



ICON

A 13th Age Fanzine

Issue 2



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ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

BY MIKE SHEA

ENCOUNTER ELEMENTS AND INSPIRATION

“Tuckers Kobolds had taken up position in the fungal cavern, now they waited. A dozen or more pairs of cunning yellow eyes and scaly snouts, hidden beneath the thick blanket of dense fog with reptilian patience. With the odds in their favour.”

Dungeons and Dragons 4th Edition gave us wonderful tools for building rich and interesting combat encounters. Fantastic terrain, interesting environmental effects, and in-battle skill challenges helped DMs build big tactical set-piece battles that went well beyond a square room full of orcs.

Many of us consider 13th Age the spiritual successor of 4th Edition D&D, yet the core 13th Age book has few environmental effects we can incorporate into our game. On the surface, the abstract design of movement and targeting in 13th Age makes it difficult to build the same sorts of effects and hazards we were used to using in our big 4e battles.

The need is still there, however. We want our battles to be interesting and unique and environmental effects give us an extra variable to make sure they are. In this article we’re going to look at some methods for developing environmental effects in 13th Age that build off of the core concepts of the game system itself.

What Is an Environmental Effect and Why Should We Care?

For the sake of this article, we’re going to consider an “environmental effect” any sort of terrain features that affects the combatants in a battle. Environmental effects might include traps, hazards, or zone-wide effects. It might include boons to PCs for going to particular locations. It might include skill challenges that sit in the middle of the fight. Consider an environmental effect anything that changes a battle but isn’t a monster or PC.

Environmental effects help ensure each of our battles is different than another. Environmental effects give us an additional layer we can add to our battles to keep them interesting. We shouldn’t use environmental effects all the time, but when we do, these effects add a complication to ensure battles don’t start feeling the same.

Environmental Effects and Abstract Distances

The biggest consideration we have to make when designing a 13th Age environmental effect is 13th Age’s use of abstract distances. With abstract distances, we can’t know if a PC is about to walk through some trapped squares or brush up against an evil altar. Even if we’re playing with maps and minis, a player can just as easily move a mini around an object instead of through it.

This means any 13th Age environmental effect we create has to use these same abstract distances. There’s an easy test for this, though, and it comes down to a single question:

Can you describe how an effect works without resorting to drawing it? - If the answer is “yes” then you likely have an effect that works.

Here's an example.

Evil Rune

A blood-stained evil rune sits on the floor radiating negative energy. Any evil creature nearby the rune gains +2 to their attack rolls. Any good creature in the rune takes -2 to their attack rolls.

Note the word “nearby”. That's a 13th Age key word for distance and, in this case, it makes things easy for us. Is the evil necromancer nearby the rune? Is the lawful good paladin near the necromancer? That would mean the paladin is also near the rune and thus under it's effect.

One can also use “engaged with” as a trigger for an object. Here's another example:

Stranglevines

In the swamps of the lizardfolk grow terrible patches of stranglevines. Any non-lizardfolk engaged with the stranglevines takes one point of damage per point on the escalation die. Creatures are considered engaged with the stranglevines if they are engaged with any other creature who is also engaged with the stranglevines.

This sort of a chain connects engaged creatures to each other and to effects with whom any of them are engaged. Again, we're able to write it out without showing a diagram which means it's likely a workable effect for 13th Age.

Of course, the easiest effects are the ones where distance doesn't matter. Here's an example.

Radiant Gem

This floating white gem fires beams of radiant light at any creature who enters the room. This environmental effect has the attacks, defenses, hit points, and damage of an appropriate level to the dungeon. It is immune to all effects except damage. It can, however, be disabled with three medium difficulty DC checks, one per round as well as destroyed by physical damage. This effect can hit any creature in the room.

Here's another example.

Dense Fog

Mystical fog flows through these caves. Attacks against far-away enemies take -4 to the attack.

Figuring out how to work with 13th Age's abstract distances is probably the hardest part when building 13th Age environmental effects. Once it begins to click, the world begins to open up.

Incorporating PC Interaction

13th Age, and all RPGs for that matter, are built around empowering PCs to interact with the world. It's easy for us GMs to get carried away when we're designing interesting environmental effects and forget to incorporate potential PC actions into the effect. It's easy for us to simply say that PCs can't actually do anything with an effect but that removes a great opportunity to give our players a chance to feel empowered and able to affect the world they inhabit.

For this reason, it's important that we think about *how* PCs can change our environmental effects without completely removing the effect in the first place unless we're perfectly happy to have them do so. Here's an example.

Fungal Caverns

The caverns beneath this cursed tree are filled with poisonous spores. While in the fungal caverns, each PC takes the current escalation die in ongoing poison damage. PCs can reduce this effect by 1/2, rounded down, with a successful and appropriate DC 15 skill check each round as a swift action.

Almost as bad as ignoring potential PC interaction is to depend on it. You don't want a firebreathing dragon statue to dish out tons of damage with an expectation that the PCs will succeed on a skill check. If they fail, they shouldn't simply die. Design effects to be interesting both with and without successful PC manipulation.

Offering Choices and Making Deals

13th Age designer, Rob Heinsoo, is notorious for offering deals during his game and we can wire such deals directly into our environmental effects. Essentially, we build an effect with a benefit tied to a cost. We don't have to worry about distance proximity with an effect like this. Instead, PCs learn of the choice they can make and choose to do it or not. Let's look at an example.

Altar of Rage

This bloody altar is filled with the hatred and sadness of those sacrificed upon it. While next to the altar, creatures increase their critical hit range by 2 but take one point of psychic damage as ongoing damage per point on the escalation die from the ravings of the sacrificed echoing in their minds.

An object like this gives players a clear choice, take damage to increase your critical threat.

Getting ranged attackers to actually enter a battleground is always a hard trick for many large tactical battles. We can use these deals as a way to bring PCs out of the doorway and into the battlespace. Here's an example:

Sniper's Perch

High up on the edge of this battleground is the perfect spot to rain damage down upon your enemies. This perch requires two move actions and a successful DC 15 check to get to. Once a creature is on the perch, that creature gains +2 to all single-target ranged attack rolls.

We can put deals like this into many of our environmental effects and never have to worry about how they may or may not come into play through movement.

Incorporating the Escalation Die

13th Age's escalation die is a great mechanic we can incorporate into our environmental effects. As we've seen in previous examples, we can use the escalation die to increase the potential threat of an effect as a battle rages on. Here's another example.

Battlefield of Mounting Violence

While fighting within this battlefield, all creatures add the escalation die to their damage rolls (x2 for champion, x3 for epic).

Scaling effects based on the die helps us increase the pace and the excitement of an encounter. We can also use it to make things a bit more difficult for the PCs.

Unhallowed Ground

While in this area, living creatures subtract one from their defenses for each point currently on the escalation die. Each round PCs can reduce this effect to 1/2, rounded up, with an appropriate swift action medium difficulty DC check.

There are lots of interesting ways to use the escalation die in our effects and, every time we do, it helps to make 13th Age a more unique game system for our players.

Using Icons and Icon Rolls

Iconic relationships and their accompanying iconic rolls are another tool we can use when designing our environmental effects. Instead of succeeding at a skill check, players can choose to use their five or six rolls on an icon roll and describe how their tie to that icon directly influenced an environmental effect. The difference between a 5 and a 6 can come into play as well. A 5 might require that the PC suffer the direct influence of the environmental effect. A 6, on the other hand, might count as two successes of a three-success skill check.

Here's an example.

Dark Obelisk

This black stone pillar draws life out of all of those nearby. This obelisk has defenses, attack scores, damage, and hit points as a creature of the appropriate level (see the 13th Age core book page 254). The obelisk is immune to most status effects. The obelisk can be disabled with three normal difficulty DC checks, one per round. Alternatively, a PC may use a 5 or 6 Icon roll as an automatic success and describe how the icon's influence helps to disable the obelisk. When using an icon roll of 5, the obelisk will get one free

attack against the PC using the roll while using an icon roll of six counts as two successes instead of just one.

We can also use icon rolls as a way to flavor the effect itself. For example, if two players both rolled 5s or 6s on the High Druid, we can flavor an environmental effect in one of the battles as a growth of wild thornweeds or patches of huge poisonous fungal mushrooms whose corruption must be thwarted. Iconic rolls for the Orc Lord might result in twisted and brutal mechanical traps infused with dark magic while rolls with the Prince of Shadows may result in shadowy portals that draw in living creatures and spit them out in different parts of the battlefield.

Once you have the mechanics down for designing 13th Age environmental effects, you can quickly flavor these effects right at the table based on these iconic rolls. This will save you preparations ahead of time while your players will enjoy watching how their iconic rolls helped to influence the very world itself.

Environmental Effect Templates

As we come to a close, let's look at what some of those environmental effect templates might be. You can use these templates to give you the basic construction of an effect and then flavor them to fit either the battle you plan to run or the iconic rolls of your players. Keep these templates handy during your game so you can quickly improvise interesting terrain effects with almost no planning ahead of time.

