can access the Voice once a day. This is a sonic ability.

Pierce Not The Veil (Ex): Beginning at 7th level the Vanguard of the Veil can, with these words, *halt undead* as per the sorcerer spell of the same name. She can do this once a day. At 9th level Vanguard can *halt undead* twice a day. This ability cannot function within an area that is magically or supernaturally silenced.

Death's Final Wail (Su): At 10th level, the Vanguard of the Veil's Voice of the Living ability ceases to function, and instead turns into a wail that could destroy the undead. With this wail she can automatically destroy all undead with a Hit Dice below her own within 50 feet who fail a Will save (DC 20 + Charisma bonus). Those that succeed the save must, however, still remain stunned, unable to do any action for 1d4 rounds. She can access the Wail a number of times a day equal to her Charisma modifier. This is a sonic ability.

Oath of the Vanguard of the Veil

The one main drive of the Vanguard is supplication from the Eternal Order's worshippers. She demands appeasement from the normal folk in hopes that such actions would quell the Vengeful Dead.

Part Three: Emissaries of Bane and Bounty

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Fortilicus

Emissary of the Lawgiver

“Let this place resonate with new songs; the cries of the warrior, the melody of clashing swords, the harmony of iron shod boots marching in unison over the stones,

the crescendo of the death wail, and the chorus of the widow's lament. Let this place be a tapestry upon which I shall paint new scenes, and blood and ash shall be my pigments. These are the things I cherish, and they shall dominate this place, as they do wherever the hearts of men are weak and quick to desire."

--The Book of Chondath (found in an Egertus gutter and kept as a sacred manuscript by priests of the Lawgiver)

In the rolling lowlands of Nova Vaasa and Hazlan, the Law is the only dominant philosophy; all who wander these lands must bow and supplicate to the iron whims of the Lawgiver. The feared Black Tyrant fell silent after the Great Upheaval, and although His voice no longer reverberates loud and true across His realms, the Lawgiver still allows His gauntlets, His Fortilici, to roam. The Fortilicus is an enforcer in the truest sense of the word, Force in its absolute manifestation. Through the eyes of the Lawgiver only the strongest are worthy, thus the Fortilicus strives to be one among the strongest, following only the iron-cold mechanisms that thrum in her mind and spirit.

Hit Dice: d10.

Requirements

To qualify as a Fortilicus (Ftl), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Lawful evil, neutral evil, lawful neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Jaded.

Skills: Concentration 3 ranks, Intimidate 5 ranks.

Special: Must be called by the Lawgiver to serve as a divine warrior under His name, or at least have a divine revelation of the Lawgiver.

Class Skills

The Fortilicus's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int) and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Fortilicus prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Fortilici are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor, and with all types of shields (except tower shields).

Pain on the Restless (Ex): For every successful unarmed attack the Fortilicus inflicts on a chaotic-aligned creature, she can inflict an additional one damage (lethal). This increases by one for every Fortilicus class levels she attains.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Pain on the Restless	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Strength from the Restless	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Turn Undead, Weapon of Harrows	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Confiscation	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Misfortune's Cruelty	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Horrid Flaying 1/day	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Grip of the Iron Maiden	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Horrid Flaying 2/day, Dominate	2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Ironcloud Severance	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Horrid Flaying 3/day	2	2	2	1

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Fortilicus gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Evil and Law clerical domains. Non-evil Fortilici replace the Evil domain with the Death domain, while non-lawful Fortilici replace the Law domain with the War domain. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a spell.

Strength from the Restless (Su): At 2nd level the Fortilicus can draw strength from those she had inflicted pain onto. For every three separate and successful uses of her Pain on the Restless ability, she gains a +2 enhancement bonus on her Strength score for 24 hours. Thus, a Fortilicus who has successfully attacked six chaotic-aligned targets using her Pain on the Restless ability gains a +4 enhancement bonus on her Strength score, which lasts for a full day.

Turn Undead (Su): At 3rd level the Fortilicus gains the ability to turn or rebuke undead. Lawful-aligned undead are rebuked, while the rest are turned. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier. She turns undead as a cleric of two levels lower would.

