



SENTINELS

of the SHOAL

NEW Epic Spells, Feats, and Prestige Classes for Your Game

by James Jacobs • illustrated by Dennis Callero & Greg Staples



Ages ago, the world of mortals and the divine were nearly as one. The deities were pleased with their creations and showered them with gifts and potent abilities. Many heroes of great skill and power walked the lands, raising mighty armies, fighting fearsome beasts, and undertaking quests that shook the foundations of reality. But then something happened. . . .

A single mortal whose name has been erased from time managed to rise in power above the gods and attempted to bring the mortal realm under his command. Today, only the most obscure references to this powerful mortal survive; he is known even then only as the Lost Scion and is held by those few who know of his legend as the first dead god. The gods were appalled by this attempted theft of their worshipers and acted quickly to solve the problem. As the Lost Scion attempted to wrest control of creation from the gods, they came at him and stripped from him his life and knowledge, casting the shell of his body and soul into the depths of the Astral Plane. The gods then stripped from other mortals their knowledge and capacity to reach such great heights of power. They took this combined knowledge and secreted it away in the depths of the sea to hide it from the mortal realm, and then they pondered what to do with it.

It seemed a waste to destroy such potent knowledge, and the gods hoped that someday the mortal realm would become responsible enough to wield such power once again. As the eons flew by, mortals eventually forgot the epic powers they once wielded, and eventually, even the gods found more important things to occupy their time.



THE SENTINELS

A mere six hundred years ago, the knowledge was rediscovered by a powerful druid by the name of Shadar. This human druid loved the sea, and with his powerful magic, he explored many of its secrets. He found a pool of dense liquid in a cavern in a deep sea trench and quickly recognized it for what it was; the liquefied knowledge of the ancients. He also knew that the powers granted by the pool could disrupt the delicate balance of the mortal realm. Shadar decided to put aside his adventuring days and founded a highly secretive order of guardians known as the Sentinels of Shadar, selecting their numbers by hand and with great diligence and care. Each of them were allowed to bathe in the fluid of the pool, which came to be known as the Shadar Pool; those who did so were enhanced and granted the power to transcend normal mortal ken and become epic-level characters. Most of these Sentinels traveled the lands in secret, using the powers granted to them by the pool to maintain balance between order and entropy, good and evil. A select few remained below the sea in a large complex warded with traps and guardians and made comfortable for any who choose (and were allowed) to visit. These sentinels, along with Shadar, stood watch over the pool to insure that only those who would not abuse its power could ever gain access.

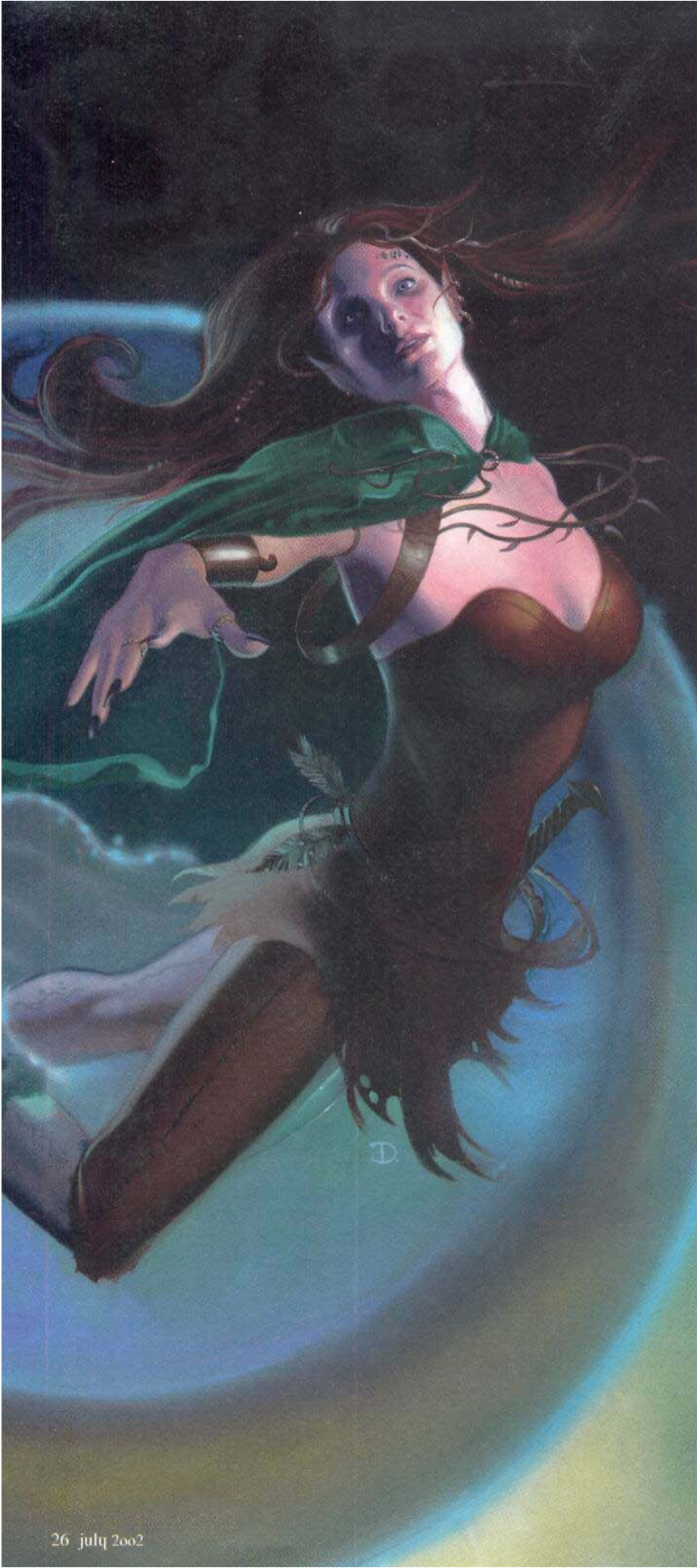
Eventually, even a being as powerful as Shadar moves on. His death left his followers grief stricken, but they continued their tasks of guarding the Shadar Pool and watching the balance to honor his memory. Nevertheless, with his passing, the Sentinels began to slowly drift apart. More and more



If your DM intends to run the *DUNGEON Magazine* adventure, "The Razing of Redshore," be warned that this article contains spoilers to some of the surprises contained therein. After running through that adventure, your character should be epic level and ready to take the feats, use the spells, or take levels in the prestige classes presented in this article. You might even be able to take on epic-level NPCs like those described at the end of this article.

For Your Character

The feats, prestige classes, and spells presented in this article are ready for use by your epic-level characters. With your DM's permission, you can change the flavor of the game elements to better fit your character. The Shadar sentinel need not be a guardian of the Shadar Pool or have any particular love of nature. *Golem seed* could summon a *hasted* beholder or some other CR 13 monster. In a truly high-level game, you might even be able to use *Tesseril* as your character



of their number opted to wander the dimensions and outer planes rather than stay to guard the Shadar Pool. Eventually, only one guardian remained, an elven druid by the name of Tesseril. Tesseril grew paranoid and fearful as the years wore on, afraid to leave her post lest someone undeserving gain access to the pool. She enhanced the wards and guardians of the Shadar Caverns, and even used her magic to awaken several whales, giant squid, and other deep-sea animals to serve as guardians.

Recently, her fears were realized in a tragic fashion. She was ambushed by an ex-Sentinel by the name of Yaervilar who had joined the Shadow Shoal, a secretive group of assassins, and although she managed to defeat the traitor, she was herself slain and her spirit was absorbed by the Shadar Pool. Today, the Sentinels of Shadar might well be gone forever, unless a new band of heroes can act quickly to restore the order to life.

Using the Sentinels

The Sentinels of Shadar would make an excellent organization to help guide a group of new epic-level characters who are unsure of their newfound powers. Ideally, this should be the same group of characters who managed to foil the plots of the Shadow Shoal and revive Tesseril in the adventure "The Razing of Redshore," which appears in issue #92 of *DUNGEON Magazine*. Once she is restored to life, Tesseril gladly welcomes any like-minded heroes to her side to aid the task of guarding the Shadar Pool. The most important thing to begin with would be to reestablish the secret presence of the Sentinels in the world. Since the society's decline, many of their various holdings throughout the world have been abandoned; these holdings are located in out-of-the-way regions. Many of them are doubtless now the lairs of powerful monsters or even disillusioned ex-Sentinels; seeking out and reclaiming these sites would make an excellent series of adventures for new epic-level characters, as would searching for and testing new recruits. As the characters grow stronger and stronger, Tesseril sends them on correspondingly more difficult tasks. She might ask the group to find a way to determine if her assassin Yaervilar is truly dead, sending them on several

daring raids against other Shadow Shoal interests and holdings, or she might even send them to other planes and dimensions to make contact with distant chapters of the Sentinels that might still function. The characters might then qualify to take levels of the Shadar Sentinel prestige class.

Eventually, the characters might grow more powerful than Tesseril. Before this happens, you should have her retire or even possibly be slain by agents of the Shadow Shoal. At this point, control of the Sentinels can pass to the players. They should soon find that keeping all of their Sentinel recruits happy and the reclaimed sites functional becomes a task unto itself. At the same time, they become obvious targets for the Shadow Shoal. Don't be surprised if the players find new things for the Sentinels to do. Sooner or later, Lascer becomes interested in them as well. Lascer is a potent enemy and would make an excellent recurring villain for extremely high-level epic characters.

You can also use the Sentinels as an enemy of the party. Perhaps the group has fallen out of Tesseril's graces or has managed to rise to epic level without bathing in the Shadar Pool. In this case, you should have Tesseril and her resources grow just ahead of the party, so that the Sentinels can serve as a constant thorn in their sides until eventually the party grows powerful enough to confront the rebuilt organization at its base.



THE SHADOW SHOAL

The Shadow Shoal is a highly secretive group of assassins founded by a powerful infernal by the name of Lascer. Imprisoned between the Astral Plane and the Region of Dreams, Lascer can nonetheless travel the dimensions and influence events and individuals in reality. He believes that if he can gather together enough followers on enough worlds and spread enough fear in his name, he'll be able to escape his prison. To further this goal, he established hundreds of assassin sects on as many different worlds and planes. Each of these sects is led by a master chosen by Lascer whom he infuses with great power. This interplanar network of assassins is known as the Shadow Shoal, and only its leaders suspect that there are multiple

branches of the Shoal on different worlds. Whenever a new sect of the Shadow Shoal is firmly established, Lascer moves on to a new dimension or world to seed another. He hopes one day to create a network of assassins so vast that he can use their resources to return to his home plane and make a bid for power.

Lascer's chosen leader for the world of the Shadar Pool was a powerful wizard/assassin by the name of Yaervilar. Yaervilar was also a member of the Sentinels of Shadar, but he grew disillusioned with that society's aims and goals. He turned to various forbidden texts, and he was eventually contacted by Lascer and perverted to his will. Yaervilar quickly established a new sect of the Shadow Shoal in this world, and using his new power and minions, launched an attack on the final guardian of the Shadar Pool in an attempt to gain control of the artifact. The attack failed, though, and Yaervilar was slain, leaving his three powerful followers to take up the reins of this world's chapter of the Shadow Shoal. If your party plays through "The Razing of Redshore," they have a chance to stop these three assassins from re-establishing the Shadow Shoal in the world.