Zone-Wide Effects

Zone-wide effects are relatively low powered and effect every space in a zone.

Incendiary Clouds

Creatures in this zone take the escalation die in fire damage as ongoing damage and a -2 penalty to hit anything they are not engaged with. This effect may be negated by an appropriate DC 15 skill check.

Unholy Grounds

Undead creatures in this area gain the escalation die in damage to all attacks.

Altars of Power

Altars of Power represent the “let’s make a deal” environmental effects. They usually add a benefit but at a cost.

Altar of Fire

Creatures near this altar can make an appropriate normal DC check to add the escalation die in fire damage to their attack (2x at Champion, 4x at Epic). Reskin the element of this altar to whatever fits your story. Failure in the skill check results in taking fire damage equal to the escalation die (2x at Champion, 4x at Epic).

Altar of Blessed Ghoul Summoning

Creatures near this altar gain the escalation die in extra damage and convert their damage type to holy. While near this altar, any ghouls within a mile become aware of their presence and attack this location.

Infernal Constructs

Infernal constructs are built like monsters. They are immune to almost all status effects (the GM decides what effects might work but most will not). Like monsters, they attack on an initiative count with an initiative bonus equal to their level. Some powerful constructs may be double or triple strength but most of them either come in multiple numbers or are accompanied by other monsters. The attacks of infernal constructs can always target nearby enemies and can sometimes target far away targets as well.

Infernal constructs can be disabled with appropriate normal DC checks, one per round. The number of checks depends on the type of construct. Mook constructs require only one check. Normal constructs usually require two or three checks. Double-strength require three or four checks. Triple-strength would require five checks.

War Machine

This infernal machine fires electrically charged crossbow bolts at enemies near and far.

Level 4 [Construct]

R: Electrical bolt +9 vs AC, 14 damage + 1d6 electrical damage.

Three physical or arcane DC 15 checks to disable.

AC 20 PD 18 MD (immune) HP 54

Chaos Portal

Arcs of black energy lash out from this chaotic portal to the nether.

Level 6 Double Strength [Construct]

Lashing energy: +11 vs PD (1d3 nearby enemies),
21 damage.

AC 22 PD 20 MD (immune) HP 180

Added Complexity for Interesting Encounters

We GMs have a hard mission to keep every encounter interesting and exciting. Many times we can do this with fantastic narrative that draws our players into the world. Other times, however, we need some interesting changes to the way the game actually plays to keep players interested and keep them guessing. With these environmental effects in hand you will hopefully have the tools you need to keep your battles unique and interesting every time the dice hit the table. Enjoy!

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THE TEMPLE AND THE MAGE

BY DAVID EGLINTON

BUILD YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

“Are you taking notes? I wouldn’t bother. This place changes every time someone wanders in, s’why allsort have been using this place to hide out for decades. I was here three summers past with Bethelfor and his band, past these very doors. Only there wern’t three of ‘em then.”

Why is this Adventure different? Too many dungeons I’ve read are, for me, essentially useless as written. Very rare is it to find a dungeon or encounter that I can just drop into an ongoing campaign - there is always work to be done. I suppose one must accept that a certain amount of work is required in order to blend a dungeon seamlessly into a game, and if so, why are there no published adventures of late that attempt to ease this burden?

I’ve written this module as a framework and tool for a DM to create a bespoke experience, it has characters, motivations, goals and dungeon dressing but gives the tools to help to DM connect the dots on How, Where and Why.

Every room in this module has been populated with an interesting feature or function within the dungeon, it hasn’t however been populated with monsters or crucially, specific purpose. All the building blocks have been provided to flesh out the dungeon so that it matches your preferred style of play and fit into any ongoing narrative you may have - it also works as a creative exercise, asking the DM to connect narrative lines between elements as he creates them. More on that later.

There is also a system whereby the story behind the dungeon advances and the characters are forced to react to its twists and turns. Again this can be implemented or not - all depending on what the GM needs.

Things you should know; this module reads loose and improvisational, things aren’t explicitly laid out for you in all regards but it does have the tools to allow you to structure it how you like - so some time is needed for customisation, but as you know, most of the time that happens anyway.

How to run this module?

First thing I recommend is a skim read through, this should give you a vague idea about what is going on, then look to the following steps:

1. Choose a Hook

I’ve created several hooks to get characters involved should you want to use the story elements from this module, choose one that reflects the players style or narrative in your game. As with much in this module they require the GM to shape them to fit into the experience they are trying to build.

They call on Icon relationships to drive PC interest and customise the dungeon accordingly, each carrying a grain of story to build upon. I highly recommend when stocking the dungeon and enveloping its look and feel, that you use this choice of Icon be your touchstone reference and inspiration.

Icon Hook - Archmage

A shady patron approaches the players with a delicate mission, the Archmage requests a valuable artefact be stolen from a minor rival who would use it for nefarious ends. But he must not be under any circumstances implicated for political reasons, this where the Characters come in. Be discreet and smart.

Icon Hook - Crusader

The Crusader visits his champions (or enemy) with vivid dreams of carnage and glory, a twisted malevolent wizard meddles too deeply in forbidden knowledge, they must be stopped and all those who would stand by him punished. Be brutal and send a message.

Icon Hook - Priestess

The clergy loyal to the Priestess send word. They worry deeply about one of their faithful, a gifted wizard had attempted to cleanse a tainted artefact they had unearthed - yet he and the three clerics of the order have not been heard from in some time. Redeem the Fallen.

Icon Hook - Dwarf King

Agents representing the Dwarf King summon the characters, they offer a substantial bounty. A trickster mage stole a rare and cherished artefact from the King, he wishes it returned as soon as possible. He is willing to compensate the Characters greatly and cares little about their actions. Success at any cost.

Sample Patrons

Anya Whiteheart. .

. . is a Noble landed Lady with strong ties to radical leftwing politicians in Starport. She is of Medium Height with a trim figure and a round face with hard eyes, framed by short ash curls. Anya

is well known for her canny wit and intelligence as well as excellent diplomatic nous. She is devoted to political reform in Starport as well as faithful member and supporter of the church. Anya makes fast friends and brings enemies quick to heel in the political forum, she is an intent listener and decisive speaker. Her ability to, and success at playing the political field has made her a target of the scheming, powerful elite.

Alastair Darkmantle. .

. . is a Trade Ogliarch, serving as the General Secretary of the Gilded Brotherhood, the pre eminent trade association in the region. In his early 60's Alastair still retains his handsome looks of his youth, albeit with snowy shoulder length black hair and crows feet. He is a ruthless businessman and keeper of secrets, having great knowledge of the cities and their lords. Alastair is devoted to his family, house and legacy, and will stop at nothing to ensure that it remains strong. Direct to the point of bluntness yet he always knows their correct thing to say and he delivers it with authority. Alastair has made a career out of making deals, some he would rather not become common knowledge.

Ogo Vashk. .

. . is a notorious freebooter and one time captain of the lost Elise Marie. Broad as he is tall with weathered olive skin and short shaggy black hair Ogo is notorious for his booming voice, bushy beard and love of revelry and plunder. He has captained all manner of vessels and participated in some of the most legendary raids of modern times, often taking pivotal roles in them. He is unscrupulous and cunning but a high sense of honour and brotherhood with his allies. He is loud and jolly when merry, thunderous and roaring when angered. His reputation, precedes him. As such he's not always welcome everywhere.

2. Make the Rooms Interesting

Each room presented later on has at least one feature that can be used to build around a part of the story, background behind key NPC's and the dungeon itself. You are free to leave these as they are, interesting set dressing. However I recommend injecting an element of fantasy to bring them alive and give each room a chance to be memorable, and tell the story you want.

Roll or choose from the following table and apply the result to the feature in question, remember you're looking to creative narrative reason for why that feature has those attributes, to make sense of the randomness. Look for the examples below if you need further guidance.

1. its illusory
2. its wants to hurt you
3. its keeping a secret
4. its larger on the inside
5. it gives a blessing
6. it gives a curse
7. its sentient
8. it takes you somewhere
9. it brings something to you
10. its hidden
11. its forgotten
12. its brand new
13. its incongruous
14. its protected
15. its disguised
16. it lies
17. its truthful
18. it belongs to a pair
19. its unusually crafted
20. its known to an Icon

Some Examples :

Room 8 has "*Winged Statues stand in alcoves lining the walls, each with hands covering its face.*" and rolling on the table above yielded: 10 (Its hidden) 4 (its larger on the inside) and 20 (its known to an Icon) so I determine that :

One of the statues is in fact a secret entrance, the unlocking mechanism is one favoured by The Liche King, a hidden magical rune upon the forehead of the statue marks it out as being different.

