

Escalation! 6

THE 13TH AGE FANZINE | SUMMER 2020

MIDGARD

WADE

MIDGARD
ICONS

ROCKETT

8



IMPERIAL DISPATCH



I returned to the tabletop roleplaying hobby in 2011, when a friend introduced me to 4th Edition Dungeons & Dragons. By 2012, I was running games regularly, and began expanding my interests to include third-party products. After a quick read through the D&D forums, I noted that Open Design (they weren't called Kobold Press, yet) was frequently recommended. If my interests weren't already piqued, a familiar name was associated with the company: Wolfgang Baur. I learned that Wolfgang and his industrious Kobolds had created the world of Midgard—a world every bit as evocative and magical as any setting I'd ever come across. Each Midgard product I purchased was used at my table and was a big success.

A couple years later, Kobold Press released the *Midgard Bestiary* for 13th Age and followed up with the adventure *The Wreck of Volund's Glory*. One of my favorite settings was now easier for me to incorporate into my favorite game system—talk about your chocolate and peanut butter. When I learned that Kobold Press offers a generous community use policy, I couldn't wait to put a Midgard issue in the Escalation pipeline.

If you aren't familiar with Midgard, its icons are a great place to get started, and we're pleased to present the official Midgard icons, updated for use with the *Midgard Worldbook*. An introductory adventure features two of Midgard's most well-known locations: the Margreve Forest and the Free City of Zobeck. Midgard is known for its diverse drakes and dragonkin, so we offer some new variations. Players needn't fear, because this issue is filled with character options, including ley line magic, alcohol-themed talents, the trollkin playable race, a new take on gearforged, and a collection of Midgard character options from the designer of *Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths*.

If this is your first time exploring Midgard, I hope we offer you a starting point that will lead you to further adventures in this dark, magical world. If you're no stranger to Midgard, perhaps these pages will aid in enriching your 13th Age games in the setting. To the many volunteer contributors to this issue: you've made me more thankful than the people of Zobeck after the fall of House Stross.

Gratefully yours,
Tim Baker



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MIDGARD

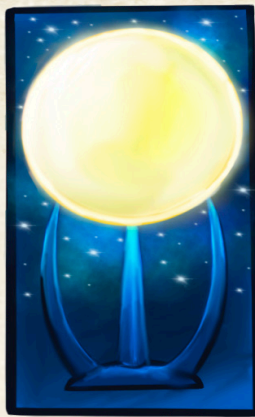
ICONS

By Wade Rockett, courtesy of
[Kobold Press](#)



Midgard is a place of war and intrigue, where powerful figures pursue agendas that have roots in the distant past. In some cases, their plots, alliances, and enmities are older than Midgard itself.

In the 13th Age Roleplaying Game, these individuals are known as icons—and adventurers, even those just beginning their careers, are vital to their intrigues. Player characters can use their relationships with their chosen icons as a resource during the game, getting aid from those who serve the icon or (if the relationship is a negative one) from those who oppose them.



QUEEN OF NIGHT
AND MAGIC



KING OF BEARS

At 1st level, each player character in a Midgard campaign gets three icon relationship points. During character creation, they spend these points on positive, negative, or conflicted relationships with one to three of the 13 icons of the Midgard Campaign Setting. Each point represents one d6 to be used when trying to leverage their connection to the icon.

To check your icon relationships, at the beginning of a session roll a d6 for each point you have in the relationship. For every die that comes up a 5 or a 6, you get some meaningful advantage from that relationship that you can use at any time during the session—but when you use a result of 5, it also comes with a complication determined by the GM. (Note for GMs: The complication shouldn't be so daunting that it keeps players from using their icon advantages! Give them an entertaining challenge, a side quest, or an unexpected consequence of using that relationship.)

Example: Sarah is rolling up an elfmarked sorcerer named Luminia Frostbrook. She decides that Luminia was a galley slave of the Dragon Empire who was freed by Baba Yaga on the condition that at the end of her mortal life, Luminia's spirit belongs to the feywitch. Sarah invests one of Luminia's icon relationship points on a negative relationship with the Dragon Sultan and two of her points on a conflicted relationship with Baba Yaga.