Using the Shadow Shoal

Even if the current group of Shadow Shoal leaders are defeated in "The Razing of Redshore," the unique multi-dimensional nature of this organization allows you to continue using it as a recurring enemy in your epic campaign. Since Yaervilar was in fairly regular contact with several other chapters of the Shoal, the destruction of these cells will not go unnoticed. Not long after the party destroys the last minions of Yaervilar, bands of assassins from other worlds and realms begin to secretly infiltrate their world and establish small Shadow Shoal cells of their own. These bands of assassins should be highly varied in their abilities, appearance, and personality; although they are bonded by a common theme, they come from all manner of worlds, and their makeup should reflect this. As the party continues to adventure, have them periodically attacked by strange groups of assassins, each bearing the same strange tattoo. Before long, the party should become convinced (and rightly so) that the Shadow Shoal is out to get them, but

If You Don't Have the Epic Level Handbook

To get the full benefit of this article, you need to use the *Epic Level Handbook*. Not yet ready for epic-level games? Don't worry; by considering the elements of this article and doing a little planning for the future, you can prepare your player character or your players for epic-level play.

Not planning on playing in a game with epic-level characters? Never fear; with a little creativity, you can use the elements of this article right away.

Feats: Some of the epic feats could be feats for characters without epic levels; Destructive Attack, Infusion of Balance, Lingering Death, and Staggering Strike are particularly good candidates. Simply add more prerequisite feats and make sure that relatively high-level characters can take the feats only if they dedicate themselves to the pursuit.

Feats like Battle Dance, Legendary Sniper, and Quicken Wildshape make great high-level prestige class abilities or magic item qualities.

You could also create a place in the world or an artifact that grants an epic feat to everyone in an area. Then you could have fantastic epic-style battles with lower-level characters.

Spells: The spells presented in this article make great powers for magic items and artifacts in your game. Perhaps the *golem seed* spell is actually a *golem seed* magic item. The spells could also be unique effects produced by legendary monsters in your game; an efreeti might not be much of a challenge to a 15th-level party, but an efreeti who constantly emanates a *nimbus* spell is a potent threat.

Prestige Classes: The class abilities of the prestige classes presented in this article can be altered and used like the feats and spells. They make excellent magic item qualities, high-level prestige class abilities, monster powers, or powerful feats.

NPCs: The NPCs in this article are incredibly powerful; perhaps they could be worshiped as gods in your campaign. The statistics blocks presented in this article could represent the gods themselves or some powerful avatar.



since these killers hail from throughout the multiverse, it should be nearly impossible to stop them. Eventually, the party should learn of Lascor and how he recruits new assassins and seeds worlds with the Shoal; only by confronting the powerful abomination in his prison between the Astral Plane and the Region of Dreams can they stop the Shadow Shoal menace.

If you are running an epic campaign for evil characters, the Shadow Shoal can serve as an excellent patron. A new recruit into the Shoal is selected (usually without the recruit's knowledge) by a Shoal leader; the recruit must have at least one level of assassin and must perform a difficult assassination for the Shoal without promise of a reward. If the recruit is successful, she is adopted into the Shoal and branded with a Shadow Shoal tattoo. This tattoo is placed over the recruit's heart, and it protects the new member with a continual *freedom of movement* effect as though cast by a 20th-level wizard and renders the assassin immune to many Shadow Shoal traps. The tattoo is effectively a magical item that cannot be removed, except by powerful magic like *miracle*, *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, or *wish*. Once a new recruit is accepted, he is expected to follow the commands of his leaders without question.



NEW EPIC MATERIAL

Each of these epic feats, spells, and prestige classes are presented and can be acquired in the same way as detailed in the *Epic Level Handbook*. These epic game elements are tied to the epic societies presented in this article; if you do not use the Shadow Shoal or the Sentinels of Shadar in your campaign, you should substitute these requirements for a similar organization in your own game. In *GREYHAWK*, this might be the Circle of Eight or the Bonehart; in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS* it could be the Harpers or the Night Masks.

NEW Epic Feats

Each feat has a special prerequisite if you are using the two organizations presented in this article; they can only be taken by members of the appropriate society. Quicken Wildshape and Infusion of Balance require that the character be a member of the Sentinels; all others require that the

character be an assassin for the Shadow Shoal.

Battle Dance [Epic]

You are so graceful and nimble in combat that you gain bonuses to Reflex saving throws, attack rolls, and Armor Class.

Prerequisites: Dex 21+, Cha 21+, Perform 30+ ranks.

Benefit: Whenever you are in melee combat, you gain an insight bonus to your Armor Class, attack rolls, and Reflex saving throws equal to your Charisma bonus.

Destructive Attack [Epic]

You can destroy plants, undead, and constructs with your death attack.

Prerequisites: Death attack ability, Improved Death Attack, Power Attack, Str 21+.

Benefit: You can make death attacks against plant, undead, and construct targets. If the target fails to resist your destructive attack, it is destroyed (reduced to 0 hit points). The target struck suffers any sneak attack damage from the attack as well, even though plants, undead, and constructs are normally immune to sneak attack damage; this damage comes from the sheer power of the assassin's destructive attack.

Normal: Without this feat, an assassin's death attack cannot harm plants, undead, or constructs; these creature types are immune to sneak attack damage.

Infusion of Balance [Epic]

You can make full use of certain magical weapons that are keyed to specific alignments, and you gain protection from similar magical attacks.

Prerequisites: Cha 19+, neutral component of alignment.

Benefit: You are infused with a balance of cosmic energies, and as a result need not fear the detrimental effects of manipulating certain magic items. You can use weapons with the following magical qualities as if you were of the most beneficial alignment: chaotic, lawful, holy, and unholy.

Additionally, you can avoid attacks that use chaotic, evil, good, or lawful energies through sheer force of will. If you make a successful saving throw against an attack that has any of the

above descriptors (such as the *chaos hammer* spell) and that normally causes half damage on a successful save, you instead take no damage. This is an extraordinary ability.

Legendary Sniper [Epic]

Your ability to make ranged attacks from hiding is legendary.

Prerequisites: Hide 24+ ranks, Skill Focus (hide), Dex 21+.

Benefit: If you've already successfully hidden at least 10 feet from your target, you can make one ranged attack and then immediately hide again as a move-equivalent action without suffering a penalty to your Hide check.

In addition, when you make a sneak attack with a ranged weapon, you deal +1 point of damage per die of sneak attack damage you deal.

Normal: If you've already successfully hidden at least 10 feet from your target, you can make one ranged attack and then immediately hide again as a move-equivalent action, but to suffer a -20 circumstance penalty to your Hide check.

Lingering Death [Epic]

A failed death attack continues to threaten the target for an additional round.

Prerequisites: Death attack ability, Improved Death Attack, Cha 21+.

Benefit: Any death attack you make that deals extra sneak attack damage but fails to kill its target continues to pose a threat. On your turn on the round after the failed death attack, the target must make a second Fortitude saving throw against the death attack to avoid being slain.

Special: This feat can be taken multiple times; each time it is taken, the number of rounds the lingering death remains (and the number of extra Fortitude saves to resist it) increases by 1.

Quicken Wildshape [Epic]

You can change shapes with wildshape instantly.

Prerequisites: Fast Wildshape (from *Masters of the Wild*), Dex 21+.

Benefit: You can change forms using your wildshape ability as a free action. This counts toward the limit of one quickened spell or spell-like ability per round.

Normal: A druid normally uses wildshape as a standard action.

Staggering Strike [Epic]

Your sneak attacks are particularly demoralizing and painful.

Prerequisites: Sneak attack +8d6, Str 21+.

Benefit: Any time you inflict damage with a sneak attack, you can choose to forgo a number of additional dice of sneak attack damage to make a staggering strike. A creature struck with a staggering strike must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + your Strength modifier + the number of sneak attack dice sacrificed) or only take a partial action when he would otherwise be allowed to act normally for a number of rounds equal to the number of sneak attack dice sacrificed.

NEW Epic Spells

Four of these epic spells (*dracomorph*, *golem seed*, *nimbus*, and *Shadar's primal devastation*) were developed by the powerful druid Shadar in ages past. Since then, many powerful members of the Shadow Shoal have managed to learn the spells as well. Many of the most powerful members of the Shadow Shoal are taught *oath of binding* by Lascer; it is conceivable that members of other religions or societies could research variants of *oath of binding* unique to their own beliefs but with similar benefits. Fragmentary notes on this spell doubtless still exist in one of Lascer's secret lairs, waiting to be discovered.

Dracomorph

Transmutation

Spellcraft DC: 107

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: 300 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Development: g63,000 gp; 20 days; 38,520 XP. Seed: Transform into adult bronze dragon (DC 94), dragon type, huge size, gain breath weapon, frightful presence, immunities, damage reduction 5/+1, spell resistance, and new form has 21 HD; Seed: Fortify +6 enhancement to Strength, Dexterity,

natural armor, SR in new form (DC 41); mitigating factor: reduce permanent duration to 24 hours (ad hoc -10 DC); mitigating factor: increase casting time to 10 minutes (-18 DC).

This spell, now lost to time, represents the height of Shadar's power, for it allowed him to transform the other Shadar Sentinels into bronze dragons of exceptional strength and power. The magic of this spell can only affect Medium-size humanoids; in addition, the target must have at least 21 Hit Dice (in other words, the target must be epic level). The magic is simply too powerful to be contained by a lesser mortal.

When you cast this spell, both you and the target glow in a shimmering bronze light. As the spellcasting continues, the light grows brighter and brighter until finally, as the casting completes, the target seems to explode in a blast of bronze-colored energy, accompanied by the roar of an enraged dragon. The target's body turns bronze, flies apart into a million fragments, and then reassembles into the new draconic shape all in the span of a few seconds.

Upon the completion of the casting of *dracomorph*, the target instantly transforms into an adult bronze dragon. This grants the target the Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores of the dragon (Strength 27, Dexterity 10, Constitution 21). The target also gains the dragon's +20 natural armor bonus, natural size (Huge), new speeds (40 ft., fly 150 ft. [poor], swim 60 ft.), blindsight, keen senses, scent, water breathing, and natural attacks. Additionally, the power of the spell allows the target to use the dragon's breath weapons (a line of lightning or a cone of repulsion gas); its frightful presence; its immunity to electricity, sleep, and paralysis; its damage reduction 5/+1; and its spell resistance of 22. The target does not gain any of the dragon's spell-like abilities or spellcasting powers. The target's Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, alignment, level, class, hit points (despite any change in Constitution), base attack bonus, base saves, spells, and spell-like abilities remain the same and are still completely usable in dragon form.

The power of a *dracomorph* spell goes even farther; it infuses the target with vitality and power, providing a +6 enhancement bonus to his new Strength, Dexterity, natural armor, and spell resistance.



Golem Seed

Conjuration (Summoning)

Spellcraft DC: 58

Components: V, S, M, XP, Ritual

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Effect: One enhanced iron golem

Duration: 20 rounds

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Development: 522,000 gp; 11 days; 20,880 XP. Seed: Summon an iron golem (DC 46); Seed: Armor +10 armor to golem (DC 26); Seed: Transport hasted golem (DC 23); Seed: Contact telepathic bond (DC 23); factor: caster can "pause" the spell (ad hoc +25 DC); mitigating factor: unusual material component (ad hoc -2 DC); mitigating factor: +9 minutes to cast (-18 DC); mitigating factor: burn 1,000 XP (-10 DC); mitigating factor: 5 additional casters contributing a 7th-level spell slot (-65 DC).

You can summon a magically enhanced iron golem to do your bidding. Casting *golem seed* requires seven additional casters to aid you, each of whom must contribute a 7th-level spell or spell slot to the casting. When this spell is cast on a specially crafted iron statuette (the "seed"), you have the option of triggering the effect of the spell then or pausing the effect. You can later trigger the spell as a standard action by hurling the statuette to the ground wherever you wish the iron golem to appear.

When *golem seed* is activated, the seed emits an ear-piercing screech like thousands of sheets of jagged metal scraping together. The tiny statuette unfolds from the inside out, growing bigger with each unfolding, until finally it reaches its full height and form: that of an iron golem.