Room 3 has "*The cells contain several skeletons*" and "*On a table nearby a mouldering bag of possessions and personal effects*". Rolling yielded 18 (it belongs to a pair) and 7 (its sentient) so :

Two of the skeletons wear similar garb, they are infact twins, heroes who disappeared quite some time ago, the possessions had belonged to them - inside the satchel is a small orb that contains a snapshot of their consciousness combined. They will know about several of the rooms in the temple.

Room 15 has "*The shelves are full to the brim of Jars, Urns and pots, of all ages, types and states of repair*" and "*One appears to be sealed with wax.*" Rolling once gives us 14 (its protected) so :

The jar contains a very valuable gem or similar trinket suspended in potent alchemical acid, and to make matters more complicated the wax seal was derived from a fantastical creature so is far more durable than run-of-the-mill wax. The remaining jars and urns are mundane.

You can see that the loose elements from the rooms described provide seeds for a myriad of different experiences, and potentially many runs through the same dungeon with different outcomes.

Some Tips :

Remember the advice the 13th Age core book gives us on assigning DC's and impromptu damage for traps and other hazards. Ask yourself, should a challenge be Easy, Medium or Hard?

Also don't worry about what you change, the game is yours - and don't limit yourself to the list above. If a good idea comes to you, use it. Think about things such as the lighting, the door - walls and rooms construction. Don't be afraid to go outside the imaginary box.

I've also found that more that 1 roll will often force you to be more creative and experimental in trying to find a narrative explanation. And when dealing with a fantasy game, that's not a bad thing.

Not everything has to be fantastical. If you do want all the features your players come across to have an interesting element, consider reducing the number of features overall in order to avoid players becoming overwhelmed. Try replacing them with empty rooms with perhaps just occupants for interest.

It's finally worth saying that if you intend to use the story elements of this module, that you read those first to ensure good cohesion of ideas.

3. Assign Monsters and NPC's

The next thing is to populate the dungeon with adversaries for the characters to overcome, I've included several lists of examples

that make good foes for different Icons and patrons. And remember to refer to the core book to see the appropriate number of monsters for any given player group.

The GM's job then, is to form an explanation as to why these creatures would be in the room they are assigned to. Again this should match the type of experience the GM is building - but consider rolling on the table below for inspiration as to a group of creatures motivation, then fit them with the rooms feature or purpose in coherence with the overall theme.

1. Military Actions e.g. *Practicing, Making camp, Guarding, On the offensive, Preparing traps.*
2. Leisure Activities e.g. *Eating, Sleeping, Gambling, Playing.*
3. Acquiring Knowledge e.g. *Deciphering Puzzles, Reading Books, Interrogating prisoners.*
4. Resource Gathering e.g. *Harvesting food, Removing Items, Collecting Mana.*

Monsters

If your patron is aligned with the Crusader consider :

Estlin is no doubt in league with the Diabolist, it makes sense therefore that he's summoned no end of demons and devils to act on his behest as well as using their infernal tricks and tools to safeguard himself.

If your patron is aligned with the Archmage consider :

Mages are notorious for protecting themselves with their magic and creations, spells and enchanted traps, helmed horrors and homunculi. Estlin is no different in this regard.

If your patron is aligned with the Dwarf King consider :

Who better to provide the know-how and daring to mount a raid on a vault owned by the Dwarven King but a gang of safe cracking, scheming kobolds and their arsenal of traps and gadgets?

If your patron is aligned with the Priestess consider :

The path to Lichedom is hard, fortunately Estlin has mastered numerous rites and rituals to bind the forms of other to do his bidding. Wights, Shades and reanimated horrors all lurk in the halls of the temple.

Some examples :

I put 4 Zombies in Room 8, the secret door in the statue is already interesting enough so I leave that alone. Instead I roll a d4 and get 4, (acquiring knowledge). When defeated the players have the opportunity to find a rotten journal that describes a group of treasure hunters who were kept captive by Estlin - fearing that they would be turned into eternal guardians for his secrets.

Following the undead theme i'll put 2 Wraiths in room rolling a 3 (gathering resources) they are drawing power from the the orb, tormenting the consciousness of the twins when the players arrive - perhaps even giving them an advantage whilst near it. They can phase in and out of the cells to avoid melee combat to make the encounter even more interesting.

Finally I decide that room 15 doesn't need any monsters or inhabitants, I don't want every room to to always lead to a combat - the jars and urns should be satisfying to solve so I leave it as it is.

Some Tips :

I haven't provided any creatures with levels, stats, or powers, this is something the GM must decide upon and amend the monster statistics from the core book accordingly in order to provide the required level of challenge for their players.

Again I encourage you to use these monsters as a mechanism to tell a story, understand what each group of monsters is doing with Estlin and you can build threads of narrative.

Remember that not all monster have to be hostile, think of interesting ways that they can be related to the rooms features that does not immediately pose a threat but rather offer potential roleplaying encounters.

4. Don't forget rewards.

This is a good time to place all the rewards that you want to dole out to players. Again very much up to you as the GM to decide upon what is appropriate for your table.

5. Key the Map

I've included a map with lined entires to be filled in for each room, print it and write your notes on there for space saving behind the screen. This is also a good time to look at the overall picture and make any changes you deem necessary.

6. Play

Thats its, you should know have a fully stocked dungeon with interesting encounters and monsters for the players to discover,

and remember to keep this module close should you need to reference anything.

The Story

If you are interested in using story elements from this adventure - exploring Estlin Amberhand and the Temple, follow these steps. They mimic the pattern of a script for film or television, following certain rules of scriptwriting such as running in a 3 act pattern - they can also be played out as scenes or intertwine into a more traditional dungeon crawl, and are designed to raise tension and provide opportunities for success or failure at certain stages of the story.

Again they are outlines, designed to guide you and help shape the way you tell the story, rather than have you parrot-perform some read aloud text. They will ask you to introduce elements or shape the narrative in certain ways as the players progress through the temple. But will always remain loose in their instructions allowing you to flavour to taste for you and your group.

1. Inciting Incident

The players patron finds them, preferably in a dramatic fashion, and makes contact, introducing the hook that should spur them on towards the temple, travelling there is easy - its location known to the patron.

2.Locked In

As soon as the players arrive in the temple and sensing their presence Estlin speaks out the characters using a illusory image of himself, he berates them for their intrusion and promises no mercy. With that he seals the players in with a heavy portcullis warded by strange glyphs.

3.Raising the Stakes

After the players explore a room or two, describe to them the effects of a turbulent earth quake, and deep rumble coming from elsewhere in the temple, perhaps create a hazard or skill check to impose a greater challenge. Estlin is beginning to activate a powerful magical artefact, a very unstable process.

4. Culmination

Minor tremors should continue as players explore a further room or two, then another violent eruption and the whole temple is pulled into blackness, a malfunction in the ritual workings of the powerful artefact has pulled the temple into the gloom, shadowfell or similar plane of existence. Describe to them now a wholly changed appearance, detailed later on under Global Dungeon Features.

5. Rising Tension

One of the next few rooms the players explore should be replaced by the *Plane Serpent's Lair*

6. Right to the Heart of the Matter.

Moving on the players should very quickly find trails of raw magic energy, visible to the eye. They flow like veins to magical heart that is the fractured artefact - the challenges of rooms they flow through are affected in unusual ways. Perhaps rolling again on the table under "making things interesting" with this new story element in mind for each room that you decide to be affected.

7. A Bit of a Twist.

Once the players have been pushed to their limits running low on recoveries and spells, they should encounter Estlin Amberhand, replace the next room they explore with *Estlin's Mutation*.

8. Full Resolution.

Here the players will succeed or fail, if they succeed the temple is restored back to the Physical plane and all is well, the artefact recoverable enough for the players needs, if not. Well, thats up to you.

The Dungeon

History & Background

In my campaign the temple of the Black Hand is buried deep within the labyrinthian back streets of the capital city, it long served as a place of worship for the impoverished and marginalised members the citys poorest districts. Eventually it succame to the entropy of time and ceased to attract the flock it once had, disappearing even from the thoughts of the cities most long lived inhabitants. Numerous groups over the last 100 or so years have taken advantage of this, using it as a place to scheme and operate safely from - its location masked from the unknowing eye. Several entrances have opened and closed over time, one could through the ages enter from the city sewers, over densely packed rooftops and from ritual circles and portways.

Estlin Amberhand

Estlin can be many things, wise, enlightened, misguided, wicked or cruel - mould him into the villain your players want to face off against. Remember that he doesn't need to be a 2 dimensional baddy either, perhaps for all his faults he's actually attempting something very noble, or something wrong for a greater good. In my campaign Estlin is a servant of the Liche King, who traded his soul for an extended existence and a magical amber hand, he had stolen a powerful artefact from the local druids in order to sink the surrounding area into the shadow fell.

Global Features

- The temple is made of hewn mortered stone, with rooms built to accomodate most normal humanoids.
- Doors to rooms are sturdy yet old, some have thick iron bands for support.
- Torches Braziers and sconces provide a low, gloomy illumination to the rooms and chambers.