Weapon of Harrows (Su): At 3rd level, a nonmagical weapon used by the Fortilicus becomes a vicious implement of pain. This weapon (preferably a whip) deals x4 damage on a successful critical hit, instead of its normal critical damage score. If the chosen weapon of harrows becomes lost or destroyed, the Fortilicus must wait the span of a fortnight (roughly two weeks) before a new weapon of similar craftsmanship is divinely bestowed on her. No other person can use a Fortilicus's weapon of harrows.

Confiscation (Ex): A 4th-level Fortilicus gains a +4 competence bonus on attempts to disarm a foe. This increases by +1 for every two levels she gains henceforth. She draws no attacks of opportunity from her target for making such attempts.

Misfortune's Cruelty (Ex): A 5th-level male Fortilicus can create a rupture in reality that negatively affects a person's immediate future actions. Only male Fortilici could gain this ability, for reasons unknown. A number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier, as a standard action, the Fortilicus focuses on a target within a 30-foot radius of himself. The next time the subject of this ability attempts an action that requires a die roll to determine success (a skill check or a save, for example, if circumstances dictate), the action fails.

Horrid Flaying (Su): At 6th level the Fortilicus is able to horrifically flay a living creature with but a single thought. Once a day, as a standard action, she can focus her mind on any living creature with skin within 30 feet of her. That creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 16 + Fortilicus's Charisma modifier) or take 3d6 slashing

damage, as its skin mercilessly peels itself from the rest of its body. Any person within 30 feet of the victim must make a Horror save at such a gruesome sight. Additionally, the victim also suffers incredible pain, taking only one partial action per round for 2d6 rounds afterward, and also taking an additional 3 damage per round for the next 2d6 rounds as both infection and decay seep in. The damage caused by horrid flaying can only be healed by divine magic. The Fortilicus can use Horrid Flaying one more time a day for every two levels she gains henceforth.

Grip of the Iron Maiden (Ex): At 7th level, a female Fortilicus's grapple attack becomes lethal to her foes. For reasons unknown to even His followers, the Lawgiver has bestowed this ability exclusively on His female emissaries. The Fortilicus deals 2d4 damage to the victim per round the grapple is maintained. Also for the same duration, she gains a +4 competence bonus on her Intimidate skill checks against her victim.

Dominate (Su): At 8th level, the Fortilicus can dominate any single living creature of Hit Dice equal to half or less than half of her own total Hit Dice (rounded down) a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. She may choose any target within 50 feet of her, which must succeed at a Will save (DC 17 + Fortilicus's Charisma modifier) to resist the effect. This is a mind-affecting ability that creates a compulsion effect, and takes a standard action that does not draw an attack of opportunity. The effect lasts for 24 hours. It is otherwise identical to the *dominate person* spell.

Ironcloud Severance (Su): At 9th level the Fortilicus is able to summon a thick, almost solid, mist that severs the ties between the world of the seen and the unseen. Once a day she summons forth a thick miasmic cloud that has the effects of the spell *obscuring mist* cast by a 10th-level cleric. Once this cloud is summoned all connection with divine agencies in the area of effect is severed for 24 hours. Divine spellcasters (except the Fortilicus herself) caught within the ironcloud at the time of its manifestation will have no access to spells. All divine spell effects are suppressed, and divinely infused magic items cease to function (except for the Fortilicus's weapon of harrows).

Oath of the Fortilicus

Emissaries of the Lawgiver follow a code called the Oath of Dereliction. Simply stated, it obliges the Fortilicus to spread the word of her patron god through subtle means, be it intrigue, subterfuge or in many cases outright physical coercion. Only the mighty survive in the eyes of the Fortilicus, and she must delight in playing the Iron Tyrant's role to the hilt.

Weave Champion

Emissary of Hala

I am the Mother of all races. I am She who has returned.
Through sky, earth and fire, I am renewed, as I renew.
Enter now the Circle, My children, with perfect love and trust.
Together, we will laugh, we will cry, and we will endure.