This iron golem is *hasted* and gains a +10 armor bonus from a second skin of pure magical force. Although the golem is mindless, you can telepathically control the golem's every action as a free action. If the golem finishes its task before the duration of the spell expires, you can pause the spell again as a standard action. This returns the golem to the place whence it came and restores the golem statuette to your possession. When you summon forth the golem again, its magical armor and *haste* effects are re-established (even if they were dispelled in a previous

summoning), and all damage and afflictions on the golem are healed. Only the original caster can activate or pause *golem seed*. When *golem seed* is inactive, the spell is effectively still in effect and can persist in this state indefinitely, unless it is dispelled by another source.

The theory holds that there exists some huge extradimensional storage facility wherein countless iron golems for use with this spell are stored; Shadar discovered this spell on one of his interplanar journeys but never found out where the golems summoned by the seeds come from.

Material Component: The material component for this spell is a small articulated iron statuette of the golem that weighs 3 pounds and is worth 600 gp due to the lifelike detail and artistry of the work. The caster of this spell must create the statuette herself using Craft (metalworking) or Craft (sculpture); the DC to create the statuette is 25.

XP Cost: 1,000 XP.

Nimbus

Evocation

Spellcraft DC: 77

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 20 hours

Saving Throw: Reflex half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (see text)

Development: 693,000 gp; 14 days; 27,720 XP. Seed: Energy emanates fire for 20d6 fire damage (DC 55); Seed: Ward against undead (DC 17); mitigating factor: change touch range to personal (-2 DC); factor: caster can determine who is harmed by fire (ad hoc +10 DC); mitigating factor: damage die increases by 2 steps vs. undead only (ad hoc +10 DC); mitigating factor: 4 additional minutes casting time (-8 DC); mitigating factor: burn 500 XP (-5 DC).

You transform your blood into searing golden light. This light causes your circulatory system to shine harmlessly (but dramatically) through your skin; your heart appears as a pulsating sun. The light bleeds from your eyes, nose, mouth, and even your pores, causing great pain and damage to those nearby but leaving you unharmed.

This light emanates from you to a radius of 10 feet, inflicting 20d6 points of fire damage per round against unprotected creatures; a successful Reflex save reduces this damage by half. You can select creatures or objects in the emanation zone to be immune to the damage as a free action, but once a creature or object is made immune to damage from the spell you cannot change your mind; in order to affect them you must cast the spell a second time. You may only have one *nimbus* active at any one time. While it is active, the *nimbus* provides light in a 120 foot radius.

The power of the *nimbus* is especially effective against undead. Against undead targets, the damage done increases to 20d10 points of fire damage per round of exposure, with a successful Reflex save reducing the damage by half. Additionally, *nimbus* prevents all undead from coming into bodily contact with the caster, which causes the natural attacks of such creatures to fail. Undead can not voluntarily enter the area of *nimbus*, and if they do take damage they must retreat beyond the reach of the *nimbus* unless the spell fails to overcome the creature's SR. This protection ends against a specific target only if you make an attack against that target or if you purposefully move to within 5 feet of the creature when all escape routes are blocked.

XP Cost: 500 XP.

Oath of Binding

Abjuration

Spellcraft DC: 78

Components: V, S, XP, Ritual

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Development: 702,000 gp; 15 days; 28,080 XP. Seed: Fortify +5 enhancement bonus to any three statistics (DC 47); Seed: Ward bludgeoning/slashing/piercing resistance 5/– (DC 18); factor: permanent duration (DC x5); factor: dismissible by caster (+2 DC); mitigating factor: burn 10,000 XP (–100 DC); mitigating factor: 9 additional minutes of casting time (–18 DC); mitigating factor: 7 additional casters contributing an epic-level spell slot (–133 DC); mitigating fac-

tor: target affected by *geas/quest* to serve the precepts of the oath (ad hoc –6 DC).

The *oath of binding* is a ritual spell often performed by powerful members of the Shadow Shoal to reward those who have served their sinister lord. No less than seven additional casters must aid the primary caster of this spell, and each must contribute an epic-level spell or spell slot to the casting.

When successfully cast, the target of the spell must agree to pledge his soul and life to Lascer and to further the goals of the Shadow Shoal. As the target of this spell accepts the oath, a spectral image of Lascer manifests before the target. The spectral Lascer grins sardonically just before it runs the victim through with its twin rapiers. As the target seems to die, the powerful illusion vanishes, leaving the individual unharmed except for a pair of tiny discolorations on the chest where the spectral rapiers struck. This is Lascer's none-too-subtle way to warn the subject of the spell to remain true to his evil ways.

The subject is immediately affected by a *geas/quest*, and if he ever goes against the teachings of the Shadow Shoal or betrays another member, he suffers the full effects of the *geas/quest* and the beneficial effects of the *oath of binding* are lost forever. An *oath of binding* can only be cast upon a specific target once; any additional castings automatically fail (but still cost the caster 10,000 XP points).

As long as the recipient of this spell holds his oath with Lascer, he gains a +5 inherent bonus to any three ability scores of his choosing and gains damage reduction 5/–. The caster of the spell can dismiss the effects of the oath as long as he and the target are on the same plane; doing so removes the *geas/quest* without harm to the recipient.

XP Cost: 10,000 XP.

Shadar's Primal Devastation

Transmutation

Spellcraft DC: 202

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 12,000 ft.

Area: 300-ft.-radius spread

Duration: Instantaneous (see text)

Saving Throw: Fortitude half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Development: 1,818,000 gp; 37 days; 72,720 XP. Seed: Destroy 40d6 damage (DC 69); Seed: Summon CR 35 monster (DC 66); factor: change target to area (+10 DC); factor: increase area to 300-ft.-radius spread (+62 DC); mitigating factor: 20d6 backlash damage (–20 DC); mitigating factor: burn 1,500 XP (–15 DC); mitigating factor: increase damage die by 3 steps (+30 DC).

The legendary *Shadar's primal devastation* is one of Shadar's greatest achievements, rivaled only by *dracomorph*. Since his death, only a few have managed to learn this difficult spell, and it has not been cast in living memory. When the *Shadar's primal devastation* is invoked, the targeted area is blasted with pure destructive force. All creatures and objects in the area suffer 40d12 points of damage. Creatures and objects slain or destroyed by this blast are reduced to a fine powder; the typical remains of a region blasted by this spell resemble a large dusty crater.

This is only the beginning of the terror. Following the blast, the energies summoned by this spell arc down from above and burst forth from the ground below simultaneously in a storm that condenses at the center and solidifies into a primal elemental of the caster's choice. The primal elemental remains for 20 rounds and is usually quite adept at destroying anything that happened to survive the initial blast.

The caster suffers 20d6 backlash damage when this spell is cast.

XP Cost: 1,500 XP.



NEW EPIC PRESTIGE CLASSES

Both of these new prestige classes are unique to the Sentinels of Shadar or the Shadow Shoal, although you can modify them with ease to fit your campaign if you choose not to use either of these two epic societies.

The Shadar Sentinel

Those who have bathed in the liquid knowledge of the Shadar Pool know that lore is the most potent weapon. Without knowledge, one can hardly hope to wield a weapon or cast a spell with any modicum of skill. An unfortunate majority of those who bathe in the pool are quick to abuse the powers granted by its might,

but a select few realize that such power should not be made available to all. Power given so freely without the discipline required to earn it leads to irresponsibility and ultimately tragedy. Yet those who choose to learn and study the gifts of the Shadar Pool rather than to just abuse the power soon find that there are greater secrets hidden in the self that can be awakened with the pool's aid, given time and due diligence.

Shadar Sentinels are those who have pledged to guard and protect the Shadar Pool from power-hungry abuse. A few choose to stay close to the pool to defend it, but the majority of those who pledge their lives to the Pool's defense are expected to travel and seek out oth-

ers who might be ready to taste its power, while at the same time keep an eye out and prevent those who should not. They strive to make sure that one force does not rise in power above the other, that all sides of power are balanced so that one does not dominate and leave the world in ruin.

The majority of Shadar Sentinels are divine spellcasters, especially druids. Wizards are also common sentinels, since they are often intrigued by the knowledge the pool has to offer. Martial classes can become Shadar Sentinels, although they are much less common since they tend to be more focused on material or social wealth rather than spiritual or intellectual wealth.

Shadar Sentinel Class

Requirements

To qualify to become a Shadar sentinel, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any neutral.

Knowledge (History): 21 ranks.

Knowledge (Nature): 21 ranks.

Spellcraft: 21 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Iron Will, Epic Skill Focus (any of the required Knowledge skills).

Shadar Sentinel Class Skills

The Shadar sentinel's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are:

Str: —

Dex: —

Con: Concentration.

Int: Craft, Knowledge (any, taken separately), Scry, Search, Spellcraft.

Wis: Innuendo, Listen, Profession, Sense Motive, Spot.

Cha: Diplomacy, Gather Information, Perform.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are features of the Shadar sentinel prestige class.

Sudden Insight (Su): Once a day at 1st level, a Shadar sentinel may invoke a special insight into a situation. Invoking an insight is a free action, and it grants the Shadar sentinel a +10 insight bonus to any one attack roll, saving throw, skill check, or level check made in the same round the insight was activated. At every third level after 1st (at 4th, 7th, 10th, 13th, and so on), the Shadar sentinel may make an additional insight each day.

Aurasight (Sp): At will, a 1st-level Shadar sentinel can *detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, and *detect magic* as a spell-like ability. This ability duplicates the effects of the spells of the same name. The Shadar sentinel can only activate one detection at a time.

Spell-like Divination (Sp): At 2nd level, the Shadar sentinel gains the ability to use one 1st-level Divination spell as a spell-like ability usable at will. At every tenth level after 2nd (12th, 22nd, and so on), the Shadar sentinel gains a new Divination spell-like ability of a level equal to or less than the previous spell-like ability gained +1. Thus, at 12th level, the sentinel could pick a 2nd-level Divination spell, and at 22nd level she could pick a 3rd-level Divination spell.

Shadar Insights (Su): Every 3 levels, the Shadar sentinel's continued study of the Shadar Pool and the changes it has wrought upon her body and soul uncovers a new insight into the way her powers are developing. This insight must be chosen from the following list:

+1 insight bonus to Armor Class

+4 insight bonus to any one skill
+1 insight bonus to attack rolls
+1 insight bonus to one saving throw
+4 insight bonus to maximum hit points

If the Shadar sentinel selects a bonus that she has already selected, the new bonus stacks with the old bonus. Insight bonuses gained from any other source do not stack with an insight bonus granted by a Shadar insight.

Bonus Feats: The Shadar sentinel gains a bonus feat (selected from the epic loremaster bonus feats) at 5th level and at every 10 levels after 5th (5th, 15th, 25th, and so on).

Spell-like Enchantment (Sp): At 8th level, the Shadar sentinel gains the ability to use one 1st-level Enchantment spell as a spell-like ability at will. Every 10 levels after 8th (18th, 28th, and so on), the Shadar sentinel gains a new Enchantment spell-like ability of a level equal to or less than the previous spell-like ability gained +1. Thus, at 18th level, the sentinel could pick a 2nd-level Enchantment spell, and at 28th level she could pick a 3rd-level Enchantment spell.

The Soulreaver

Although the majority of those who belong to the Shadow Shoal are nothing more than powerful, epic-level assassins, there are a select few who are chosen by the Lord of the Shadow Shoal to become his chosen killers. These purely evil masters of slaughter are contacted in their dreams by Lascere and offered the secrets of the soulreaver; those who accept the offer wake with terrible new powers, while those who do not accept wake just long enough to scream before dying of some unknowable terror. Soulreavers quickly rise to positions of power and leadership in the Shadow Shoal as they use their newfound abilities to assassinate any who might stand in their way. Once a soulreaver has established himself in a position of power, his life is rarely comfortable. Lascere does not grant the lore of the soulreaver lightly or without reason; those to whom he offers this knowledge can expect to be called upon regularly in dreams to perform tasks and slayings for the Lord of the Shadow Shoal.