If you are using the story elements detailed earlier, ensure you detail the effects of the switch into the shadowfell specifically the following:

- Globes of light and energy float listlessly throughout the temple now, the forgotten souls of those trapped in the gloom.
- Natural light sputters and falters, the shadowfell dampens all light sources by about 50-75%
- Have players roll a consitution check every 10-20 minutes of real time play. For every failure they lose one Last Gasp save due to encroaching gloom of the shadow plane. If they lose all the Last Gasp saves this way they do not die, however have no saves to make and will die when they reduced to ohp.

Room Key

I. Quiet Chapel

Large Circular Room with high ornate stone walls supported by thick marble pillars, rows of pews face a simple altar raised on a stone dias.

- Jade Gargoyles and Grotesques decorate the tops of the high pillars
- Fine words and scriptures runs the length of the floor.

2. Squalid Robing Room

Small Rectangular room inhabited by three large heavy wooden wardrobes.

- The wardrobes contain several heavy woollen vestments
- Two Ornate lamps hangs on the wall, each lit by a swarm of bioluminescent flies.

3. Dank Cells

A narrow cramped place along the mildewy walls are a row of 6 mouldering cells, each protected by thick lack iron bars.

- The cells contain several skeletons
- On a table nearby sits a mouldering bag of possessions and personal effects.

4. Renovated Private Chambers (locked)

A sumptuous well appointed study, with carved wooden panelling depicting scenes of arcane idolatry, the gloom of the shadows fell seems to warp and change them to horrid imagery under torchlight

- A large heavy wooden desk with writing apparatus, numerous scrolls and parchments lie in a heap ontop.
- In a lower drawer of the desk is a small well crafted chest.
- 3 tall glass bells sit atop stone pedestals, suspended inside them float several shards of teal crystal.

5. Rank Dormitory

A large open livings space, with several rotten and decrepit sleeping pallets and chests.

- A green viscous liquid pools in the centre of the room.

6. Disused Study

A small private area designed for research and study, the floor is lined with a once fine rug now crawling with maggots.

- Tall bookshelves line the walls, packed with tomes covering all manner of topics.
- A large Iron grate built into the ceiling reveals the sky above.

7. Lonely Scriptorium

A wide cold chamber with numerous writing desks and shelves. Any light in the room ends abruptly, the ceiling resembling a starless sky.

- A crumpled figure lies at the foot of a small stone dais.
- On the dais a feint arcane rune glows a bright purple hue.

8. Bleak Statuary

A long hall, with tall windows, supported by numerous thin octagonal stone columns.

- Winged Statues stand in alcoves lining the walls, each with hands covering its face.

9. Disused Larder

A medium sized room with several tall wooden shelves, each packed with boxes, sacks and pottery.

- Mosquitos and noisy insects buzz around the room
- Two large hives have been constructed covering the corner of the room.

10. Ornatley Tiled Chamber

A large open space with a raised dais in the middle is a ornate marble statue, it depicts a revered saint, who's features are obscured by a carved veil.

- A deck of cards lies scattered across the floor.

11. Vaulted Room (locked)

A medium sized, round chamber supported by 13 spiralled columns.

- A delicate mosaic featuring scholars learning and writing adorns a wide circle in the centre of the floor.

12. Forgotten Parlour

A small near pitch black room, with broken furniture and acrid smell in the air.

- A polished bronze shield lies discarded on the floor.
- Several small drops of blood can be seen near the shield.

13. Mage Arch (locked)

A neatly tiled room, with several stone benches lining the walls.

- An archway cut with jagged and arcane looking runes stands in the centre of the room.

14. Meditation Chamber

A small cosy room, with soft furnishing and drapes hanging from the low ceiling.

- A delicately carved wooden door seals the room, and several silk pillows line floor.
- 4 Thick red candles burn in ornate candle holders.

15. Jars and urns

A wide and cold storeroom, heavy wooden shelves are interspersed throughout.

- The shelves are full to the brim of Jars, Urns and pots, of all ages, types and states of repair.
- One appears to be sealed with wax.

X. Plane Serpents Lair

The alternate version of this place, one that rests in an another plane is home to a great Plane Serpent, it hides in the gloom awaiting anything foolish enough to blunder into its lair.

- The room is pitch black, all natural light extinguished by the serpents presence.
- The atmosphere in the room has been unnaturally altered to suit the serpent.
- A glowing orb hovers in the centre of the room,

similar in nature to the ones that float around the rest of the temple whilst shifted into another plane. This one is much bigger and luminous than the rest, it is in fact a lure used by the Plane Serpent to attract curious creatures (much in the same way an angel fish hunts)

X. Estlin Amberhands Mutation

A long Flagstone tiled hall, with ruined and mouldering carpets spanning its length, at one end sits a raised platform with numerous workbenches and arcane apparatus, above which a circular window reveals a bleak sky and a waning red moon.

- Estlin is using a magical artefact to further his own ends, unfortunately his manipulation of the magical device has gone awry.
- Due to the catastrophic malfunction Estlin's form has been altered, infusing him with elements and characteristics native to this plane.
- A large esoteric object sits at the back of the room, feeding power Estlin with power and resources.
- 6 mirrors line the chambers walls.

AN AGE OF PURPLE

BY VENGER SATANIS

CAMPAIGN SETTING OVERVIEW

“At the heart of Purple is a gonzo science-fantasy hex crawl with a treasure trove of strange encounters, and this is where the adventure really shines. Time traveling snake-men, an alien spaceship, green slave girls, ultra-violent cults, and cyber-sorcerers are just a taste. Pop culture references and familiar tropes make each encounter seem fun and playable.”

~ Matthew Lowes

I wanted to do something kind of cool for Gary Con, where I was running a single event based on my The Islands of Purple-Haunted Putrescence notes. The pre-generated characters were all set except for two things: equipment and something special to each character, something the player could choose for himself in order to differentiate his fighter or wizard from the thousands of fighters and wizards that came before and would surely adventure into the far future... one unique thing.

After I had explained my idea to the eight seated players, one of them told me my “something special” idea sounded exactly like an idea in 13th Age. Having no clue what 13th Age was, I nodded my head, smiled, said “Cool”, and filed that information away somewhere dark and deep.

It wasn't until I read a review of this new tabletop fantasy RPG that I recalled what that player said. Yes, the 13th Age... one unique thing... great minds do think alike, I guess! Hey, if I came up with the same nifty idea as an RPG, independently I might add, this

might be something to look into. So, I'm looking into the 13th Age.

Back when I was coming up with a campaign setting, adventure, hex-crawl, and whatever else, I knew that system neutrality was paramount. There are dozens of RPGs that owe their origins to Dungeons & Dragons. What's something that all those different RPGs could use? A new locale for adventuring, that's what! Hit points, hit dice, armor class, damage, and few other things... just the basics. Beyond that? Flavor: an interesting place full of interesting encounters carrying interesting weapons, equipment, and magic (or high-tech) items. Plus, a few game mechanics which either worked really well for my campaign or added a bit of weird flavor.

Unfortunately, I know very little about 13th Age besides the review I read. Oh, and other than the fact that I keep hearing people talk about it all over RPG forums. The same kind of buzz I heard a couple years ago about Dungeon World. Buzz matters. It draws people in, people who ordinarily wouldn't give 13th Age a second look because the name doesn't conjure up any specific imagery. It's a period in time, presumably, not a type of monster or arena in which to fight various creatures. Thankfully, there's enough buzz to get people curious, people like me.

All that ties into the system neutrality thing. Along with half dozen OSR RPGs in my possession, I want to read and start running Fifth Edition, 13th Age, maybe even Dungeon World. Who knows? All those RPGs were spawned by the original fantasy game of 1974, giving them a shared lineage, yet they've grown and evolved. I've heard 13th Age gamers liken the system to 3rd and 4th edition D&D; however, the experience was much more like AD&D or 2nd edition. How a game feels is an invisible but oh so important part of the rules.

I wanted The Islands of Purple-Haunted Putrescence to be a mish-mash homage of every awesome movie and tv show from the 70's and 80's I could think of. Taking all that retro cool and making it my own, twisting it into a dark and bat-shit insane campaign setting... flipping through the pages makes me smile. Definitely not for everybody. Purple is a niche within a niche kind of product. A lot of gamers will hate it just because its gonzo with touches of Lovecraft, trying too hard to be like Thundarr the Barbarian and Land of the Lost. That's ok. I wasn't trying to please everybody, just myself and those of my kind.

So, if you ever use my campaign setting (available on both DriveThruRPG and Amazon) in your 13th Age game, I want to hear about it. Write your own article or blog post or even something on one of the many tabletop RPG forums. Could be two strange tastes that taste great together. You never know...

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FROST GIANTS

BY MELODY HAREN ANDERSON

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES AND CHARACTER OPTIONS

“In the annals of history, many of the suspected or known origins of the bloodlines of the giants are well recorded. But one bloodline has a sudden and mysterious arrival, as if they were not of our world: the frost giant. Here, I record everything I have found of these giants’ history and culture, both as an outsider and one of the rare people to have survived among them.”