-**"Thirteen Strands Unwoven"** Tales of the Ages

Since time immemorial, normal folk have for many faceted reasons feared the witch and her culture of mysticism. Never more so is this real than in the Dread Realms, where practitioners of this silent craft are shunned or, in many lamentable cases, executed. Beneath the canopy of Ravenloft's dark forests the Church of Hala thrives, struggling to survive persecution from all those who misunderstand the magic of the Weave. Hence, Hala occasionally sends forth Her holy defenders, Weave Champions, to make sure that Her sacred art thrives in an increasingly hostile world that fears everything secret and mystical.

Hit Dice: d10.

Requirements: To qualify as a Weave Champion (WvC), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Feats: Open Mind, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Knowledge: Religion)

Skills: Hide 6 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 6 ranks, Survival 4 ranks.

Special: Must be called by Hala to serve as a divine warrior under Her name, or at least have a divine revelation of Hala.

Class Skills

The Weave Champion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Weave Champion prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Weave Champions are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light armor.

Weavechosen (Ex): As chosen of Hala, the Weave Champion's hair takes on an autumn color while her skin becomes fresh and flawless. Her Charisma increases by +2 at 1st level, which further increases by +2 at 6th level.

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Weave Champion gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Healing, Plant and Magic clerical domains. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a spell.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Weavechosen	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Pneumic Ward	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Turn Undead, Feyfolk Persuasion +1	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Item Creation	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Hermetic Healing	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Feyfolk Persuasion +2	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Consecrate Coven	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Item Creation	2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Feyfolk Persuasion +3	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Æther Transit	2	2	2	1

Pneumic Ward (Su): At 2nd level the Weave Champion gains an invisible sonic aura that surrounds her with a 10-foot radius. Whenever an undead or fey creature enters this aura, it shimmers with the sound of tiny bells. The pneumic ward's radius increases by 10 feet for every three levels she gains henceforth. This is a sonic ability.

Turn Undead (Su): At 3rd level the Weave Champion gains the ability to turn undead as a cleric two levels lower than her own. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Feyfolk Persuasion (Ex): A 3rd level Weave Champion becomes more favorable to the folk of the forest. She gains a +1 bonus to all her Charisma-related skills when communicating with fey creatures, which increases by +1 for every three Weave Champion levels she gains henceforth.

Item Creation: At 4th and 8th levels the Weave Champion can take one bonus Item Creation feat without the necessary prerequisites for that specific feat.

Hermetic Healing (Ex): At 5th level the Weave Champion's healing skill and magic improves, using her knowledge of holistic medicine. Whenever she casts a healing spell (such as *cure light wounds*) or uses her Heal skill, she adds her Wisdom modifier as an additional number of hit points to be healed, and adds her Intelligence modifier as an insight bonus to her Heal skill. These bonuses apply to any magical healing item the Weave Champion creates.

Consecrate Coven (Sp): Once every six months, during a solstice or equinox of her choosing, a 7th-level Weave Champion can render any appropriate site *hallowed* in Hala's name, as the cleric spell. Any site could include stone circles, forest clearings, underground chambers, abandoned churches and other places where kindred witches could gather and perform their rituals. A Weave Champion, however, must sacrifice 5,000 XP to perform this ability. If the Weave Champion does not already have an affinity for a place of worship and ritual, then she gains such an affinity or emotional attachment to the first coven she consecrates using this ability.

Æther Transit (Su): At 10th level the Weave Champion can take herself and a few others through the Near Ethereal. Once a day she and a number of people equal to her Wisdom modifier can travel ethereally as the *ethereal jaunt* spell, but she and her co-travelers must be linked or joined together throughout the whole transit.

Oath of the Weave Champion

Since the Church of Hala is not a missionary religion, the Weave Champion's primary duty is to defend the Church, using force only when absolutely necessary. She must also defend the sacred secrets of the Weave, and must never take pleasure in combat, war or the deaths that come after such miseries.

In the next installment, we focus on emissaries of Zhakata and Belenus.

Part Four: Emissaries of Appeasement and Inquisition

In this and the next few installments of **Substance, Shadow and Spirit**, emissaries of each of the gods detailed in the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting* would be presented. This installment would focus on divine emissaries of Zhakata and Belenus.