BABA YAGA



DRAGON SULTAN

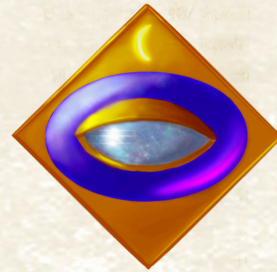
At the beginning of the first game session, Sarah make her icon relationship rolls. She rolls 2d6 for Luminia's relationship with Baba Yaga and gets a 4 and a 5. That's one icon advantage, and it comes with a complication. She then rolls 1d6 for her character's relationship with the Dragon Sultan, and gets a 6—another advantage! At any point during this session, she can use those die results to get a benefit-plus-complication from having Baba Yaga as an ally, and a benefit from having the Dragon Sultan as an enemy.

Inspired by these results, the GM decides to use them to make tonight's adventure more relevant to Luminia's backstory. With a few small adjustments, an adventure about goblins and kobolds fighting deep in the mines becomes one in which those two icons have a stake in the outcome—the kobolds are trying to claim the mine for the Dragon Sultan, and the goblins have made a bargain with Baba Yaga in exchange for her aid. Luminia gets a turn in the spotlight as she strikes a blow against her hated enemy and possibly decides to help the goblins in their dealings with the feywitch.

Here are the current thirteen icons of Midgard, updated to reflect the changes to the setting described in the Midgard Worldbook. Unlike the default icons presented in the 13th Age Roleplaying Game, the Midgard icons vary wildly in power and scope of influence. The Queen of Night and Magic is a goddess. The Dragon Sultan rules a mighty empire. The King of Bears leads a remote kingdom, and the Queen of the Road wanders as a vagabond. But Midgard's long history, vibrant trade, and deep magic connects them all and extends their reach far beyond their areas of geographic influence: the Hidden Princess cares about the price of grain in Zobeck, and a prisoner of a goblin tribe in the Wasted West might find unexpected help from a courier on an errand for Baba Yaga.



HIDDEN PRINCESS

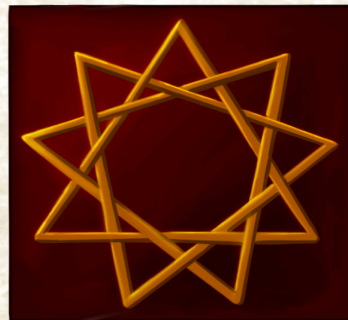


ORACLE OF KAMMAE

In the weeks to come the Kobold Press blog will give each of these icons a full writeup. In the meantime, check out the 13th Age compatible products from Kobold Press: [Midgard Bestiary](#), [Deep Magic](#), and [The Wreck of Volund's Glory](#).



FIRST DUKE_ADMIRAL



THE ILLUMINATED

BABA YAGA



A hunched crone with iron teeth and a ferocious gaze, Baba Yaga has existed for as long as anyone remembers; she may be as old as the world. “Grandmother” is a hoarder of secrets and a powerful fey who makes it her business to know everything. She flies through the air in a mortar, wielding a pestle, and has aided or destroyed some of history’s greatest heroes and villains.

BLOOD KING



Lucan I is a powerful vampire who rules a kingdom where the undead reign, and humans serve in fear—a terror that the entire Crossroads region may soon know.

DRAGON SULTAN



The scarred and cunning dragonkin ruler of the Mharoti Empire, Dread Sultan Ozmir Al-Stragul is a general of great skill and a politician of utter ruthlessness.

EXARCH OF THE WASTES



Exarch Vermes II is the most influential wizard in the Wasted West, a land riddled with mysteries and horrors. Leader of Bemmea's Ninemage Council, the Exarch has made that city into the foremost center of magical study in Midgard.

FIRST DUKE-ADMIRAL



The first minotaur to serve as First Duke-Admiral of Triolo, Cadua is a polarizing figure even after 18 years of service. Most revere him for his stance against the Mharoti and consider him a promising sign of Kyprión's and Triolo's joint destiny. Others feel sure his steerage has brought the republic to the edge of ruin.

GHOUL EMPEROR



Nicoforus the Pale is the undisputed ruler of the Dread and Endless Imperium of the Darakhul, a civilization of ghouls deep within the realms subterranean. Through cunning and relentless cruelty, he's led his legions to repeated victories over the other races in the underworld.

HIDDEN PRINCESS



Kalvora Moonsong Kalthania-ReIn-Orosnig is a young elf who carries herself with ease and confidence. She claims to have traveled from the Summer Lands to the Grand Duchy to claim her birthright as the granddaughter of the Beloved Imperatrix.

THE ILLUMINATED



This esoteric society is open to all dwarves who seek perfection in their chosen craft. Many high-ranking members of dwarven society, even some monarchs, count themselves among the ranks of the Illuminated.