Giant Physiology

The frost giants are a strange, still people. They need to eat only rarely. They are known for not moving for a month, then suddenly erupting from a hill of snow to fire an arrow that can take down a mighty beast. This is due, in great deal I suspect, to their nature as some form of living ice. Their bodies do not tire the way those of flesh and blood do; their minds are less likely to wander.

Frost giants are considered by many to be slow-thinking, and this is true, but they are hardly incapable of rapid thought. Instead, they prefer to consider over years the sorts of things that we might consider in hours.

They live long lives. I have never seen a frost giant who died a death of old age, so it might be possible that they are, in fact, unaging once they reach maturity. I will admit, I know little about how they reproduce, other than to say I know it happens, and that I think it is in a manner very

different from our own. I half suspect that the parents craft their new child from ice, somehow imbued with their own natures.

Giant Culture and Thought

For a race so dedicated to domination, conquering those they consider lesser and such, frost giants are much given to philosophy. Their lack of paper and other common writing materials is no barrier to such study, as they adorn their bodies with their beliefs and stories in a complex pictogram language. I, myself, mastered only the barest rudiments of this language, and subtle shifts in the details of each image can change the meaning greatly. If they could be only convinced to live in peace with others, I believe the contributions frost giants would make might change the nature of our world. Sadly, I doubt such a day will ever come.

Frost giant magic is based not only on the cold, as one might expect, but on a mastery of the void beyond the edges of the world where we live. I am certain this is tied closely to their origins, and it strongly implies that their own stories carry much of the truth in this regard. Their main building material is an unmelting ice they somehow draw very slowly from the void itself. I do not know if they are creating it anew, summoning it from another world, or if it is something stranger. I do know that it is a very alien magic, compared to the magics I am familiar with.

I realize, as I write this, that the frost giant people who once ruled the world, have now been driven to its edge. Yet, for all they lost, they never lost sight of the need to preserve the essence of their civilization’s art and grace, even in the face of the harsh requirements of survival. I respect them for this, even as I fear them.

As one might expect from their forms, the frost giants are a cool

people, rarely given to emotion. So rarely, that, when it does happen, few among them understand it. But they are tight knit as families, even without love as we know it. There is a bond of loyalty they share, built on convictions, rather than raw passion. But again, this makes their ways hard for us, as warm blooded peoples, to understand.

A History of the Giant's Origins

They say they came from a place far past ours. I will admit, my mastery of their language has failed me, and I do not know if they mean they came FROM the void, or from another world beyond it. But it seems they wandered long, and, on reaching our world, they saw a new place they could call home and rule as their own. And so they did.

At least they did until the rise of the Wizard King, an upstart who was not content with just understanding the world, but with using such knowledge to shape it to his desires. And foremost among these desires was building a kingdom where humans were strong.

The battles were brutal, and in the end the frost giants were driven to the edge of the world and death. Then the Wizard King stopped, not in mercy, they say, but as a lesson for all those who would consider opposing him in the future.

The giants felt constrained by this, and so sought to wander again, but this time the void was denied them. They were trapped now, on their new home. As they had changed it, so too had it changed them. A far more bitter defeat for them than the war against the Wizard King. But sorrow is not their way, and they pledged as a people that they would rebuild, no matter how long it took, and make this world a proper home once more.

Frost Giants as PCs

Frost giants are a tall people, the shortest being near three meters tall, and some of the largest being almost five meters (although that is rare and often seems to come with problems of its own). They receive a +2 bonus to Constitution or Wisdom, reflecting their ability to overcome harsh environments and to focus with patience.

•(Racial Ability) Terribly Patient: Being still and calm is second nature to your kind; you move only when the time to strike has arrived. You are immune to Fear and receive a kin bonus of +1 per Tier to any background check where your patience is rewarded.

Champion Feat: Chessmaster: While you can't natively pull off seemingly impossible feats on the fly, you can, with a short preparation time once per battle, set things up for them. In effect, you spent a Quick Action describing the stunt as normal, but it does nothing obvious this round. Next round you can describe as suddenly describe as small and seemingly harmless events from last action culminate to bring great change to the field, not unlike Swashbuckler for the Rogue.

Champion Feat: Fainting Feint: After you have been staggered in battle, you can fall for a round as if felled by the blow (though you can pretend to take a hit anytime after being staggered) and lay unmoving for a round. All enemies will proceed to ignore you immediately and next round, any attack strikes as if the enemies were dazed from the surprise of your sudden recovery.

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WARLOCK

BY BRIAN RODRIGUEZ
CHARACTER CLASS

“Wizards cast spells. Clerics utter prayers. Sorcerers draw on their magical bloodlines and druids draw on the power of nature. You do none of these things, or perhaps all of them. Others call you “Warlock” for your abilities call upon otherworldly beings to work magic. For you, magic is simply a means to an end, regardless of from whence it arises. You are not bound by the precepts of the arcane or the divine. You do as you see fit, limited only by your ability to channel the energy you desire through your very being. Perhaps you do in fact have a relationship to some elder and forgotten deity that assists you in your work. On the other hand, you might be your own god.”

With its free-wheeling style of combat magic, the warlock is designed for new or experienced players who want to take on the role of a spellcaster without the complexities of preparing a spellbook or suite of prayers. Players who enjoy making lots of choices or exploring a class' potential for hidden gems may find the warlock a bit underwhelming.

Ability Scores

As a warlock, your magic might come from tireless research, deft bargaining or channeling raw magical energy in a brute-force fashion. Add +2 to your Charisma or Constitution so long as you haven't added to that score with your racial bonus. Whichever stat you choose is the one you will use for attack and damage with your

eldritch bolt attacks (see Eldritch Bolt class feature).

Races

High elves follow the path of the warlock more often than that of the wizard. The intrigues of the Elf Queen's Court lend itself naturally to servitude and fey bargains. Gnomes can become enamored to the game of deviousness and deceitfulness required to forge contracts with the powerful or corrupt. Humans will easily trade his soul in exchange for power heedless of its true value, making the warlock a natural fit. Half-elves and half-orcs, already neither one race nor another, seek to create an opportunity for a better life where often none existed before.

Backgrounds

Disgraced Apprentice, I see The Truth in the Stars, Bearer of the Forbidden Tomes, Eclectic Education, Chosen Disciple.

Icons

Icons who are strongly associated with either the arcane or the divine view the Warlock with some distrust or even hostility for crossing long-respected boundaries. Conversely, those who traffic in demonic or necromantic magics make very good use of Warlock abilities.

Gear

At 1st level, a warlock has a focus of power – an implement through which she directs her will, such as a rod, wand, or staff.

The warlock might carry a simple weapon, but generally avoids the use of armor unless she takes the black blade of enervation talent. Warlocks with some real-world experience have a small savings of about 25 gp to begin with. Those who are venturing forth into the world for the first time have 1d6 x 10 gp.

Armor

Armor is not usually a strong point for the warlock. She must spend a great deal of time studying and learning to blend the various magical traditions which doesn't leave much time for warrior proficiencies.

<i>Armor Type</i>	<i>Base AC</i>	<i>Attack Penalty</i>
None	10	-
Light	12	-2
Heavy	14	-4
Shield	+1	-2

Basic Attacks

Melee Basic Attack

At-Will

Attack: Strength + Level vs. AC

Hit: WEAPON + Strength damage

Miss: -

Ranged Basic Attack

At-Will

Attack: Dexterity + Level vs. AC

Hit: WEAPON + Dexterity damage

Miss: -

Weapons

Magic is the warlock's weapon, plain and simple. It is at her beck and call all day, every day. She may envelope enemies in flame one moment, entangle opponents in poisonous vines the next, and then drain vitality with a vampiric touch. She is also versed with a few simple weapons should the occasional pesky anti-magic field come into play.