Servile Scion

Emissary of Zhakata

The Devourer is a mighty storm and his voice is a distant echo...from where the sun arises and where it sets his shadow strikes...he partakes of the Path ahead...and one day he shall return to give what he has partaken.

-Prayer at the Hour of Vespers, Zhakata's Dole

Lurking somewhere in the cold swirls of the Mists, the island of G'Henna reflects in itself its emaciated, starving and desolate people. All the realm swears fealty to the hungry whims of Zhakata the Devourer, the unseen god who demands all and takes all, leaving almost nothing behind.

Through painful sacrifice, the people of G'Henna hope (perhaps in vain) that Zhakata would soon be appeased, and would manifest Itself as the Provider in a legendary Day of Bounty. But until that glorious day comes, the Devourer's Servile Scions must roam, ever seeking to appease their hidden Lord in any way they could.

Hit Dice: d10.

Requirements

To qualify as a Servile Scion (SSc), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Lawful evil, neutral evil, lawful neutral.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Feats: Endurance, Jaded.

Skills: Intimidate 9 ranks, Survival 10 ranks.

Special: Must be called by Zhakata to serve as a divine warrior under Its name, or at least have a divine revelation of Zhakata.

Class Skills

The Servile Scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Servile Scion prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Servile Scions are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, but are not proficient with any armor or shields.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Scion's Beads	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Gaunt	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Eyes of the Guesting Cup	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Servile Grip 1, Shattering Pulse	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Visions of Hunger 1/day	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Servile Grip 2, Bonesmith's Boon	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Visions of Hunger 2/day	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Servile Grip 3	2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	Visions of Hunger 3/day	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Servile Grip 4	2	2	2	1

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Servile Scion gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Destruction, Earth, Fire and Protection clerical domains. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does; unlike other Emissaries however, she can spontaneously cast either a *cure* or *inflict* spell (her choosing) in place of a spell.

Scion's Beads: As chosen of Zhakata, a 1st-level Servile Scion instinctively (and perhaps mystically) creates a string of prayer beads for herself made entirely of human finger bones. Such a macabre item, when completed, grants her a +7 circumstance bonus to her Hide and Intimidate checks. On the odd chance she loses these beads, the Servile Scion instinctively crafts another whole string, taking the span of the moon going through all its phases (roughly a whole month) for such an undertaking.

Gaunt (Ex): At 2nd level, the Servile Scion becomes grossly underweight, gaining an almost skeletal-like appearance. She gets a +2 increase to her Dexterity score, while at the same time gets a –2 decrease to her Constitution score. For every four Servile Scion levels she gains henceforth, she gets a +1 increase to her Dexterity and a –1 decrease to her Constitution.

Eyes of the Guesting Cup (Su): A 3rd-level Servile Scion can mystically extend her vision through the precious skulls of previous martyrs who have starved themselves for the Devourer. She can select any Guesting Cup (as stated in the “G’Henna” entry in Chapter 4 of the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting*) within a mile of her and see through its eyes, in which case the Cup’s eye sockets glow with sinister green pinpoints of light. What the Servile Scion sees through the Guesting Cup is relative to the sight range such an item could give.

Servile Grip (Su): At 4th level the Servile Scion could drain another living being’s essences, using it to her advantage. A successful grapple enables her to permanently drain 1 level each from her victim’s Constitution and Charisma scores, which give her an additional total of 5 hp that lasts for three days. The Servile Scion can use this ability up to three times a day. For every two Servile Scion levels she gains henceforth, she can increase the number of levels she can drain from her victims to increase her hit points by one; thus, an 8th-level Servile Scion can permanently drain 3 levels each from her victim’s Constitution and Charisma scores, giving her a total of 15 hp lasting three days.

Shattering Pulse (Sp): With a simple word of power, a 4th-level Servile Scion can break objects around her with a sonic pulse. This works much like the *shatter* spell cast by a 4th-level wizard, and can be used by the Servile Scion a number of times per day equal to her Wisdom modifier.