KING OF BEARS



The King of Bears rules the bears and lycanthropes of the north, served by a cadre of witches and oracles. Once his royal court spent its time feasting and brawling, but with the trollkin raiders growing ever bolder and the giants rallying to Loki in preparation for Ragnarok, it is time for the bear to show his claws.

MASTER OF DEMON MOUNTAIN



The Master of Demon Mountain's spells and incantations carry great potency. The demons praise him, and his many children are tiefling ambassadors to the world and heralds of his power. But his real goal is to reach immortality—although first he must break the pacts binding him to Demon Mountain.

ORACLE OF KAMMAE



The Oracle is blessed—or cursed—with divine insight and gifts of healing and prophecy. Once a minor player in Midgard's affairs, she now commands tremendous influence, and her city of Kammae Straboli has risen to become the mightiest of the Seven Cities.

QUEEN OF NIGHT AND MAGIC



The Queen of Night and Magic rules the Shadow Realm, where she dreams of conquest, blood, and loss. She remembers too many worlds that once were hers—and now that the shadow roads are opening across Midgard, perhaps they will be hers again.

QUEEN OF THE ROAD



The ravenfolk Queen of the Road looks after all who travel without ceasing and whose bags are always packed and ready to go: merchants, refugees, wandering beggars, outlaws, and pilgrims. In these times of darkness, she may be the Crossroads region's last hope.

HEROIC, AMBIGUOUS OR VILLAINOUS?

Here's how we envision the icons in the Midgard Campaign Setting, but you should feel free to change them to fit your campaign. Maybe your version of Baba Yaga is a true friend to heroes, and the Dragon Sultan is a good and just monarch presiding over a golden age.



GHOUL
EMPEROR



QUEEN OF THE
ROAD

- Heroic Icons: Usually the First Duke-Admiral, King of Bears, and the Illuminated; possibly the Exarch, Hidden Princess, and Queen of the Road.
- Ambiguous Icons: Usually Baba Yaga, Hidden Princess, Oracle of Kam-mae, Exarch of the Wastes, and Queen of the Road; possibly the Queen of Night and Magic and the Illuminated.
- Villainous Icons: Usually the Blood King, Dragon Sultan, Ghoul Emperor, Queen of Night and Magic, and Master of Demon Mountain; possibly Baba Yaga and the Oracle of Kam-mae.



EXARCH OF THE
WASTE



BLOOD KING



MASTER OF DEMON
MOUNTAIN

THE LOST HEART'S COPSE

2nd-Level Adventure
for 3-6 Characters

By John Murphy



LOST HEART'S COPSE

An 2nd-Level Adventure for 3-6 Characters

By John Murphy

Development by Patricia Baker and Tim Baker

PREFACE

Lost Heart's Copse is based on material from the Pathfinder edition of Tales of the Old Margreve from Kobold Press, an excellent compendium of adventures and setting material for the dark forest in Midgard. The original adventure hook calls for a man searching for his murdered wife, but I changed that to a female geargrinder searching for her husband because I first presented this story to a group of female players.

This adventure is designed to introduce players to the city of Zobeck and the Margreve Forest as well as giving players familiar with the setting a chance to experience it using the 13th Age rule system. Each encounter is set up to give the players interesting tactical choices during combat scenes by providing a key objective (dramatic question) that is not always defeating all the enemies in combat. I've also included a couple ways the encounters can be complicated or simplified to meet GM and player taste and experience. The adventure will take 3-5 hours to complete





Introduction

In Zobeck, shortly after the Great Revolt, Zaneta, a young human woman, fell in love with and married Antal, a handsome human man. Ginevra, a noble woman in hiding after the Great Revolt, also became smitten with Antal, whom she met when she commissioned him to paint her portrait. Her affection unrequited, Ginevra murdered Antal, and completed a ritual that both bound him as an undead servant and enhanced her ability to survive the ghoul fever that she would soon willingly accept in an attempt to retain her nobility and power.

When Antal failed to return home, Zaneta went to Ginevra's manor to find him. During the confrontation, Ginevra told Zaneta that Antal no longer wished to be with Zaneta. Unable to believe such a thing, Zaneta demanded to know where Antal was. A struggle ensued, Ginevra killed Zaneta, and she ordered her henchmen to dispose of the corpse out of town. Fearing she will be arrested for the murder of Zaneta and Antal, Ginevra left Zobeck to join the undead lands to the north, rising in the ranks of the darakhul necrophagi.