Warlock Melee Weapons

<i>One-Handed</i>	<i>Two Handed</i>
Small 1d4 dagger	1d6 staff
Light or Simple 1d6 rod, club	1d8 shortspear
Heavy or Martial 1d8 (-2 atk) axe, warhammer	1d10 (-5 atk) maul, morningstar

Warlock Ranged Weapons

<i>One-Handed</i>	<i>Crossbow</i>	<i>Bow</i>
Small 1d4 dagger	1d4 hand crossbow	-
Light or Simple 1d6 javelin	1d6 light crossbow	1d6 (-2 atk) shortbow
Heavy or Martial -	1d8 heavy crossbow	1d8 (-5 atk) longbow

<i>Warlock Level</i>	<i>Total Hit Points</i>	<i>Total Feats</i>	<i>Class Talents</i>	<i>Level-up Ability Bonuses</i>	<i>Damage Bonus from Ability Score</i>
Level 1	(6+CON mod) x 3	1 adventurer	3	-	Ability modifier
Level 2	(6+CON mod) x 3	1 adventurer	3	-	Ability modifier
Level 3	(6+CON mod) x 3	1 adventurer	3	-	Ability modifier
Level 4	(6+CON mod) x 3	1 adventurer	3	+1 to 3 abilities	Ability modifier
Level 5	(6+CON mod) x 8	1 adventurer 1 champion	4	-	2 x Ability modifier
Level 6	(6+CON mod) x 10	1 adventurer 1 champion	4	-	2 x Ability modifier
Level 7	(6+CON mod) x 12	1 adventurer 1 champion	4	+1 to 3 abilities	2 x Ability modifier
Level 8	(6+CON mod) x 16	1 adventurer 1 champion 1 epic	5	-	3 x Ability modifier
Level 9	(6+ CON mod) x 20	1 adventurer 1 champion 1 epic	5	-	3 x Ability modifier
Level 10	(6+ CON mod) x 24	1 adventurer 1 champion 1 epic	5	+1 to 3 abilities	3 x Ability modifier

Warlock Class Features

Warlocks gain *Eldritch Bolt*, *Warlock's Pact*, and *Pact Magic* as class features.

Eldritch Bolt

You gain the eldritch bolt spell. Whichever stat you chose as your class stat bonus (see above) is the one you will use for attack and damage with your eldritch bolt attacks.

Once per battle when you declare an eldritch bolt attack, you may use a pact boon as a quick action. If you do so, until the end of your next turn, when you hit with an eldritch bolt attack, you deal an additional +2d4 damage per level.

Adventurer feat: Your pact boon damage die increases to +2d6 per level.

Champion feat: Once per day, you may use your pact boon twice in a battle.

Epic feat: Your pact boon damage die increases to +2d8 per level.

Eldritch Bolt

Ranged Spell

At-Will

Target: 1 creature up to far away

Attack: Charisma or Constitution + Level vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 per level + Charisma or Constitution damage

Champion: Damage die increases to 1d8.

Miss: damage equal to your level

Epic: Now does half damage on a miss.

Adventurer feat: Before you make an attack roll, you may choose to target AC or MD with your eldritch bolt.

Warlock's Pact

Choose a Pact below. You gain one Patron's Gift from your chosen pact.

You may assign your relationship points as normal, with a limitation that one Icon must have more relationship points (positive, negative, or ambiguous) than any other. This is your chosen pact Icon. You may start with a 3 point relationship with an Evil Icon, and you may raise this to 5 (or higher) as you would with a Good or Neutral Icon. You also have a powerful patron (see Patron below), often an agent of your chosen Icon, who is the source of your bargained or stolen power.

You gain a number of pact boons equal to the relationship points in your pact Icon. You may use pact boons to empower your warlock abilities, and you regain your pact boons after a full heal-up.

At the beginning of the session, you may invoke your patron before rolling your pact Icon relationship dice. If you do so, you may gain additional pact boons, but you may be subject to your patron's Agenda (see Agenda below). A 6 gains you an additional pact boon. On a roll of 1 or 2, your patron has an Agenda for you to complete.

Adventurer feat: Once per day, when invoking your patron you can reroll your pact Icon relationship dice.

Champion feat: When invoking your patron, a 5 is a pact boon.

Epic feat: You now only gain an Agenda on a 1.

Pacts

Black Contract

Sample Dominions: Death, Domination, Dominion, Greed, Hatred, Malice, Trickery, Tyranny

Associated Icons: Crusader, Diabolist, Lich King, Prince of Shadows, The Three

Choose one Patron's Gift below.

- Once per round, when you reduce a non-mook enemy to 0 hit points with an eldritch bolt attack, you deal additional damage with eldritch bolt equal to your Constitution modifier until the end of your next turn. At 5th level, you deal double the modifier. At 8th level, it's triple.

Champion feat: As above, except you also deal triple damage on a crit until the end of your next turn.

- Choose one of the following Cleric Domains: Death, Lore, Strength, Trickery, Vengeance, or War. You gain all the domain's advantages, including the ability to use the domain's invocation once per day.

You can use the domain's feats if you wish, reinterpreting them to help your warlock abilities and powers as necessary.

Once per day, you can use an pact boon to gain another use of you invocation today. You can change the domain each time you level.

Champion feat: You can use your pact boon twice per day.

Blood Pact

Sample Dominions: Darkness, Death, Destruction, Necromancy, Shadow, Sin, Undeath

Associated Icons: Diabolist, Lich King, Orc Lord, Prince of Shadows.

Choose one Patron's Gift below.

- Your eldritch bolt deals negative energy damage. Once per round, when you reduce a non-mook enemy to 0 hit points with an eldritch bolt attack, you regain hit points equal to your Constitution modifier. At 5th level, you regain double the modifier. At 8th level, it's triple.

Champion feat: As above, but you also heal if you stagger a non-mook enemy.

- Choose one Sorcerer (or Necromancer if available) spell of your level. You can cast this spell once per day.

Once per day, you can use a pact boon to gain another casting of this spell today. You can change this spell each time you take a full heal-up.

Champion feat: You can cast this spell twice per day.

Eldritch Covenant

Sample Dominions: Knowledge, Lore, Madness, Magic, Prophecy
Associated Icons: Archmage, Diabolist, Elf Queen, Lich King, Prince of Shadows, The Three

Choose one Patron's Gift below.

- Choose one Wizard (or Occultist if available) spell of your level. You can cast this spell once per day.

Once per day, you can use a pact boon to gain another casting of this spell today. You can change this spell each time you take a full heal-up.

Champion feat: You can cast this spell twice per day.

- Your eldritch bolt deals psychic damage. Once per battle, when you hit a staggered enemy with an eldritch bolt attack, you can deal 5 ongoing psychic damage to the target.

On the first failed save, the target becomes confused (ongoing save ends). On the second failed save, the target becomes helpless (ongoing save ends). At 5th level, increase to 10 ongoing. At 8th level, increase to 15 ongoing.

Champion feat: Once per day, you can use this ability twice in a battle.

Fey Bargain

Sample Dominions: Anarchy, Debauchery, Nature, Madness, Servitude, Wildness

Associated Icons: Elf Queen, High Druid, Prince of Shadows

Choose one Patron's Gift below.

- Choose one Bard (or Druid if available) spell of your level. Once per day, you can cast this spell.

Once per day, you can use a pact boon to gain another casting of this spell today. You can change this spell each time you take a full heal-up.

Champion feat: You can cast this spell twice per day.

- Once per battle, you may teleport to a nearby area as a move action. If you do, all adjacent enemies must make a normal save or become confused until the end of your next turn.

Champion feat: Once per day, you can use this ability as an interrupt action.

Sacred Concord

Sample Dominions: Community, Harmony, Health, Order, Peace, Protection

Associated Icons: Great Gold Wyrn, High Druid, Priestess

Choose one Patron's Gift below.

- Your eldritch bolt deals holy damage. Once per round, when you reduce a non-mook enemy to 0 hit points with an eldritch bolt attack, a nearby ally gains temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier. At 5th level, double the modifier. At 8th level, it's triple.

Champion feat: As above, except the ally also regains an equal amount of hit points.

- Choose one Cleric (or Druid if available) spell of your level. You can cast this spell once per day.

Once per day, you can use a pact boon to gain another casting of this spell today. You can change this spell each time you take a full heal-up.

Champion feat: You can cast this spell twice per day.

Patron

Your patron must have a name, an origin and two dominions. An origin describes what type of creature your patron is such as fey, elemental, or undead. A dominion describes a realm of power or control, such as war, justice, blight, illusion, time, fire, life and so on. A specific character backstory event will help you decide what dominions your patron has. If you made your pact in order to get revenge on your sister for stealing the family inheritance, your patron might have family or wealth as dominions. If your patron gave you the affections of a desired lover, consider lust or illusion as dominions.

Agenda

The GM will tell you what that Agenda entails. An Agenda is only enforceable once you accept it, however, until you complete the Agenda, you cannot level up or gain incremental advances. Your patron has a vested interest in seeing the Agenda come to pass and doesn't mind playing a little rough to ensure your cooperation.

An Agenda should be something you can accomplish within the course of the adventure without relying on a single die roll to succeed. Good Agendas create conflicts of interest or expose secrets. If the Agenda fits well at the end of the sentence, "While you're over there, why don't you be a dear and. . .", that's probably a good Agenda. You have the right to tell the GM to modify or rewrite the Agenda if it:

- would significantly pull you away from the main story or the rest of the party
- does not seem attainable within one session
- includes directives that are hurtful or offensive to you as a player.

It may be helpful to talk with your GM ahead of time about possible Agendas your patron might have or even provide a short

list of examples. It's your patron, after all. You probably know what it wants more than the GM does.