Visions of Hunger (Su): At 5th level, the Servile Scion can pick 1d6 persons within a 50-foot radius of her, making them see every living being around as starving or in the throes of death by hunger. These ghastly visions last for as long as she makes a Concentration skill check (DC 10 + Servile Scion class levels) every round she wishes to prolong them. Those targeted must make a Fear save (DC 17) at the first round of visions, and must make a Horror save (DC 17) every round henceforth the visions last if the initial Fear saves have been successfully made. The Servile Scion

can induce Visions of Hunger once a day, and an additional time a day for every two Servile Scion levels henceforth.

Bonesmith's Boon (Su): A Servile Scion at 6th level can supernaturally turn any stray bone within a 50-foot radius of her into a deadly weapon in the blink of an eye. Only she could use this weapon, and she must be proficient in such a weapon for her to use it. Any weapons created this way are considered normal weapons with no special abilities, although the Servile Scion may freely choose to enchant them with magicks of her choosing.

Oath of the Servile Scion

Zhakata is a god who must be appeased, not worshipped. Thus, as chosen of the Devourer, the Servile Scion appeases her Patron by (at best) making sure others partake only of foodstuffs that they need, and (at worst) offering all food to Zhakata alone, with no one allowed to even touch such a precious offering.

Solar Zealot

Emissary of Belenus

“Seek mercy from the Sun no more.”

- *Edict of Viktal, 741 BC.*

Belenus shines upon Tepest and the Shadowlands as a radiant beacon of salvation and truth. Unfortunately, many of His followers in the Dread Realms see only the lurking shadows beyond His luminous grace as encroaching evils. Tepestani Inquisitors ruthlessly burn “witches” in Belenus’s name, while Nidalans exalt Him and condemn other gods (and their worshippers) as “demonic.”

Solar Zealots thrive under this shadow of intolerance. Although she carries the zealous aspirations of xenophobic societies, she nevertheless perseveres as a voice of reason and discernment.

Hit Dice: d10.

Requirements

To qualify as a Solar Zealot (SoZ), a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Alignment: Neutral good, chaotic good, neutral.

Race: Human.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Courage, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Religion).

Skills: Intimidate 3 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special	Spells			
						1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Track	--	--	--	--
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Turn Undead	0	--	--	--
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Belenic Mindlink	1	--	--	--
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Eyes of Inquisition +2	1	0	--	--
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Scorching Touch	1	1	--	--
6 th	+6	+5	+2	+5	Sword of the Sun +2, Truthgaze	1	1	0	--
7 th	+7	+5	+2	+5	Eyes of Inquisition +4	1	1	1	--
8 th	+8	+6	+2	+6	Sword of the Sun +4	2	1	1	0
9 th	+9	+6	+3	+6	True Seeing	2	1	1	1
10 th	+10	+7	+3	+7	Sword of the Sun +6	2	2	2	1

Special: Must be called by Belenus to serve as a divine warrior under His name, or at least have a divine revelation of Belenus.

Special: Solar Zealots from the Shadowlands are exclusively female.

Class Skills

The Solar Zealot's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Solar Zealot prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Solar Zealots are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light armor.

Track: A 1st-level Solar Zealot gains the Track feat for free.

Turn Undead (Su): At 2nd level the Solar Zealot gains the ability to turn undead as a cleric one level lower than her own. She may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Spells: Beginning at 2nd level the Solar Zealot gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells from the Good and Sun clerical domains. Non-good Solar Zealots replace the Good domain with the Fire domain. She prepares and casts spells the way a cleric does, though she cannot spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a spell.

Belenic Mindlink (Su): At 3rd level, the Solar Zealot can communicate telepathically with any cleric, paladin and emissary in service to Belenus within a hundred feet of her.

Eyes of Inquisition (Ex): Due to the relatively hostile stance of her people towards the unfamiliar, a 4th-level Solar Zealot gains an advantage when dealing with those not of her kind. She gains a +2 competence bonus to her Intimidate and Sense Motive skills when interacting with nonhumans. This bonus increases further by +2 at 7th level.

Scorching Touch (Su): At 5th level the Solar Zealot gains a touch of fire. She gains a touch attack considered as a natural weapon dealing the indicated damage for such an attack, considered as fire damage. The Solar Zealot can use this ability thrice a day.