Soulreavers must be proficient assassins. Lascere often looks favorably upon those who are particularly skilled

Shadar Sentinel Advancement

HIT DIE
D8

Levels	Special
1st	Sudden insight 1/day, <i>aurasight</i>
2nd	<i>Spell-like Divination</i>
3rd	Shadar insight
4th	Sudden insight 2/day
5th	Bonus feat
6th	Shadar insight
7th	Sudden insight 3/day
8th	<i>Spell-like Enchantment</i>
9th	Shadar insight
10th	Sudden insight 4/day

at arcane magic and at the various assassin skills. Most soulreavers are bards, rogues, sorcerers, or wizards, but monks, fighters, and rangers are not uncommon. Barbarians are generally too coarse to pique Lascier's interest, and clerics and druids are often passed over because their devotions lie elsewhere. Paladins are unable to become soulreavers, although blackguard/assassins can make particularly deadly additions to the Shadow Shoal.

Class Features

All the following are features of the soulreaver prestige class.

Sneak Attack: The soulreaver's sneak attack damage increases by +1d6 every 2 levels.

Improved Assassin Spells: Once an assassin becomes a soulreaver, he may choose to prepare improved assassin spells in any available Improved Spellcasting slots. These improved spells are treated as normal assassin spells as regards to the DC to save or the methods of preparation; all improved assassin spells are based on Intelligence and are arcane spells. These spells may be chosen from the list below:

5th Level—*ethereal jaunt, nightmare, slay living, teleport*

6th Level—*circle of death, etherealness, harm, mislead*

7th Level—*destruction, finger of death, shadow walk, teleport without error*

8th Level—*mind blank, power word kill, screen, trap the soul*

9th Level—*imprisonment, soul bind, wail of the banshee, weird*

Double Death (Ex): At 2nd level, the soulreaver may declare one death attack per day to be a double death attack. When the assassin makes the death attack, the victim must make two saving throws to survive rather than just one. Every ten levels after 2nd (at 12th, 22nd, and so on), the soulreaver can make a double death attack an additional time each day.

Bonus Feats: The soulreaver gains a bonus feat (selected from the list of epic assassin feats) every 4 levels.

Vampiric Death (Su): At 6th level, the soulreaver may declare a single death attack to be a vampiric death attack, up to once per day. If the death attack successfully slays the victim, the assassin

absorbs a tiny portion of the departing soul's life energies and gains a +6 profane bonus to his Strength and Constitution and +6d6 temporary hit points for the next hour. Every ten levels after 6th (at 16th, 26th, and so on), the soulreaver may make a vampiric death attack one additional time each day. This cannot be combined with the double death ability.

Sudden Death (Ex): At 10th level, the soulreaver can draw upon the unholy energies of his imprisoned master to strike with blinding speed with a death attack. This death attack is a full-round action, but it does not require the assassin to spend 3 rounds studying his victim; the attack must still be a sneak attack, however. Every ten levels thereafter (20th, 30th, and so on), the soulreaver may make a sudden death attack an additional time each day.



EPIC-LEVEL NPCS

Presented here are Tesseril and Lascier, the leaders of the Sentinels of Shadar and the Shadow Shoal respectively. Either character makes for a potent threat to epic-level PCs.

Tesseril

Tesseril is ancient, fully 650 years old. Nevertheless, her druidic powers keep her as young, healthy, and beautiful as she was at age 150. She stands rather tall for an elf, and she carries herself with a grace that is haunting to behold. Her hair is long and coppery, and her eyes are a brilliant shade of violet. Her voice is strong and clear, and she is quick to befriend those she believes mean her or the Shadar Pool no ill will.

Tesseril keeps the true extent of her powers secret; she is loathe to use her epic spells or her most powerful abilities indiscriminately, since she knows that such awesome displays of power would arouse the curiosity of any survivors and drive them to find out how such a young-looking elf could wield such magic. She knows that the powers granted by the Shadar Pool are easily abused and also knows that those who would use such powers in moderation are few and far between. For the past several decades, she lived in a state of increasing paranoia that she would fail and that the Shadar Pool would fall into the hands of some unknown enemy. She

Soulreaver Class

Requirements

To qualify to become a soulreaver, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any evil.

Disguise: 12 ranks.

Hide: 24 ranks.

Knowledge (Arcana): 12 ranks.

Move Silently: 24 ranks.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Improved Critical, Improved Spellcasting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Special: The character must be able to cast 4th-level assassin spells.

Before becoming a soulreaver, the character must have been contacted by Lascier in a dream. This requires that the prospective soulreaver has already fulfilled all other feats and has successfully assassinated no less than ten targets in a single day; all of these assassinated victims must be at least CR 15. Once these prerequisites have all been met, there is a non-cumulative 1% chance each year that the prospective soulreaver is contacted by Lascier and offered the terrible secrets of the soulreaver's ways. If the prospective soulreaver is already a member of the Shadow Shoal, the chance of being contacted by Lascier rises to a 75% chance per year. If the prospective soulreaver agrees to become one of the chosen slayers of Lascier, he awakens and may take his first level of soulreaver at any point thereafter when he gains enough experience points to gain a level. If the prospective soulreaver refuses the offer or otherwise offends Lascier, he must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 57) or be slain upon awakening.

withdrew farther from contact with others apart from her animal companions (especially the awakened sperm whale Urkathoon), becoming more and more convinced that all of the civilized world would abuse the power of the Shadar Pool if they knew of its existence.

Yaervilar's attack on the Shadar Caves only served to prove her fears

Soulreaver

Class Skills

The soulreaver's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.

Dex: Balance, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Pick Pocket, Tumble, Use Rope.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Alchemy, Decipher Script (exclusive skill), Craft, Forgery, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (the planes), Read Lips, Scry, Search.

Wis: Innuendo, Listen, Profession, Sense Motive, Spot.

Cha: Bluff, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate, Perform, Use Magic Device (exclusive skill).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Soulreaver Advancement

Levels	Special
1st	Sneak attack +1d6, improved assassin spells
2nd	Double death 1/day
3rd	Sneak attack +2d6
4th	Bonus feat
5th	Sneak attack +3d6
6th	Vampiric death
7th	Sneak attack +4d6
8th	Bonus feat
9th	Sneak attack +5d6
10th	Sudden death 1/day



and drove her over the edge. She threw all caution to the wind and defended the pool with a ferocity of such magnitude that, although she managed to slay the assassin wizard, she destroyed herself in the process. If she is restored to life via *resurrection* or similar magic, she recovers from her madness to a certain extent, mollified by the knowledge that at least a few in the world count her as an ally or possibly even a friend. But no matter how many allies she gains in the coming years, or no matter how strong the Sentinels grow again, her eyes and face will forevermore be haunted by a shadow of doubt, fear, and paranoia.

Tesseril, Elf Female Drd34/Shadar sentinel 6: CR 40; Medium-size Humanoid (elf) (5' 3" tall); HD 40d8+320; hp 500; Init +9 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 45 (+8 +5 *etherealness* leather armor, +7 +5 *heavy fortified*

large wooden shield, +5 deflection, +9 Dex, +5 natural, +1 insight) (touch 25, flat-footed 36); Atk +37/+32/+27 melee (1d6+12, +5 *defending bane vs. aberrations shocking burst scimitar*); SA spell use, wild shape; SQ *aurasight*, nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, venom immunity, a thousand faces, timeless body, sudden insight 2/day, *true strike* (spell-like ability usable at will) Shadar insight (+2 insight bonus to Spellcraft), Shadar insight (+1 insight bonus to AC); AL NG; SV Fort +30, Ref +25, Will +38; Str 25, Dex 28, Con 26, Int 26, Wis 39, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +36, Concentration +20, Craft (sculpture) +36, Diplomacy +15, Knowledge (history) +36, Knowledge (nature) +51, Scry +33, Spellcraft +53, Wilderness Lore +43; Alertness, Automatic Quickened Spell, Beast Wild Shape, Dodge, Epic Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]), Epic Spellcasting, Epic Spell Focus (Evocation), Gargantuan Wild Shape, Improved Spellcasting (x4), Iron Will, Magical Beast Wild Shape, Maximize Spell, Natural Spell*, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (Evocation).

*This feat appears in *Masters of the Wild*; it allows the druid to cast spells with verbal and somatic components while wild shaped.

Spells Prepared: (6/9/9/8/8/8/7/6/6/6/3/2/2/2; Base DC = 24 + spell level, or 30 + spell level for Evocation spells, spells marked with an asterisk are Evocation spells): 0—*create water*, *detect magic* x2, *flare**, *light*, *read magic*; 1st—*cure light wounds* x3, *endure elements*, *entangle* x2, *faerie fire**, *obscuring mist* x2; 2nd—*charm person or animal*, *fire trap*, *flame blade**, *flaming sphere**, *produce flame**, *resist elements*, *speak with animals*, *summon swarm*, *tree shape*; 3rd—*call lightning**, *cure moderate wounds* x2, *greater magic fang* x2, *protection from elements*, *poison*, *speak with plants*; 4th—*control plants*, *cure serious wounds* x2, *dispel magic*, *flame strike**, *rusting grasp*, *screaming*, *spike stones*; 5th—*animal growth*, *cure critical wounds* x2, *death ward*, *flame blade** (maximized), *insect plague*, *transmute rock to mud*, *wall of thorns*; 6th—*call lightning** (maximized), *fire seeds*, *greater dispelling* x2, *poison* (maximized), *repeal wood*, *transport via plants*; 7th—*creeping doom*, *firestorm**, *flame strike** (maximized), *greater screaming*, *heal*, *sunbeam**; 8th—*cure serious*

wounds (quickened), *finger of death*, *flame strike** (quickened), *summon nature's ally VIII*, *sunburst**, *whirlwind**; 9th—*cure critical wounds* (quickened), *earthquake*, *foresight*, *shambler*, *summon nature's ally IX*, *wall of fire* (quickened); 10th—*fire storm** (maximized), *greater dispelling* (quickened), *wall of stone* (quickened); 11th—*flame strike** (maximized, quickened), *heal* (quickened); 12th—*finger of death* (quickened), *word of recall* (quickened); 13th—*earthquake* (quickened)*, *shapechange* (quickened).

SA—Wildshape: Tesseril may wildshape 10 times a day (11 when she wears her *druid vestments*). She may assume the form of any animal, beast, or magical beast of size Tiny to Gargantuan. She may also assume the form of an elemental of Tiny through Gargantuan size 3 times a day.

Epic Spells per Day: 4; DC 34 (40 for Evocation).

Epic Spells Known: *Crown of vermin*, *nailed to the sky*, *nimbus*, *spell worm*, *superb dispelling*.

Equipment: +5 *defending bane vs. aberrations shocking burst scimitar*, quarterstaff enchanted with *changestaff* and *spellstaff* (contains a quickened *finger of death*), +5 *etherealness leather armor*, +5 *heavy fortified large wooden shield*, *ring of protection* +5 (doesn't count against total limit of rings worn), *ring of water elemental command*, *ring of spell storing* (contains a maximized *fire storm*), *cloak of charisma* +6, *belt of wild giant strength* +6 (user keeps the bonus even when in other forms), *scabbard of keen edges*, *boots of swiftness*, *periapt of wild wisdom* +6 (user keeps the bonus even when in other forms), *amulet of natural armor* +5, *necklace of prayer beads* (wind walking, karma, and smiting), *Heward's handy haversack*, *headband of intellect* +6, 3 *incenses of meditation*, *druid's vestment*, *bracers of wild health* +6 (user keeps the bonus even when in other forms), 3 *doses of stone salve*, 4 *potions of cure serious wounds*, 2 *potions of heroism*.