Zaneta's remains lie in a copse of trees at the edge of the Margreve Forest, but her soul cannot rest. She roams the area to this day seeking her Antal. Over the years, her haunting presence led locals to name the site the Lost Heart's Copse. Recently, Ginevra has returned to Zobeck, and the spirit of Zaneta has sensed the opportunity to locate Antal and avenge her death.

A chance encounter drives the characters to the copse where Zaneta's body was left decades before. The party finds Zaneta's disquieted spirit and are unknowingly struck with life-blindness until they solve the mystery of Antal's disappearance.



ADVENTURE OVERVIEW:

The characters stumble across shadow fey hunters who chase the PCs. After defeating the fey, the party faces the host of the Great Hunt bearing down on them. Their only escape is across the river where they meet Zaneta and are affected by life-blindness. A dark path leads the PCs to Zobeck, where clues from Zaneta's cloak tattoos lead them to her former place of employment, the Geargrinder's Guild. There, the PCs find the location of Zaneta and Antal's former residence, but their home no longer stands. The PCs find a hidden entrance to Zaneta's workshop, and within it the location of Ginevra's manor. There they face Ginevra, who commands Antal's bound soul.

INVOLVING THE PLAYER CHARACTERS:

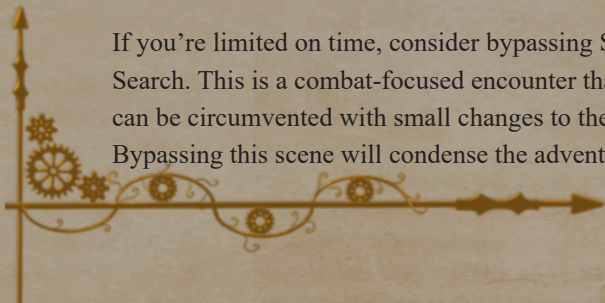
One or more of the PCs is being pursued by the shadow fey hunting party. But why? Perhaps the PCs had to retrieve something important from the Eastern Margreve. What was it?

Or maybe one of the PCs is a great niece or nephew of Zaneta or Antal, and found themselves drawn to the copse. Why do the shadow fey intervene? Icon relationships can provide insight if you're comfortable with some improv.

MIDGARD ICONS:

A list of Midgard icons is provided in the Midgard Icons article in this issue. Nothing beats a creative player's use of an icon advantage, but sometimes those ideas aren't forthcoming, and this is even more likely if the players aren't familiar with Midgard. For each scene, possible boons will be provided for icon advantages. Encounter complications can serve as not only a means of dialing up difficulty, but as ideas for icon complications.

TIME CONSTRAINTS:



If you're limited on time, consider bypassing Scene 1 in the section The Hunt and the Search. This is a combat-focused encounter that introduces iconic elements of Midgard, but can be circumvented with small changes to the story, as explained at the end of the scene. Bypassing this scene will condense the adventure to something approaching a demo.



The Hunt and the Search

SCENE I:

It's the month of Last Leaf—nearly winter—and the characters are near the edge of the Margreve Forest. It's cold and overcast, and it feels like snow could be on its way. The PCs have been tracked down by the scouts of a shadow fey hunting party (see *Involving the Player Characters*, above). The characters are surrounded, but they know that if they can make it to a nearby stream and cross the bridge, the shadow fey will not pursue as they are bound by old territorial agreements.

If all characters lack a tie to the shadow fey, the target of the hunt is a puck, Bracken Quickbush, who crossed the Queen of Night and Magic by trafficking with the Master of Demon Mountain. Which PC has a tie to Bracken? Why do they feel the need to save him?

DRAMATIC QUESTION:

Can the characters escape from or defeat the scouts and cross the bridge before the full hunting party arrives?

THE ANTAGONIST:

Quickling outriders and fey hounds have found their target, and their job is to hold their quarry until the rest of the hunting party arrives. They’ve permitted the target to get too close to the bridge, and to please their masters will fight hard to subdue their opponent as well as anyone who interferes.

- It takes 5 move actions for the PCs to reach the bridge.
- The quicklings will direct the hounds to pin down or corner the target of their pursuit.
- The hounds are well trained and will fight to their death to prevent their quarry from crossing the bridge.
- The quicklings are hot blooded and eager to impress their masters. They will attack anyone who they feel will interfere.
- The quicklings will attempt to intercept anyone moving to the bridge.
- The quicklings will back off if they are under 10 hp.
- If Bracken Quickbush is the shadow fey’s target, he will tell the PCs the hunt cannot cross the bridge.