Sword of the Sun (Su): A 6th-level Solar Zealot can call upon the essences of Belenus to create a deadly weapon of fire and brilliance. Once a day (and only in the presence of daylight or spells that mimic daylight) she can command natural sunlight to become a radiant greatsword with an enhancement bonus starting at +2 at 6th level, increasing by +2 for every two levels she gains henceforth. Forming the greatsword from sunlight is a standard action, and the weapon lasts for a number of rounds equal to 4 + her Wisdom modifier. Such a mystical weapon does not function for anyone other than Solar Zealots.

Truthgaze (Sp): Solar Zealots of 6th level can gaze into a person's eyes, compelling him to speak nothing but the truth. The target of this ability must make a Will save (DC 14 + Solar Zealot's level) or act as if inside a *zone of truth*. A Solar Zealot can use this ability a number of times a day equal to 4 + her Charisma modifier.

True Seeing (Su): At 9th level, a Solar Zealot can focus her sight to allow her to see as if under the effects of a *true seeing* spell cast by a 10th-level cleric, requiring a round of concentration to activate such an activity. This ability can last for up to an hour a day, but the Solar Zealot must maintain her concentration to use this ability.

Oath of the Solar Zealot

Solar Zealots must actively seek to cleanse their worldview of evil, but also have to try as much as possible to keep from falling into the trap of intolerance and cruelty against those who are simply different from them. As such, although Solar Zealots follow the sacred laws of the Belenus priesthood, they covertly follow their own ways to solve problems.

In the next installment, we focus on emissaries of Ra, Osiris and Set, gods of the Akiri pantheon.

Children of the Summerlands: A New Player Race

by Dion Fernandez

As a preview of the upcoming Midway Haven netbook *Noctis Inferior: The Ravenloft Underdark*, a new player character race appropriate for play in the Dread Realms is presented here.

Medieval history is replete with stories of people not unlike humans who have emerged from the depths of the earth to live under the brightness of the sun. Such unusual folklore could be used to generate a new character race for players in Ravenloft: the Summerfolk, the reclusive human subrace of the Noctis Inferior, the subterranean Lower Night that hides beneath the Core.

A Historical Account

Two medieval chroniclers, Ralph of Coggeshall (writing in 1210 at Coggeshall monastery in Essex, England) and William of Newburgh (contemporary of Ralph who lived in Yorkshire), tell a curious story of a boy and a girl with green skin who were found in what is now the village of Woolpit, in Suffolk sometime between the years 1135 and 1154.

Unable to understand their speech, the villagers took them to a manor lord. At first the children cried and refused the food that was offered to them, but when they saw some freshly cut beans they indicated by signs that they would like to try some. Unfortunately, the boy died soon afterwards, but the girl survived and gradually lost the greenish tint of her skin. She remained in the lord's household for many years, and married a man from Lynn (later King's Lynn) in Norfolk, although she was rather unruly.

The girl said that her people came from St. Martin's Land, a realm where the sun never shone and where everyone was green. She and her brother were tending their flocks when they came to a cavern and heard the peal of church bells. They followed the sound and emerged into the light of day where, overcome by brightness, they lay unnoticed until they were caught by villagers. To this day, the people of Woolpit,

England still commemorate the green children by displaying road signs with their visages on them.

Summerfolk

Contrary to the rather cheery name that surface dwellers have given them, summerfolk are a grim people who have rarely, if ever, seen the sun that shines on the surface. Fireside folklore from all around the Core suggests that summerfolk were humans who, fearful of the Mists, gained the unexpected help of faerie-folk and retreated away from the world of sunlight into the depths of the earth.

The truth to their origins, however, is far stranger than superstitions would whisper. Indeed, summerfolk are a subrace of humans who have quickly adapted to life in the Lower Night. Not long after the Realm of Dread began forming, obscure legend goes that fey creatures lured a group of miserable surface humans underground. These humans were promised kinship, eternal life and riches within the perpetual summer beneath the earth, but in actuality they were being pulled in as servants of the fey. Fed only mushrooms that turned their skin green, these humans eventually escaped from their deceptive captors yet could not find their way back to the world of sunlight. Thus, they eked out a new home for themselves in this lightless realm and became the first *iundyrbukk*, as they prefer to be called.