Lascier

The gods believe that they have removed the Lost Scion from reality by casting his soulless body into the Astral Plane, but they erred. A tiny spark of the Lost Scion's will remained, trapped in his eternally rotting carcass for thousands of years. As the ages wore on, this spark began to rebuild its power and

eventually made a feeble attempt to escape its dead shell. The attempt failed, but the surge of power generated attracted the attention of a powerful erinyes wizard by the name of Kastilla, an exile herself for attempting a coup against her infernal overlords. The powerful devil could tell that the surge of power could be a great boon if she could harness it. Unfortunately, she underestimated its power, and she was quickly overwhelmed by its strength. The fragment of the Lost Scion's will was without soul or body, but it managed still to infest Kastilla's body like a parasite, and over the course of a few excruciating minutes grew to maturity inside her body and burst forth fully formed. Thus was the abomination Lascer born into the silvery waste of the Astral Plane.

Lascer quickly found that he wielded great power. Nevertheless, he was still somewhat bound by the ancient edict of the gods; the exile of the Lost Scion carried over to Lascer and prevented him from fully manifesting his body anywhere but the Astral Plane. At first, Lascer was infuriated at this, but eventually he learned that while he could not leave the Astral Plane, he could spy upon an infinite number of other planes and worlds connected to his silvery prison. As time wore on, Lascer found that he could extend his will from the Astral Plane into the Region of Dreams, from whence he could influence the minds of those who were particularly open to his offers of power and knowledge. He used this power to search for a way to escape the Astral Plane and return to reality, and after several centuries of research he finally came upon a possibility. According to his research, if a number of ritualistic slayings or assassinations were performed in his name, the dead could be made to remember the fate of the Lost Scion and their combined fear and despair could be used to punch a hole in the Astral Plane and unleash him back into reality.

Fortunately, Lascer's theory remains just that at this point. He feels that he is nearing his goal, and that each new victim claimed by the Shadow Shoal might be the one to finally set him free.

Lascer appears as a looming, gaunt humanoid figure. His skin is sallow and looks like aged parchment, and it is stretched tightly over his bony frame; despite this appearance, Lascer is unbelievably strong. His arms and legs are

much longer than they have any right to be, and both end in razor-sharp talons. His face is the stuff of pure terror. Bulging orange eyes that glow with an inner fire, a grossly oversized mouth filled with stiletto-like teeth, and large bat-like ears complete his terrible appearance. Lascer is completely hairless. A pair of nearly skeletal wings covered with strips of tattered, dead flesh protrude from his back; these wings are covered with razor-sharp spines and blades and, despite their appearance, somehow still allow the Lord of the Shadow Shoal to fly about with incredible speed and agility.

Lascer, Lord of the Shadow Shoal, Paragon Infernal Male Asn 5/Soulreaver 15: CR 58; Large Outsider (15' 10" tall); HD 40d8+20d6+1,680; hp 2,120; Init +17 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 240 ft., fly 720 ft. (perfect); AC 92 (+13 Dex, -1 size, +20 insight, +12 luck, +38 natural); Atk +105/+100/+95/+90 melee (1d6+54/crit 12-20, +10 keen unholy power rapiers) and +105/+100/+95/+90 melee (1d6+42/crit 12-20, +10 keen unholy power rapiers), or +98 melee (4d6+44, 2 claws), +93 melee (4d8+32 + spell suck, bite), and +93 melee (2d6+32, 2 wings); SA improved grab, spell suck, spell-like abilities, summon pit fiend, sneak attack +10d6, double death 2/day, vampiric death 1/day, sudden death 1/day; SQ improved assassin spells, abomination qualities, learned spell immunity, fast healing 20, regeneration 15, SR 68, damage reduction 35/+7, +10 bonus to saving throws against poison; AL LE; Saves Fort +58, Ref +55, Will +57; Str 58, Dex 36, Con 43, Int 37, Wis 41, Cha 44.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +44, Balance +86, Bluff +60, Concentration +69, Diplomacy +90, Disguise +68, Escape Artist +86, Hide +82, Jump +77, Intimidate +48, Intuit Direction +45, Knowledge (arcana) +86, Knowledge (planes) +66, Listen +90, Move Silently +86, Scry +66, Search +96, Sense Motive +98, Spellcraft +86, Spot +90, Swim +55, Tumble +86; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blinding Speed x2, Cleave, Epic Spellcasting, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Death Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Spellcasting x5, Perfect Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Tenacious Spell (*blur*), Tenacious Spell (*improved invisibility*),

Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (rapier).

SA—Improved Grab: If Lascer hits with a claw, he deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Lascer's grapple check is +91, and he may use this ability on size Large and smaller creatures. He has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply use his claw to hold the opponent (this incurs a -20 penalty to his grapple check). Each successful grapple check he makes during successive rounds automatically deals claw damage and automatic spell suck damage.

Assassin Spells Prepared: (6/5/5/4/4/3/3/3/3; Base DC = 23 + spell level): 1st—*change self* x2, *ghost sound*, *obscuring mist*, *spider climb* x2; 2nd—*alter self*, *darkness* x2, *pass without trace*, *undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*deeper darkness* x2, *misdirection* x2, *nondetection*; 4th—*freedom of movement*, *poison* x3; 5th—*ethereal jaunt*, *nightmare*, *slay living* x2; 6th—*circle of death*, *harm* x2; 7th—*destruction*, *finger of death* x2; 8th—*power word kill* x2, *screen*; 9th—*imprisonment*, *wail of the banshee*, *weird*.

Epic Spells Per Day: 6; DC 33.

Epic Spells Known: *Damnation*, *dreamscape*, *enslave*, *greater ruin*, *lord of nightmares*, *oath of binding*, *ruin*, *superb dispelling*, *time duplicate*.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will as a 41st level sorcerer (save DC 40 + spell level)—*animate dead*, *blasphemy*, *blur*, *charm person*, *create undead*, *darkness*, *deeper darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect chaos*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect magic*, *fear*, *fireball*, *greater dispelling*, *hold person*, *improved invisibility*, *magic circle against good*, *major image*, *produce flame*, *polymorph self*, *pyrotechnics*, *read magic*, *scrying*, *suggestion*, *symbol (any)*, *telekinesis*, *teleport without error* (self plus 1000 pounds), *unholy aura*, *unholy blight*, *unhallow*, *wall of fire*; 3/day—*haste*, *see invisibility*; 1/day—*firestorm*, *hellball*, *implosion*, *meteor swarm*.

Equipment: Two +10 keen unholy power rapiers. These two potent swords constitute the entirety of Lascer's possessions; forged at the time of his birth from the shards of the Last Scion's will. These swords appear to be made of bone and petrified flesh, and constantly emit a putrid breeze as if the air itself were rotting on contact. 

RIVAL THE GODS

Epic Prestige Classes

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Steve Garcia

Even epic-level characters need something to strive for, and that's where the epic prestige class comes in. By definition, characters can't begin advancing in an epic prestige class until they have reached epic levels, but once they do, even the sky isn't the limit.

As noted in the *Epic Level Handbook*, characters add levels of epic prestige classes using the same rules as when multiclassing into a new character class at epic levels: Base save and base attack bonus progressions are replaced by epic save and attack progressions. Just like all other classes, you may take as many levels in an epic prestige class as you'd like. Even though the charts here show only 10 levels of progression, the accompanying text indicates how the class features continue beyond those shown.

Designing an Epic Prestige Class

Since all epic-level campaigns are undoubtedly unique, DMs should consider creating their own epic prestige classes, personalized to their own campaigns. All the normal guidelines still apply—aim for specialization over generality and create clear requirements that can be met without too much DM fiat. Don't forget to include requirements that can't be met until

the character reaches at least 21st level, otherwise your class might not be that epic after all! Use the classes here and those presented in the *Epic Level Handbook* as guides.

Remember that since base attack bonuses and the base save bonuses increase at a fixed rate beyond 20th level, you can't use those as balancing factors as you would with a typical prestige class. Instead, an epic prestige class offers only three potential elements: Hit Dice, spellcasting improvement, and class features. Assigning an appropriate Hit Dice amount is no different than at non-epic levels. For spellcasting improvement, keep in mind that even though an epic prestige class can grant spellcasting improvement (which bumps up your caster level), a spellcaster's number of spells per day is capped at 20th level without the proper epic feats.

Ultimately, it is class features that separate epic prestige classes from one another. These are the most important elements of the class, and an epic prestige class's entire identity rests upon them. Remember to create class features that can improve over a high-infinite level progression—like the rogue's sneak attack damage or the barbarian's damage reduction. Try to avoid simply giving out ad hoc abilities at each level; if you do, the prestige

class won't have any clear progression beyond the top level that you describe. If you must give a prestige class abilities that don't improve at a steady pace, remember to include a bonus feat progression that kicks in after the character reaches the "end" of the level progression you create. (For guidelines on how to assign bonus feats, see the *Epic Level Handbook* for versions of the classes presented in the *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.)

Arcane Lord

When wizards dream, they dream of becoming arcane lords. The arcane lord is a true master of spellcasting, able to shape her arcane magics in ways that lesser beings can only dream of doing. In the arcane lord's opinion, if there is anything about arcane spells that she doesn't already know, it probably isn't worth knowing. Some might call this arrogance, but the arcane lord doesn't care what others think. To her, all that matters is the pursuit of the arcane and the mastery of things magical.

As the name suggests, the arcane lord prestige class is most appealing to arcane spellcasters. Generally speaking, sorcerers and wizards have the most to gain from this class. A bard highly dedicated to spellcasting could

If You Don't Have the *Epic Level Handbook*

Although the *Epic Level Handbook* will help you get the full benefit of this article, you can still use it for your game even if you don't own the book. If you aren't yet ready for epic-level games, consider using this article as a tool to help you prepare your player character or your players for epic-level play. With a little creativity, you can use many elements of this article right away.

This article presents many interesting and powerful abilities, and any of them can be used in a non-epic game.

- A DM can create new monsters based on any of these exciting abilities. For example, the unholy ravager's corrupting touch and desecrating aura would make great abilities for a new type of undead.
- If a particular ability appeals to a player, consider imbuing a magic item with the ability. Perhaps the PC must undergo a challenging quest and prove his worth before being granted the magic item, or maybe he claims it as his reward for killing his arch-nemesis.
- Perhaps one of the abilities presented here would work with a prestige class a PC already has. For example, the perfected one's graceful movement ability could also be a useful high-level ability for a thief-acrobat (*Song and Silence*) who wishes to continue advancing in that prestige class.

- Players or DMs could also import these abilities into their game by creating new spells that mimic the abilities' powers. For example, a druid PC might uncover a spell based on the world's friend ability (world guardian prestige class) after discovering a long-forgotten druidic burial site.

You don't have to be epic to use this article. Your imagination is your only limit!

pursue this path as well. Other classes don't have much hope of qualifying for the high requirements and should look elsewhere for epic power.

NPC arcane lords are usually solitary individuals, preferring to spend time mastering their craft rather than interacting with those who can't

possibly understand their pursuits. Since so few exist, congregations of arcane lords are rare. Of course, if the situation warrants, an arcane lord stands ready to defend herself, her home, and her allies. While most arcane lords might care little for those around them, even they see the benefits of strategic alliances with local emperors, princes, and high priests.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the arcane lord prestige class.