Pact Magic

You lack formal training and understanding of the structure of spells or prayers, so you must beseech your patron to supply the eldritch knowledge and power needed to invoke a ritual casting. You may cast a ritual spell from any class's spell list, except any spell granted by a class talent or feature. However, the magic costs you more than it would for wizards and clerics.

Willingly sacrificing one of your recoveries in place of an adventurer tier spell is often enough satisfy your patron into providing the ability to produce a lasting magical working. The more potent the rituals, the greater the toll and sacrifice demanded. Champion tier rituals require a sacrifice of two recoveries, and an epic tier ritual demands three recoveries.

You can also appease your patron by sacrificing a true magic item in place of your recoveries. The item offered must be at least as powerful as the ritual in question; an adventurer tier item for an adventurer tier ritual and so forth. (See Rituals in the 13th Age core rulebook).

Should your skill check fail while performing the ritual, your GM might rule that you lose an additional recovery. A few rituals may require sacrificing gold or additional true magic items for extraordinary effect. If the result you're going for is so extreme that the GM tells you it requires sacrificing a life, consider attempting a different ritual or placating the GM with a direct offering instead. Gifts of pizza and dice work wonders.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon in place of a recovery. Adventurer feat: You may use any Warlock spells gained from features or talents as normal, without sacrificing recoveries. Champion feat: You can use your pact boon twice per day, but only once per ritual.

Warlock Class Talents

Choose three class talents. You gain an additional talent at 5th and 8th level.

Hellfire and Brimstone

Choose from two of the following damage types: acid, fire, cold, lightning, and thunder. As a free action, before you make the attack roll, you can declare that your eldritch bolt deals one of these damage types instead of untyped damage.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon as a free action to deal 5 ongoing damage (save ends) of your eldritch bolt damage type to all nearby enemies to the target. At 5th level, it's 10 ongoing damage. At 8th level, it's 15 ongoing damage.

Adventurer feat: Add holy, negative energy, poison, and psychic damage types to the list. Choose a third damage type. When you crit with your eldritch bolt, the target becomes vulnerable to your eldritch bolt damage type (except untyped) until the end of your next turn.

Champion feat: Choose two damage types you can use. Your eldritch bolt now deals both damage types.

Epic feat: Your eldritch bolt deals triple damage when you crit against targets vulnerable to your attack.

Incantation of Writhing Tentacles

Once per battle, before you roll an eldritch bolt attack, as a free action you may choose to reduce the size of your damage die by one. If you do, you can target 1d2 additional enemies within range.

Once per day, before you roll an eldritch bolt attack, as a free action you may use a pact boon to declare your eldritch bolt to be a Chain spell.

Adventurer feat: You can adjust the natural attack roll of your eldritch bolt attacks by one against staggered enemies.

Champion feat: Once per day, you can use incantation twice in a battle.

Epic feat: You can use your pact boon twice per day.

Hexes

Once per battle as a free action, you can force a nearby enemy to reroll a successful save. You may sacrifice a recovery to make the target reroll with a penalty equal to your Charisma modifier.

Hexes can be used by Pact Magic to create ritual spells that relate to fate, karma, luck, happenstance, and other metaphysical conditions. Well, the bad aspects anyway. The level of a hex ritual is can be up to your level in potency (with DM approval).

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to force all nearby enemies to reroll a save on their turn.

Adventurer Feat: If the target fails the reroll, he takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier and is confused until the end of your next turn. At 5th level, damage is double the modifier.

At 8th level, it's triple.

Champion Feat: Once per day, you can use hexes twice in a battle.

Epic Feat: As above, except confusion is (save ends).

Curses

You can curse once per battle, plus an additional number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier.

Once per round, as a quick action you may curse a nearby staggered target. If you do, you cause the target to be hampered or stuck until the end of your next turn. If you sacrifice a recovery, you can make the curse condition save ends.

Curses can be used by Pact Magic to create ritual spells that relate to well-being, health, looks, and sanity. So long as the result is horrible or detrimental. The level of a curse ritual is can be up to your level in potency (with DM approval).

Once per day, you may use a pact boon as a quick action to curse all staggered enemies you can see.

Adventurer feat: Now the target can gain the fear condition.

Champion feat: As above, except the target can be weakened.

Epic feat: As above, except once per battle, a target can be stunned or confused.

Fickle Fate

Once per day when you roll initiative, as a free action roll a d4. For the first round in which the escalation die matches that number, you and all nearby allies get add the escalation die to one defense until the start of your next turn.

You may use a pact boon to gain another use of fickle fate.

Adventurer Feat: Increase to d6.

Champion Feat: You now roll 2d6 and gain the bonus on each round rolled. If you roll double odds, decrease the escalation die by one at the start of that round. If you roll double evens, increase the escalation die by one at the start of that round.

Epic Feat: As above, , except on double odds, you also add the escalation die to all defenses. On double evens, you and your nearby allies also gain a bonus to damage equal to twice the escalation die.

Fortune's Gambit

Once per battle, as a free action you allow a nearby ally to immediately reroll an attack or save. If the ally fails on the reroll, he loses a recovery.

Once per day, as a free action, you may use a pact boon to use fortune's gambit on all nearby allies.

Adventurer Feat: You can use fortune's gambit yourself; on a successful reroll the target also gains 10 temporary HP.

Champion Feat: As above, except the target gains 25 temporary HP. Once per day, you can use fortune's gambit twice in a battle.

Epic Feat: As above, except the target gains 40 temporary HP; if the target is staggered, he can also spend a recovery to heal.

Conjure Spellbound Servant

Twice per day, but only once per battle, you gain the ability to conjure an otherworldly creature. This is similar to the Druid's Animal Companion Talent. You can spend feats on this ability as normal.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to conjure a double strength spellbound servant.

Champion feat: You may use conjure spellbound servant thrice per day.

Promise of Life

Once per battle, you can use promise of life as a quick action. If you do, a nearby ally gains 5 temporary hit points per pact Icon relationship die.

Once per battle, you may use a pact boon as a free action to use promise of life again this battle.

Adventurer feat: Increase to 10 temporary hit points.

Champion feat: Once per day, when you use promise of life, the ally may also heal using a free recovery. He can reroll any recovery dice that roll under your Charisma modifier.

Epic feat: As above, except you can do it twice per day

Otherworldly Might

Once per day before you roll initiative, you can choose to channel additional might from your patron as a free action. If you do, until the end of the battle, you increase your crit range by 2 with eldritch

bolt, and you gain temporary hit points equal to your staggered value.

This is a taxing endeavor which leaves you unable to spend recoveries during this encounter. The first time you are staggered in a battle, you become confused (save ends).

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to gain another use of otherworldly might today.

Adventurer Feat: Increase your eldritch bolt damage die one step while you are staggered.

Champion Feat: Once per battle, when you stagger or reduce a non-mook enemy to 0 hit points with an eldritch bolt attack, you regain hit points equal to your recovery.

Epic Feat: Once per day, while using otherworldly might, you can use your eldritch bolt pact boon this battle for free (it does not count against your total usage).

Black Blade of Enervation

You do not suffer a penalty to your attacks while in light armor.

The penalty for attacking in heavy armor is reduced to -2.

As a quick action, you can use black blade to change your eldritch bolt into a close-quarters spell. While using black blade, your eldritch bolt damage die increases one step. You can only attack engaged or nearby enemies, but you can use eldritch bolt as a basic attack. As a quick action, you can change it back to a ranged spell.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to increase the damage die of your eldritch bolt one additional step until the end of the battle.

Adventurer feat: You do not suffer a penalty to your attacks while using heavy armor or shields.

Champion Feat: Once per round, while using black blade, when you hit with a natural odd roll, you regain hit points equal to your Charisma modifier. At 5th level, you regain double the modifier. At 8th level, it's triple.

Epic feat: Once per day, while using black blade, your eldritch bolt does triple damage on a crit until the end of the battle.

Astrologer of the Hungering Void

When you take a full heal-up, you may roll a d6. On a 6, you have a dream that gives you useful or otherwise unknowable information about the adventure you are on. On a 5, you also get that information but your dreams are frightful or disturbing; you regain all of your HP but only four recoveries. On a 4 or less, the GM can choose to spout bizarre gibberish at you that may or may not mean anything, but either way, until your next full heal-up, you become confused (save ends) every time you roll a natural 1 on an attack or skill check.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to using this ability again during a quick rest. If you do, on a 5, you lose one recovery.

Adventurer Feat: You now roll 2d6, and choose the highest roll.

Champion Feat: As above, except you roll 3d6. If you roll three 6s, you gain three bits of knowledge and one pact boon to be used anytime until your next full heal-up. If you roll three 1s, you gain one fragment of unknown knowledge and three pact boons, but the horror you experience causes you to gain the fear and confused conditions (hard save ends both) every time you roll a natural 1 or 2 on any d20 roll.

Eldritch Knowledge

You've delved into forgotten tombs, read forbidden tomes, and bargained your soul with Elder beings. This gives you the +5 Cthonic Scholar background for free. From this research, you learned the power hidden in the ancient, forbidden languages of the Old Ones.