HUNT AND SEARCH FIGHT CHART

PLAYERS	QUICKLINGS	HOUNDS
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	3	2
6	4	2



Quickling Scout

2nd level wrecker [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +9

Slashing blade +7 vs. AC—7 damage

R: Darting arrow +7 vs. AC (one nearby or far away enemy)—8 damage if the target has a lower Initiative, 5 if it doesn’t

Delicate runner: A quickling that becomes stuck, grabbed, stunned or otherwise slowed down also becomes weakened until the triggering condition ends.

Nastier Special

Lightning speed: Once per battle when the quickling is not engaged and becomes the target of an attack roll that targets a nearby creature, the quickling can choose to be far away instead.

AC	21	HP 25
PD	16	
MD	12	

Fey Hunting Hound

Large 1st Level Wrecker [BEAST]

Initiative: +6

Savage bite +9 vs. AC—10

damage

Overbear (one intercepted

enemy) +9 vs. PD—8 damage

on natural 16+: The target is stuck and can't make ranged attacks (save ends)

Intercept: Can disengage on an easy save to intercept a nearby opponent and make an overbear attack

AC	14	
PD	12	HP 54
MD	12	

Complications:

Feel free to use or omit the complications for these encounters depending on your desire to track the extra conditions and complications during the encounter.

- When the escalation die is 6, the rest of the hunt will show up. At the start of the battle, the party hears the sounds of horns and trample of hoofs in the near distance.
- At the top of each round inform the players the noise is getting louder and the hunting party getting closer.
- Inform the players exactly when the rest of the hunt will arrive, unless you feel tension is better served by keeping it ambiguous.
- You can increase or lower the difficulty by adjusting the time it takes for the hunt to arrive and/or changing the amount of moves it takes to reach the bridge.



- On ED 6 the rest of the hunt arrives and arrows fly at each PC for +5 vs AC for 5 damage. The next round, make one attack per PC at +6 vs AC for 5 damage. The following rounds make two attacks per PC is at +8 for 5 damage each. If the party tries to fight the hunt or engage the hunt other than surrender, they are overwhelmed. This is obvious to the characters.

Conclusion:

If the PCs are defeated or surrender to the hunt, or if a character is left for dead before crossing the bridge, the fey take the item they were sent to retrieve. They stabilize the characters, and roll them over the bridge, but first inflict a punishment.

Below are suggestions:

- Have a magical mark of shame branded to their face.
- Have a power, talent, or spell stolen for the rest of the adventure.
- Have their best weapon stolen. Until replaced, they must fight with their next best weapon (one damage die size down).
- Have their arrows stolen (limit of 6 ranged attacks unless they find more).

ICON SUGGESTIONS AND HOOKS:



A relationship with the Queen of Night and Magic will let the players know about the bridge. An icon advantage with her could be used to delay the arrival of the hunting party a round or two (maybe a complication also lowers the escalation die). A positive or conflicted icon advantage could be used to convince the hunt to not punish the party as described above. A negative or conflicted relationship could mean they know a way to distract quicklings and can inflict the stunned condition on one of them for one round.

If a player has a relationship with the Master of Demon Mountain, it could mean they have stolen a secret from the queen for the master. With an advantage, they can use it to put a weakened condition on one of the quicklings (save ends).



Those familiar with the Summer Court know some of the weaknesses of the Winter Court. Spend an icon advantage with the Hidden Princess to inflict the stunned condition on an enemy for one round.



SCENE 2:

As the characters cross (or awake) on the other side of the bridge, they find themselves in a foggy copse of trees. The air is cold, and the setting sun ushers in the twilight. More than the physical eeriness and fogginess of the copse is a feeling of fogginess the characters have in their minds. Thoughts are dull and distant with the exception of a strong sense of sadness and loneliness that the characters feel. Sounds of moaning and weeping are faintly audible, and out of the corner of the characters' eyes, they notice shadows and shapes that they never get a good look at.

INTERACTION:

In the distance the PCs see a shadowy form seemingly searching for something amidst the copse, speaking words they can't quite make out. As the PCs begin to focus, the apparition becomes clearer and closer. The PCs are in front of a woman, but one that is insubstantial instead of flesh and bone. She wears a cloak with the mark of the Geargrinder's Guild, and tattoos on her arms mark her as a geargrinder.