Personality: Much like Ravenloft's surface humans, summerfolk (from their own point of view) couldn't care less about the mysteries of the world around them, preferring to live peaceful and uneventful lives. Summerfolk are simple people with a disposition of cultivating the surrounding ecology to live simple lives.

As with their surface cousins, summerfolk fear the effects of magic that calls on unseen powers beyond nature's reach. To the summerfolk, their world is *The World*; the sunlit world high above merely exists in bedtime stories told to children and in laughable tales told by elders.

Physical Description: As a subrace of humans, summerfolk look every inch human, save for the deep-green coloring of their skin. This pigmentation has led surface scholars to speculate that summerfolk are somehow related to the fey; after all, in many legends the fey realm is referred to as the "Summerlands." Another curious trait that most surface dwellers may overlook is the fact that summerfolk do not support facial hair; scholars theorize that the absence of sunlight may have led to this.

Typical summermen stand 5 feet 2 inches to 5 feet 6 inches and weigh 145 pounds, while summermaids are usually half a foot shorter and 30 pounds lighter.

Summerfolk wear simple clothing and usually shun any form of jewelry.

Relations: Summerfolk are insular. They are fearful, and at the same time curious, of the darkness beyond the boundaries of their hamlets. They are distrustful of strangers, especially of "lightskins" that are occasionally seen wandering the wilds. The extremely few summerfolk who reach the surface may perhaps eventually find themselves incorporated into normal society, but only after years of fascination and fearful awe by surface dwellers.

Alignment: While surface dwellers may find summerfolk as chaotic as the faeries they are said to be in kinship with, summerfolk are as neutral as any surface human could be.

Homelands: Deep in the Noctis Inferior, summerfolk live out lives that humans all over the Core would find “mundane”: their hamlets, not unlike small human settlements on the surface, dot the underdark.

Religion: Most summerfolk do not believe in any higher powers, although many tolerate and even openly welcome the divinity of nature, hence the existence of a few rangers and druids among them. Although many summerfolk tales mention the divine powers of the Spider Queen, no sane summerfolk would worship such a vicious deity.

Languages: Handed down from generation to generation, the language of the summerfolk is an unusually sibilant blend between Balok, Mordentish and Darkonese. Not surprisingly, the lands where these languages come from are the same lands where most summerfolk sightings on the surface were recorded.

Names: The meld of ancient Balok, Mordentish and Darkonese has produced familiar yet unusually musical names among the summerfolk.

Male Names: Aldrin, Ciestyr, Corvyn, Damion, Giurgen, Iarvys, Oryn, Phelix, Roman, Tyris.

Female Names: Ayrin, Annika, Bela, Cieryl, Haydin, Lysha, Katya, Maenin, Shastiya, Taeryl.

Summerfolk Racial Traits

+2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, -2 Constitution, -2 Charisma. Summerfolk are nimble and knowledgeable of the ways of their lightless world, yet centuries of isolation from the sunlit lands have weakened them, while the trauma of being mere servants of fey has made them suspicious of anything unusual.

Medium-size. Summerfolk have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

A summerfolk’s base land speed is 30 ft.

Deep Human: For all special abilities and effects, summerfolk are considered human, though they do not gain the extra feat or skill points standard humans receive.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a daylight spell) blinds a summerfolk for 1 round. She also takes a –1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls, saves and skill checks while operating in bright light.

Racial Bonuses: +1 racial bonus to Initiative rolls, and +3 racial bonus on Hide, Listen and Move Silently skill checks when traveling underground. Most summerfolk know better than to meddle into what they do not understand, yet their curiosity for things unknown is tempered with caution.

Base Outcast Rating: 3.

Low-light Vision: A summerfolk can see twice as far as a normal human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight or similar conditions of poor illumination. She retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

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He hopes one day to become the Father of Filipino Gothic Literature simply because there currently isn't one, and he believes that he's up to the task of attaining that goal (if his female rival in Manila doesn't beat him to it first, that is).



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