Eldritch Knowledge grants you the knowledge to learn the

Truename of an object or creature. Once you have gained that knowledge, you hold power over its very being.

You must spend at least one full heal-up in the presence a creature or object (either because it is willing or can't escape from you) per Eldritch Knowledge check. Creatures or objects of greater power require more checks before the truename is discovered; Champion Tier requires two successful checks, and Epic Tier requires three.

At the end of each full heal-up, you make Cthonic Scholar skill check against the target's MD; if you fail a check, you lose a recovery. Recoveries lost to failure cannot be recovered by a full heal-up until the process is completed, or you stop the process and begin again from the start. Once you succeed on all checks, you learn the truename of your subject.

For as long as you know a creature or object's truename, it confers the following benefits to you, and only you:

- Increase the crit range of your attacks by 2 against the subject during a battle.
- Maximize one die of damage or healing applied to the subject. At 5th, this increases to two dice, and at 8th level, three dice.
- The subject makes saves at -2 against conditions imposed by you.
- Use your Cthonic Scholar background for skill checks to interact with or affect the subject.
- Gain telepathic communication with the subject (but not mind-reading)
- Always knows which direction to go to find the subject with a vague sense of distance
- Can affect the subject with rituals regardless of distance at an elevated DC (usually +5 from baseline)

Once per creature or object, you may use a pact boon to reroll the

Eldritch Knowledge check to learn it's truename.

Adventurer Feat: Once per day, you can reroll your relationship dice with your pact icon.

Champion Feat: Once per day, you can use a pact boon to cast one spell equal to your level or lower from any class. You cannot choose a spell granted by a talent or feature.

Epic Feat: You gain an additional relationship point with your pact icon.

Witchcraft

Twice per day you can cast a Wizard Utility Spell equal to your level or lower.

Once per day, you may use a pact boon to gain two additional castings of utility spell today.

You gain a familiar, as the Wizard talent. You can spend feats on this ability as normal.

Adventurer feat: You can use the pact boon twice per day.

Champion feat: As above, but you can cast utility spell thrice per day.

Crack in Reality

Once per battle, you may teleport to a nearby area as a move action.

Once per battle, you may use a pact boon to gain another use of Crack in Reality.

Adventurer Feat: When you teleport, you deal damage to adjacent enemies equal to your Constitution modifier. At 5th level, you deal double the modifier. At 8th level, it's triple.

Champion Feat: Once per day, you can use Crack in Reality twice in a battle.

Epic Feat: Once per day, when you use Crack in Reality, you may bring along a nearby ally.

THE WILD TALENT

BY ASH LAW

A PSIONIC OPTION FOR 13TH AGE CHARACTERS

“Look into my eyes, look into my eyes, the eyes, the eyes, not around the eyes, don’t look around my eyes, look into my eyes. You’re under.”

This talent can be taken by anybody, replacing a class talent. If you are a multiclass character (see 13 True Ways) you must, of course, follow the normal multi-classing rules.

When you take this talent you become a wild talent, a psychic character with access to a power outside of the realms of normal magic. As a psychic character you need to have inner calm to use your abilities. You can achieve inner calm by spending a standard action. Inner calm is a binary state, you either have inner calm or you do not.

When you pick this talent decide what attribute you use with psionic attacks. When making such attacks you roll a d20, and add the attribute modifier and level. The attribute you use determines a special ability your character has related to gaining inner calm.

Strength

You achieve inner calm when you hit with an opportunity attack.

Dexterity

You achieve inner calm when you are missed by an opportunity attack.

Constitution

You achieve inner calm each time you become staggered.

Intelligence

You achieve inner calm when you critically hit with an attack that uses intelligence as its attack attribute (for example wizard spells). You do not gain inner calm by hitting with a psionic attack.

Wisdom

You achieve inner calm when you critically hit with an attack that uses wisdom as its attack attribute (for example cleric spells). You do not gain inner calm by hitting with a psionic attack.

Charisma

You achieve inner calm when you critically hit with an attack that uses charisma as its attack attribute (for example cleric spells). You do not gain inner calm by hitting with a psionic attack.

At 1st level you gain one of the following abilities: *Ego Twist*, *Mind Crush*, or *Telekinetic Grasp*

At 3rd level you gain one of the following abilities that you did not gain at 1st level

At 5th level you gain one of the following abilities that you did not gain at 1st level

At 7th level you gain an extra champion feat that you may use on one of the following abilities: *Ego Twist*, *Mind Crush*, or *Telekinetic Grasp*

At 9th level you gain an extra epic feat that you may use on one of the following abilities: *Ego Twist*, *Mind Crush*, or *Telekinetic Grasp*

Ego Twist

Close-quarters mental attack

Special: Interrupt - you use this mental attack on the turn of the creature you are attacking to interrupt an attack that it is making, after it has made its attack roll but before damage and effects have been applied to the target.

At-Will

Requires the expenditure of inner calm, after you use ego twist you no longer have inner calm.

Target: One nearby or far away creature

Attack vs: MD

Hit: The target chooses: take 5 psychic damage OR you choose a new target for the attack (including the target of ego twist)

3rd level - 9 psychic damage (OR you choose a new target etc...)

5th level - 16 psychic damage (OR you choose a new target etc...)

7th level - 20 psychic damage (OR you choose a new target etc...)

9th level - 40 psychic damage (OR you choose a new target etc...)

Adventurer Feat: Once per day you can twist other's minds. You could make somebody temporarily believe that you are a guard, or forget that they have seen you, or unlock your jail cell. The mental effect wears off after a minute or two. To twist another's mind you must make eye contact with them and make an ego twist attack against them that hits (it does no damage, it just twists their mind for a moment or so). If you miss with the ego twist attack the target is aware that you attempted to take control of their mind.

Adventurer Feat: On a natural even hit you pick which of the two effects ego twist has.

Champion Feat: When you crit with ego twist the target becomes confused (save ends).

Epic Feat: When you use this spell on a target outside of combat, instead of doing damage you may read the target's mind. You gain only fragmentary information and images, and the target is aware that you read their mind.

Mind Crush

Close-quarters mental attack

Special: Interrupt - you use this mental attack on the turn of the creature you are attacking, and may use it to interrupt an attack and on a hit apply the penalty to the attack that you are interrupting.

At-Will

Requires the expenditure of inner calm, after you use mind crush you no longer have inner calm.

Target: One nearby or far away creature

Attack vs: MD

Hit: The creature takes a cumulative -1 to attacks (save ends all the accumulated penalties from this ability).

After effect: When the creature saves it takes 1d8 psychic damage per -1 that it is saving against (so if you have hit the creature 3 times it will have a -3 penalty, and when it saves it takes 3d10 psychic damage).

3rd level - After effect: 2d8 psychic damage per point of penalty saved against

5th level - After effect: 3d8 psychic damage per point of penalty saved against

7th level - After effect: 4d8 psychic damage per point of penalty saved against

9th level - After effect: 8d8 psychic damage per point of penalty saved against

Adventurer Feat: You are a pyrokinetic, and target PD instead of MD with this attack. Instead of doing Xd8 psychic damage instead you deal Xd4 ongoing fire damage (where X is the number of d8s rolled per -1 that is being saved against).

Adventurer Feat: Once per day when you hit with this attack and the target is of lower level than you, you may make the target helpless (save ends).

Champion Feat: You muddle the minds of others. When you make a natural even hit with mind crush, the target cannot attack you until the start of your next turn.

Epic Feat: When you miss with mind crush you do not expend your inner calm.

Telekinetic Grasp

Close-quarters attack

At-Will

Requires you to have inner calm, but does not expend inner calm.

Target: One nearby or far away creature or object

Attack vs: PD (automatic hit on unattended objects).

Hit: 1d10 ongoing force damage

Miss: Force damage equal to your level

3rd level - 2d10 ongoing force damage

5th level - 3d10 ongoing force damage

7th level - 4d10 ongoing force damage

9th level - 4d20 ongoing force damage

Adventurer Feat: As a quick action you may create a telekinetic effect, similar to a mage hand. You can't use it to attack but can use it to move and manipulate objects that you would normally be able to move and manipulate with one hand. If you use a standard action you can move objects that would require the full effort of your physical strength to move.

Adventurer Feat: As a full round action that expends your inner calm you may choose to telekinetically pick up a weapon and use it, as though you were present. The weapon floats at a distance from you (nearby or far away), but in all other ways that matter you as using it.

Champion Feat: As a free action interrupt to an attack made against you, you may expend inner calm to add +4 to your PD and AC for that one attack, potentially turning a hit into a miss. You must do this before the attack roll is made.

Epic Feat: As a move action you may levitate up to 6' in the air, moving vertically and horizontally at a brisk walking pace. You need inner calm to do this, but it does not expend inner calm. If you become helpless or expend your inner calm you drift quickly downwards (the levitation effect ends but you take no damage).

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