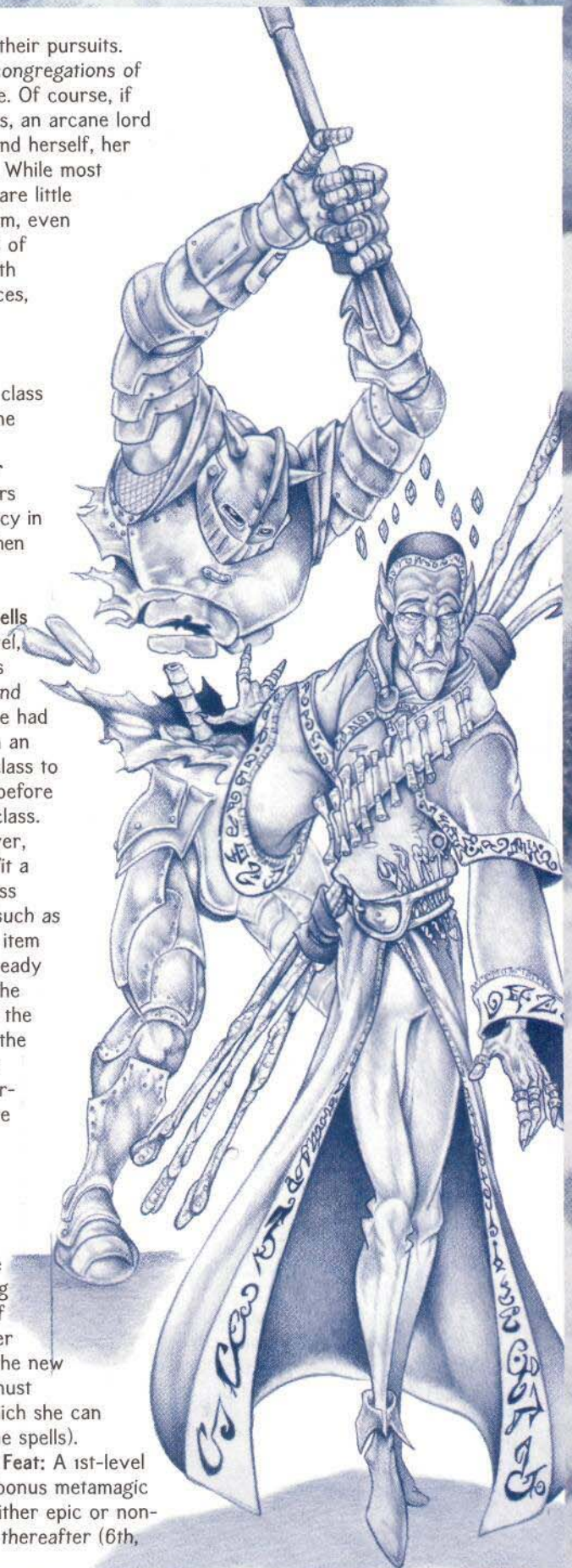
Weapon and Armor

Proficiency: Characters gain no new proficiency in armor or weapons when they take a level of arcane lord.

Spells Per Day/Spells

Known: At every level, the arcane lord gains new spells per day and spells known as if she had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as bonus metamagic or item creation feats). If already an epic spellcaster, the character gains only the benefit noted under the Spells entry for that epic class. If the character possessed more than one arcane spellcasting class before she became an arcane lord, she must decide which class will receive the additional spellcasting level for purposes of determining spells per day when she adds the new level (although she must choose a class in which she can cast 10th-level arcane spells).

Bonus Metamagic Feat: A 1st-level arcane lord gains a bonus metamagic feat, which can be either epic or non-epic. Every 5 levels thereafter (6th,



11th, 16th, and so on), the arcane lord gains another bonus metamagic feat.

New Spell (Ex): At 2nd level and every other level thereafter, the arcane lord may learn one new arcane spell of any level she can cast. If she uses a spellbook, she may scribe this spell into her spellbook at no cost. Otherwise, the spell is simply added to the arcane lord's list of spells known. This spell knowledge is in addition to any she might gain from other sources.

Recall Spell (Su): At 3rd level, the arcane lord can use a standard action to recall any spell she has already cast within the past hour. Essentially, the character regains the prepared spell (in the case of characters who prepare spells) or the spell slot (in the case of characters who don't prepare spells). The arcane lord gains one additional use of this ability per day for every three levels after 3rd gained in this class (1/day at 3rd, 2/day at 6th, 3/day at 9th, and so on).

Expanded Spell Power (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, the arcane lord can (once per day) cast any spell that has an effect that is capped by level (such as *fireball*) as if the cap were twice the listed amount. For example, an arcane lord could cast a *fireball* that dealt 20d6 damage, rather than the normal maximum of 10d6, or a *magic missile* that fired 10 missiles, rather than the normal maximum of 5. The arcane lord's caster level still applies to such limits; for instance, even though a *delayed blast fireball* cast with expanded spell power has a new maximum damage of 30d8, an arcane lord whose caster level is 25 would only deal 25d8 points of damage with the spell.

For every 5 levels gained after 5th (10th, 15th, and so on), the arcane lord can use this ability one additional time per day. This power does not stack with the effects of the Enhance Spell epic feat.

Gauge Weakness (Su): At 7th level, the arcane lord may spend a standard action to analyze any single foe that he can see (even via a scrying effect). The arcane lord instantly knows all of that foe's current save bonuses (Fortitude, Reflex, and Will), thus allowing the arcane lord to better tailor her spell choice for the encounter. If the target's save bonuses change at

a later time, the arcane lord is not automatically privy to this information. For every 10 levels beyond 7th (17th, 27th, and so on), the arcane lord may use this power one additional time per day.

Recognize Spell (Ex): At 9th level, the arcane lord instantly knows when an arcane spell is cast within line of sight, even if she can't see or hear the caster. The arcane lord also knows with unerring precision exactly what the spell is (including any metamagic effects). This ability doesn't grant any bonus to saves, but it can help the arcane lord's counter-spell efforts immensely.

Arcane Mastery (Su): At 10th level, the arcane lord may, once per day, re-roll a random effect of any arcane spell she has just cast. For instance, she could re-roll damage from a *meteor swarm*, the effect of a *confusion* spell, or any other effect determined by a random roll of the dice. The character may then use either result. For every 10 levels beyond 10th (20th, 30th, and so on), the arcane lord may use this power one additional time per day, but not more than once per spell.

Master of the Order of the Bow

The Way of the Bow, originally presented in *Sword and Fist*, describes the spiritual, philosophical, and religious aspects of archery. But while the Order of the Bow initiate dabbles in such learning, the master truly dedicates his life to these teachings. In doing so, the master reaches levels of enlightenment

Arcane Lord Requirements

To qualify to become an arcane lord, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Knowledge (arcana): 25 ranks.

Spellcraft: 25 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (Spellcraft), plus any five metamagic feats.

Epic Feats: Improved Spellcasting.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 10th-level arcane spells.

Arcane Lord Class Skills

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

Str: —

Dex: —

Con: Concentration.

Int: Knowledge (arcana), Scry, Spellcraft.

Wis: —

Cha: —

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

and spiritual understanding that defy explanation.

While fighters, rangers, and other combat-oriented characters can greatly benefit from this class, most who become masters of the Order of the Bow (or bow masters as they are often called) have already pursued advanced training in archery skills. Obviously, Order of the Bow initiates are singularly qualified to become masters, but arcane archers also find that much of their training overlaps with that required for this class. In fact, dedication to either of those prestige classes can greatly

Arcane Lord Advancement

Class

Level Special

1	Bonus metamagic feat
2	New spell
3	Recall spell 1/day
4	New spell
5	Expanded spell power 1/day
6	New spell, bonus metamagic feat, recall spell 2/day
7	Gauge weakness 1/day
8	New spell
9	Recognize spell, recall spell 3/day
10	New spell, arcane mastery, expanded spell power 2/day

Spells Per Day

+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

HIT DIE
D6

accelerate a character's entry into this prestige class.

Bow masters are highly revered individuals, respected for their dedication and extraordinary skills. Most bow masters feel driven to help others find the discipline of the Way of the Bow. Even those who continue adventuring often make time to give back to other would-be masters in the form of teaching, guidance, and example. Whether this occurs in the disciplined setting of an academy or while wandering through the countryside depends on each individual.

Bow Master Requirements

To qualify to become a bow master, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Knowledge (religion): 12 ranks.

Feats: Weapon Focus (any bow), Weapon Specialization (any bow), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Manyshot.

Epic Feats: Combat Archery, Epic Weapon Focus (any bow), Epic Weapon Specialization (any bow), Swarm of Arrows.

Special: Character may substitute the superior weapon focus class feature (see the Order of the Bow initiate prestige class in *Sword and Fist*) for the Epic Weapon Focus epic feat requirement.

Special: Character may substitute the superior weapon specialization class feature (see the Order of the Bow initiate prestige class in *Sword and Fist*) for the Epic Weapon Specialization epic feat requirement.

Special: Character may substitute the close combat shot class feature (see the Order of the Bow initiate prestige class in *Sword and Fist*) for the Combat Archery epic feat requirement.

Bow Master Class Skills

The Order of the Bow's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Swim.

Dex: Ride.

Con: —

Int: Craft (bowmaking), Knowledge (religion).

Wis: Spot.

Cha: —

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the bow master prestige class.

Weapon and Armor

Proficiency: Characters gain no new proficiency in armor or weapons when they take a level of bow master.

Opportunistic Shot (Ex):

At 1st level, a bow master effectively threatens adjacent enemies with his bow. He can make attacks of opportunity using a ranged weapon.

Ranged Sneak Attack (Ex): Any time the bow master's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (regardless of whether she has a Dexterity bonus), his ranged attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 2nd level and an additional +1d6 every two levels thereafter. Ranged attacks only count as sneak attacks if the target is within 30 feet. The bow master cannot strike with such deadly accuracy beyond that range. In every other way, treat this ability as a rogue's sneak attack. If the character has the sneak attack ability from another class, the bonuses stack.

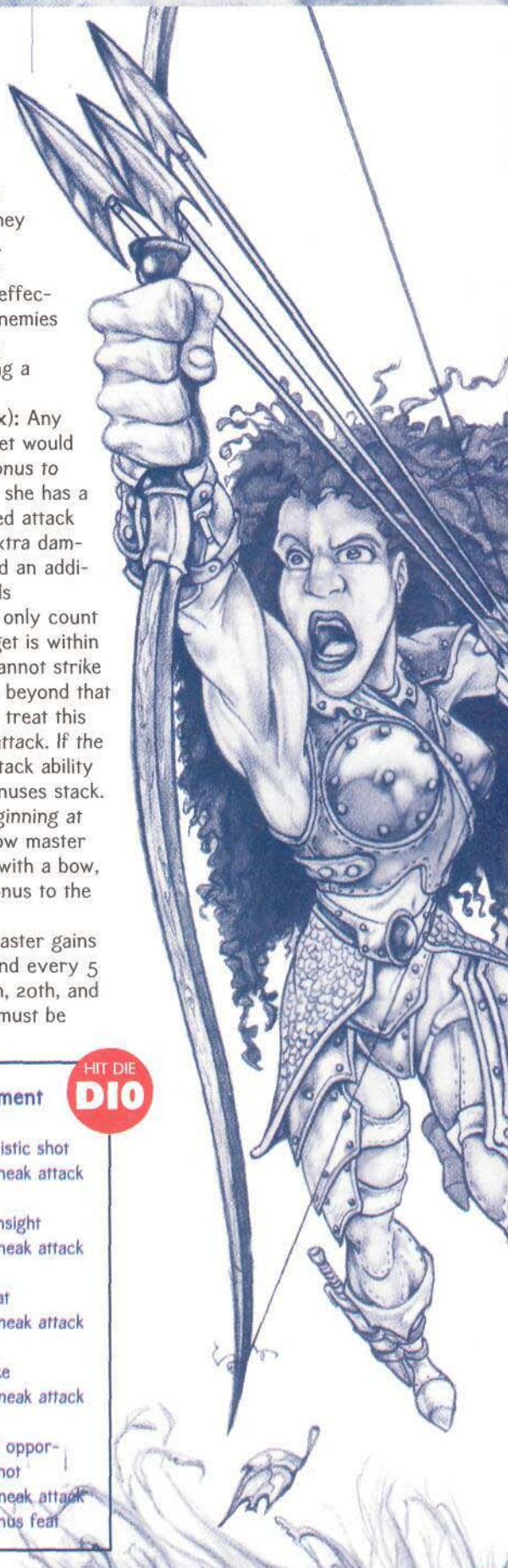
Combat Insight (Su): Beginning at 3rd-level, whenever the bow master makes a successful attack with a bow, he may add his Wisdom bonus to the damage dealt.

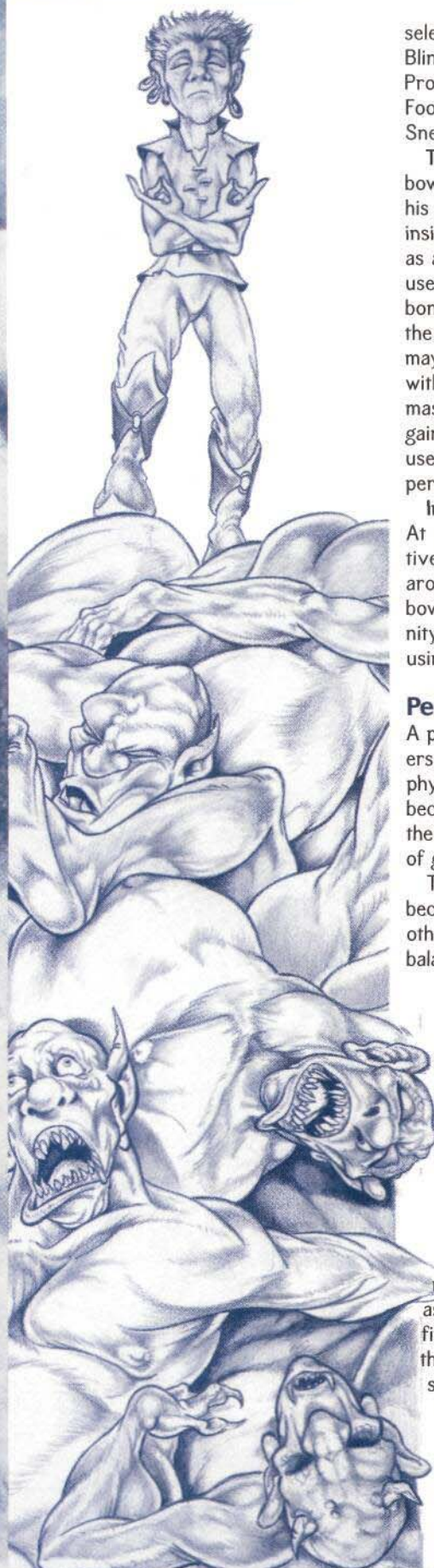
Bonus Feats: The bow master gains a bonus feat at 5th level and every 5 levels thereafter (10th, 15th, 20th, and so on). These bonus feats must be

Bow Master Advancement

Class Level	Special
1	Opportunistic shot
2	Ranged sneak attack +1d6
3	Combat insight
4	Ranged sneak attack +2d6
5	Bonus feat
6	Ranged sneak attack +3d6
7	True strike
8	Ranged sneak attack +4d6
9	Improved opportunistic shot
10	Ranged sneak attack +5d6, bonus feat

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D10





selected from the following list: Blinding Speed, Distant Shot, Epic Prowess, Epic Toughness, Fleet of Foot, Improved Manyshot, Improved Sneak Attack, and Uncanny Accuracy.

True Strike (Su): At 7th level, the bow master becomes highly aware of his surroundings and gains an intuitive insight into the future. Once per day as a free action, the bow master may use this ability to gain a +20 insight bonus to a single attack roll as per the spell *true strike*. The insight bonus may only be applied to a ranged attack with a bow. For every 5 levels of bow master beyond 7th that the character gains (12th, 17th, and so on), he may use this power one additional time per day.

Improved Opportunistic Shot (Ex): At 9th level, the bow master effectively threatens an area 30 feet around him in all directions with his bow. He may make attacks of opportunity against opponents within 30 feet using a ranged weapon.

Perfected One

A perfected one transcends what others perceive as the limitations of the physical form. Body, mind, and soul become a single unified force, granting the perfected one an unparalleled level of grace and clarity in battle.

The vast majority of characters who become perfected ones are monks; few other classes have the discipline and balance to achieve the requirements.

Some fighters, and even fewer paladins, have chosen to follow this path, although they must typically multiclass in order to meet the high base save bonuses required to become perfected ones. Other classes see little gain in this pursuit.

Perfected ones differ according to their personality. They might be solitary, gregarious, beatific, or diabolical. Some perfected ones return to their roots, teaching young ascetics at the monastery where they first learned their skills. Others walk the earth, dispensing justice as they see fit. Still others reason that with their perfect insight, they are best suited to rule over others—although such rule might be benevolent or repressive, depending on the perfected one's alignment.

Perfected One Requirements

To qualify to become a perfected one, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful.

Base Save Bonus: Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +12.

Concentration: 24 ranks.

Feats: Dodge, Expertise, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist.

Epic Feats: Perfect Health.

Special: Character may substitute the purity of body (monk) or diamond body (henshin mystic, monk) class features for the Perfect Health epic feat requirement.

Perfected One Class Skills

The perfected one's class skills and the key ability for each skill are:

Str: —

Dex: Balance, Escape Artist, Move Silently, Tumble.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Knowledge (arcana), Scry, Spellcraft.

Wis: —

Cha: —

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the perfected one prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Characters gain no new proficiency in armor or weapons when they take a level in the perfected one prestige class. They suffer the same penalties for wearing armor that monks do.

Monk Multiclassing: A perfected one may continue to gain monk levels even after gaining one or more levels as a perfected one.

Battle Trance (Ex): The perfected one masters the art of letting her mind guide her attacks. At 1st level, she learns how to enter a battle trance. While in a battle trance, the perfected one gains a +4 bonus to Dexterity and Wisdom, and a +2 morale bonus to Fortitude saves. During the trance, the character may not cast spells, use spell-like abilities, or use spell-activation or spell-completion magic items (such as wands or scrolls). The battle trance only functions if the perfected one is wearing no armor. A battle

Perfected One Advancement

Class

Level Special

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Battle trance 1/day |
| 2 | Combat insight |
| 3 | Bonus feat |
| 4 | Perfect grace, graceful movement, battle trance 2/day |
| 5 | Clarity of battle |
| 6 | Bonus feat |
| 7 | Perfect fortitude, close the wound, battle trance 3/day |
| 8 | See your future |
| 9 | Bonus feat |
| 10 | Perfect mind, protective mind, battle trance 4/day |

HIT DIE
D8

trance lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the character's (newly improved) Wisdom modifier. The perfected one may prematurely end the battle trance voluntarily. The perfected one may enter a battle trance once per day at 1st level and one additional time every 3 levels thereafter (4th, 7th, 10th, and so on).

Combat Insight (Su): At 2nd level, whenever the perfected one makes a successful unarmed strike and is wearing no armor, she may add her Wisdom bonus to the damage dealt.

Bonus Feats: The perfected one gets a bonus feat at 3rd level and every 3 levels thereafter (6th, 9th, 12th, and so on). These bonus feats must be selected from the following list: Armor Skin, Blinding Speed, Damage Reduction, Epic Prowess, Epic Toughness, Fast Healing, Fleet of Foot, Improved Combat Reflexes, Keen Strike, Legendary Climber, Legendary Wrestler, Righteous Strike, Shattering Strike, and Vorpal Strike.

Perfect Grace (Ex): By 4th level, the perfected one gains a clarity of insight that allows her to avoid dangers more easily. She may add her Wisdom bonus to Reflex saves while unarmored.

Graceful Movement (Su): Once per day at 4th level, the perfected one's body automatically activates graceful movement when needed (although the perfected one may elect not to use this ability). This ability functions as the *freedom of movement* spell. Using this ability doesn't require an action on the part of the perfected one, and it can even occur on another character's turn if necessary.

Clarity of Battle (Su): Once per day at 5th level, a perfected one may add her Wisdom bonus to her unarmed strike attack rolls for one full round. During this round, she is also treated as having the Improved Combat Reflexes feat, even if she doesn't have the prerequisites for that feat. Clarity of battle only functions if the perfected one is wearing no armor. The perfected one gains one additional use of this ability per day for every 10 levels after 5th gained in this class (15th, 25th, and so on).

Perfect Fortitude (Ex): At 7th level, the perfected one's agility becomes potent enough to resist bodily hazards. As long as the perfected one is unarmored, she may add her Dexterity bonus to Fortitude saves.

Close the Wound (Su): Once per day at 7th level, the perfected one's body automatically activates close the wound on itself if she is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points. This ability doesn't function if the perfected one is reduced to -10 or fewer hit points. Close the wound functions as the *heal* spell. Using this ability doesn't require an action on the part of the perfected one, and it can even occur on another character's turn if necessary.

See Your Future (Su): An 8th-level perfected one has a powerful sixth sense and receives instantaneous warnings of impending danger or harm as per the *foresight* spell. The perfected one gains one additional use of this power per week for every 10 levels of of this class gained above 8th (18th, 28th, and so on), but never more than once per day.

Perfect Mind (Ex): The body and mind of a 10th-level perfected one become fully attuned. As long as she is unarmored, the perfected one may add her Constitution bonus to Will saves.

Protective Mind (Su): Once per day at 10th level, the perfect one's body automatically activates protective mind on itself if the perfected one is the target of any effect that would detect, influence, or read her emotions or thoughts. This ability functions exactly as the *mind blank* spell, except that its duration is only one hour. Using this ability doesn't require an action on the part of the perfected one, and it can even occur on another character's turn if necessary.

Stalwart Warden

The stalwart warden personifies the mettle and endurance of the dwarven race. Despite his short stature, this mighty dwarf stands tall in the defense of his charge, whether that be an individual, a town of innocents, or an entire race. More than one orc warlord has made the mistake of urging his troops on with the statement, "It's only a single dwarf, how can he hope to stop us?"

Fighters, paladins, monks, rangers, and even ex-barbarians all make fine stalwart wardens. Some clerics choose to follow this path, although this is rare since they must forsake improving their spellcasting abilities. Dwarven defenders most often become stalwart wardens and are readily prepared for this class since they've already pledged some level of service or loyalty to the dwarven people. Similarly, the devoted defender (from *Sword and Fist*) can aspire to become a stalwart warden. Arcane spellcasters have little to gain from this class.

A stalwart warden puts the needs of others before his own, although this can take many forms. Some live spartan lifestyles, preferring to avoid personal involvement. Others live as their fellows, reveling in all that life has to offer. Regardless of personality, however, the stalwart warden remains ever vigilant for danger.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the stalwart warden prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The stalwart warden gains proficiency with all simple and martial weapons, with light, medium, and heavy armor, and with shields.

Ceaseless Vigilance (Ex): Beginning at 1st level, the stalwart warden may add his class level as an insight bonus to Listen and Spot checks.

Dwarven Prowess (Ex): At 2nd level, a stalwart warden receives additional training against the traditional foes of his people. His racial bonus to attack rolls against orcs and goblinoids increases to +2, and his dodge bonus against giants increases to +6. In addition, the stalwart warden may add his class level to damage rolls against any of these creatures.

Enduring Bravery (Ex): At 3rd level, the stalwart warden becomes immune to fear effects.

Stalwart Warden Advancement

Class

Level	Special
1	Ceaseless vigilance
2	Dwarven prowess
3	Enduring bravery
4	Bonus feat
5	Distant vision (60 ft.)
6	Unshakable loyalty
7	Immovable bulwark
8	Bonus feat
9	Unwavering dedication
10	Mighty resistance, distant vision (90 ft.)



Bonus Feats: The stalwart warden gains a bonus feat at 4th level and every 4 levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on). These feats must be selected from the following

list: Armor Skin, Damage Reduction, Devastating Critical, Energy Resistance, Epic Endurance, Epic

Prowess, Epic Toughness, Epic Weapon Focus, Fast Healing, Improved Combat

Reflexes, Improved Darkvision, Instant Reload, Overwhelming Critical, Perfect Health, and Spellcasting Harrier. **Distant Vision**

(Ex): At 5th level, the stalwart warden's darkvision improves from 30 feet to 60 feet, and increases by an additional 30 feet every 5 levels thereafter (10th, 15th, and so on).

Unshakable Loyalty (Ex): At 6th level, the stalwart warden becomes immune to charm effects.

Immovable Bulwark (Ex): At 7th level, a stalwart warden may add his Constitution bonus to any check to avoid being bull rushed, grappled, or tripped (including by an overrun attempt). In addition, he is treated as if he is one size category larger than his normal size for the purposes of such checks, and when attempting to

Stalwart Warden Requirements

To qualify to become a stalwart warden, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

Race: Dwarf.

Base Attack Bonus: +21.

Listen: 10 ranks.

Sense Motive: 5 ranks.

Spot: 10 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will, Toughness.

Epic Feats: Epic Toughness.

Special: Must have damage reduction from a feat or class feature.

Stalwart Warden Class Skills

The stalwart warden's class skills and the key ability for each skill are:

Str: —

Dex: —

Con: —

Int: Craft (any).

Wis: Listen, Sense Motive, Spot.

Cha: —

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

resist a bull rush or a trip, the stalwart warden is considered "exceptionally stable."

Unwavering Dedication (Ex): At 9th level, the stalwart warden becomes immune to compulsion effects.

Mighty Resistance (Ex): The stalwart warden's natural dwarven racial bonuses to saves against poison and spells improve from +2 to +4 at 10th level, and thereafter increase by 2 points for every 10 additional levels gained (20th, 30th, and so on).

Unholy Ravager

The unholy ravager is a walking personification of evil incarnate. He doesn't merely radiate evil, he is evil, and he leaves a trail of devastation behind him. Some lands exist for centuries without seeing such a villain, but for every such fortunate kingdom, there is another brought to utter ruin at the hands of an unholy ravager.

While all unholy ravagers revel in destruction, they pursue this goal in a variety of different ways. Lawful



Unholy Ravager Advancement

Class

Level	Special
1	Aura of evil
2	Corrupting touch
3	Sneak attack +1d6
4	Bonus feat
5	Desecrating aura
6	Sneak attack +2d6
7	Defiling glare
8	Bonus feat
9	Sneak attack +3d6
10	Despoiling presence



Unholy Ravager Requirements

To qualify to become an unholy ravager, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +21.

Feats: Power Attack, Sunder, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical.

Epic Feats: Overwhelming Critical.

Special: Must have dedicated yourself to the service of an evil god.

Unholy Ravager Class Skills

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

Str: Climb.

Dex: Ride.

Con: —

Int: Intelligence.

Wis: —

Cha: Handle Animal, Intimidate.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

unholy ravagers often set themselves up as despots, periodically leaving the palace to lead an army of evil across the land. Neutral unholy ravagers might work behind the scenes until such a time as their presence is necessary to achieve maximum carnage. Chaotic unholy ravagers are especially feared, for there is no negotiating with such a character. These unholy ravagers care little for rulership or back-room dealings, but only in bringing sorrow to the land, often at the head of a rapacious band of murderous thugs who see the unholy ravager as the living hand of their destructive god.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the unholy ravager prestige class.

Weapon and Armor

Proficiency: Characters who take a level of unholy ravager gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons, with light, medium, and heavy armor, and with shields.

Aura of Evil (Su): The unholy ravager emanates an evil aura that causes all good-aligned characters within 20 feet to suffer a -2 morale penalty to all attacks and skill checks. For the purposes of the *detect evil* spell, the unholy ravager's aura of evil is equal to his character level. Note that the unholy rav-



World Guardian Advancement

Class

Level	Special
1	World's friend
2	<i>Speak with the world</i>
3	Oaken hide +1
4	Bonus feat
5	<i>Hear the world</i>
6	Oaken hide +2
7	Strength of stone
8	Bonus feat
9	<i>Walk the world</i> , oaken hide +3
10	<i>Unleash the world's fury</i>

Spells Per Day

+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class
+1 level of existing class

ager can dampen this aura as a standard action, such as when he wishes to remain unnoticed by good-aligned characters. Restoring his aura of evil is a free action.

Corrupting Touch (Su): An unholy ravager can corrupt a creature or object by touch once per day at 2nd level, and one additional time per day every 10 levels thereafter (12th, 22nd, and so on). Corrupting touch eliminates any damage reduction or hardness possessed by the creature or object for one hour. This ability requires a touch attack if used against a character or an object carried by another character. Corrupting touch allows no saving throw to resist its effects. If used against a single part of a particularly large object (such as a castle wall), corrupting touch affects a 5-foot-cube of material.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Any time the unholy ravager's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (regardless of whether she has a Dexterity bonus), the unholy ravager's attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 3rd level and an additional 1d6 every three levels thereafter. In every other way, treat this ability as a rogue's sneak attack. If the unholy ravager already has the sneak attack ability from another source, the bonuses to damage stack.

Bonus Feats: The unholy ravager gets a bonus feat at 4th level and every 4 levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on). These bonus feats must be selected from the following list: Armor Skin, Damage Reduction, Devastating Critical, Epic Prowess, Epic Toughness, Epic Weapon Focus, Fast Healing, Improved Sneak Attack, and Lingering Damage.

Desecrating Aura (Su): By 5th level, the unholy ravager's 20-foot aura of evil is so purely evil that it imbues the area with negative energy, as per the *desecrate* spell. If dispelled, the unholy ravager can restore the aura on his turn as a free action.

Defiling Glare (Su): An unholy ravager can place a curse upon a target within 30 feet with only a glance. He may use this ability once per day at 7th level, and one additional time per day every 10 levels thereafter (17th, 27th, and so on). This ability works exactly as the *bestow curse* spell, except that its effects can only be

removed by a spellcaster of at least 21st level.

Despoiling Presence (Su): At 10th level, the unholy ravager's aura of evil renders any food or water within its area poisonous to consume (Fortitude save DC 20 + class level + Charisma modifier to resist; initial and secondary damage 1d10 Constitution). Potions and similar magic liquids can also be affected, although such items are allowed a Will save (DC 20) to resist. Any items carried by the unholy ravager are unaffected.

World Guardian

Some might describe the world guardian as an avatar of nature. Others see her as the personification of the environment, an animate extension of its needs. In actuality, the world guardian is simply an individual dedicated to defending the world of beast, tree, sun, and sky, from callous destruction at the hands of those who cannot or will not respect its terrible beauty.

Druids are the most logical world guardians, with their innate respect for the natural world. However, some rangers also take up the cause, and in rare cases a barbarian or multiclassed barbarian/ranger might heed the call as well. Other characters simply don't have the training and knowledge required to become world guardians.

The world guardian bears a heavy burden—the protection of her natural environment from those who would despoil it. Some world guardians grow aloof, standing apart from those who do not share the weight of the beliefs of this class. Others solicit allies, both from nature and from civilization as needed. In cases where local rulers share similar outlooks, the world guardian can provide simultaneous protection to nature and kingdom alike. But in territories controlled by those who do not respect her charge, the world guardian might turn to lawless anarchy to protect the land.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the world guardian prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The world guardian gains no new proficiency in armor or weapons.

Spellcasting: At every level, the world guardian gains new spells per day and spells known as if she had

For Your Campaign

Just as with mundane prestige classes, your choice to include epic prestige classes in your campaign should be guided by the roles they will fit. Don't simply add all the prestige classes presented in this article to your game without considering the ramifications of their inclusion. If possible, include hints to their existence well before the characters seek to qualify for them. This might come in the form of meeting others of those classes or, if your PCs are the first epic-level characters in your campaign, providing omens or signs that the characters are "destined" for certain paths of power.

Although the requirements for each of the prestige classes presented here are largely statistic-oriented, you can make these classes even more special and elite by adding campaign-specific requirements that characters must fulfill to qualify. For instance, you might decide that in your game, all world guardians are specially selected by the goddess of nature or that a character seeking to become an arcane lord must first visit the Wellspring of All Magic. Requirements such as these help make a prestige class feel more a part of your world, rather than just an artificial addition.

also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as bonus metamagic or item creation feats). If already an epic spellcaster, the character gains only the benefit noted under the Spells entry for that epic class. If the character possessed more than one spellcasting class before she became a world guardian, she must decide which class will receive the additional spellcasting level for purposes of determining spells per day when she adds the new level.

World's Friend (Ex): No animal, beast, or plant willingly harms or opposes a world guardian. Any spell or effect that would cause an animal, beast, or plant to act against the world guardian (such as *entangle*) automatically fails. If the world guardian

World Guardian Requirements

To qualify to become a world guardian, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Knowledge (nature): 24 ranks.

Wilderness Lore: 24 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]) or Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore).

Epic Feats: Epic Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]) or Epic Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore), Extended Lifespan.

Special: Character may substitute the timeless body class feature from the monk class for the Extended Lifespan epic feat requirement.

World Guardian Class Skills

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

Str: Swim.

Dex: Hide, Move Silently.

Con: Concentration.

Int: Craft (any), Knowledge (nature), Profession (any), Scry (exclusive skill), Spellcraft.

Wis: Heal, Intuit Direction, Listen, Spot, Wilderness Lore.

Cha: Animal Empathy (exclusive skill), Diplomacy, Handle Animal.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

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attacks such as a creature, the stricture is broken.

At 6th level, this ability grants any animal, beast, or plant fighting as an ally of the world guardian a +4 morale bonus to attacks and damage. The world guardian must be within 100 feet and have line of sight to the animal, beast, or plant.

Speak with the World (Sp): A 2nd-level world guardian may *speak with animals* or *speak with plants* at will. She may also cast *stone tell* once per day, plus one additional time per day every 10 levels thereafter (12th, 22nd, and so on). These powers function as a spellcaster of the world guardian's character level.

Oaken Hide (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, the world guardian develops a natural armor bonus. This bonus is +1 at 3rd level and increases by an additional +1 every three levels thereafter (+2 at 6th, +3 at 9th, and so on).

Bonus Feats: The world guardian gains a bonus feat at 4th level and every 4 levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on). These bonus feats must be selected from the following list: Blinding Speed, Energy Resistance, Epic Endurance, Fast Healing, Fleet of Foot, Legendary Climber, Legendary Tracker, Perfect Health, Permanent Emanation, and Spontaneous Spell.

Hear the World (Sp): At 5th level, the world guardian can cast *commune with nature* once per day as a spellcaster of her character level. The world guardian gains one additional use of this ability per day for every 10 levels gained above 5th (15th, 25th, and so on).

Strength of Stone (Sp): Once per day, the world guardian may cast *stoneskin* upon herself as a caster of her class level. The world guardian gains one additional use of this ability per day for every 10 levels gained above 7th (17th, 27th, and so on).

Walk the World (Sp): At 9th-level, the world guardian may cast *transport via plants* at will.

Unleash the World's Fury (Sp): At 10th level, the world guardian may, once per week, unleash the unfettered fury of nature. This requires one round of concentration and takes the form of any one of the following spell effects cast at a level equal to the world guardian's character level: *creeping doom*, *earthquake*, *storm of vengeance*, or *whirlwind*.

The world guardian and her allies are unaffected by the effect. This power only functions on the Material Plane. ♠