The woman repeatedly says, "Antal," and, "Find my Antal." Without explanation, the PCs know that her name is Zaneta and feel compelled to find her love, Antal. If the PCs wish to have a dialogue with Zaneta, she will only say she has lost Antal, and must find him. It seems as though her spirit doesn't fully remember what happened, but yearns to be reunited with Antal. She is anxious for the party to help her, but her thoughts seem to trail off when they try to get specific information.

If a PC has a connection with Zaneta, she hands that PC an amulet necklace. If no PCs have a connection with her, then the GM can pick a PC at random or for story reasons. The amulet is gear-shaped and on a silver chain. On the back of the gear is inscribed, "With love, Antal." Explain to the PCs that the amulet can be used to grant a magical boon unique to each encounter of the adventure, but can only be used once during the adventure, so the PCs will only be able to access one boon. When the benefit of the boon can be used, inform the players what it will be if they choose to use it. Unbeknown to the party as they leave the interaction, they are cursed with life-blindness.

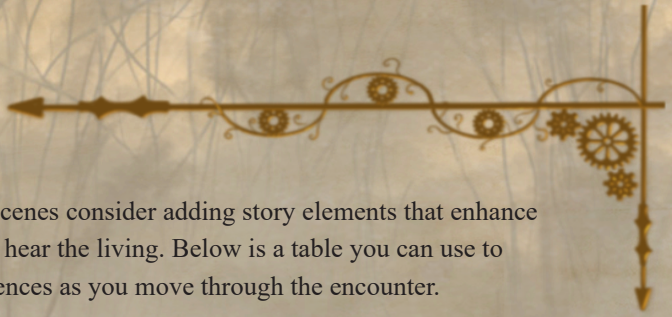


LIFE BLINDNESS:

A creature that is afflicted with life-blindness can no longer see or hear living creatures, unless they, too, are afflicted. Someone afflicted sees buildings, structures, clockworks, and the undead, but living creatures and even gearforged, who possess a living soul, are invisible to them. Creatures afflicted with life-blindness are also invisible to the living. The PCs are unaware they have life-blindness until they discover it via clues in the adventure.

Life-blindness is a powerful curse, and cannot be lifted by simply dispelling magic or detecting invisibility. In classic 13th Age style, I've left its exact details to you. Is it a "perception filter" that causes those affected to not process the sights and sounds of the living? If those who are cursed are truly invisible to the living, how far does this invisibility extend? Certainly to their clothing and belongings on them, but what about items that are picked up? Consider the answers to these questions before proceeding with the adventure. If your players decide that life-blindness might not be such a bad thing, when they enter Zobeck and attempt to use their life-blindness for too much non-adventure-related mischief, have the ghost of an oracle confront them and explain that life-blindness is a progressive condition. The longer they remain blind to life, the closer they move toward death. Only the spirit that pulled them into the fabric between life and death can push them back out. This effect can be demonstrated by having the players appear less substantial to each other as the adventure progresses.



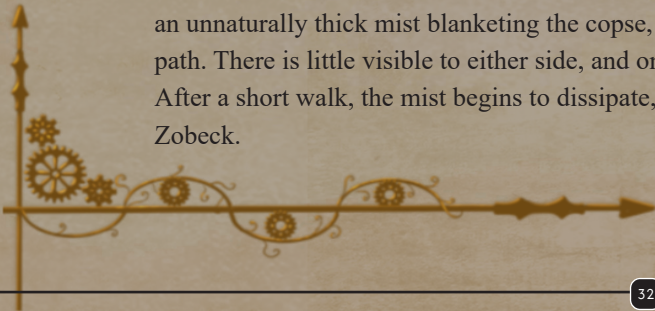


When the characters are moving between scenes consider adding story elements that enhance the eerie feeling of not being able to see or hear the living. Below is a table you can use to roll a d12 for random life blindness experiences as you move through the encounter.

1	You notice you cannot hear birds or insects.
2	A scrap of bread runs across the road by itself
3	You see footprints forming in the snow around you
4	As the snow falls, you see the outline of the invisible citizens of Zobeck.
5	You see the frosty breath of horses on the street.
6	The street lights are being lit, but no one is seen lighting them.
7	A door opens next to the PCs, but no one is opening it.
8	There is a sudden warm breeze and it smells like beer and garlic.
9	You bump into an unseen passerby.
10	A cart wheels down the street, seemingly without a horse or driver.
11	A dead rat suddenly appears on the street. Something unseen is removing small bites from it.
12	A skeletal creature of sylvan ancestry materializes out of a nearby shadow. It flickers, as if only partially in this world. It looks as you quizzically for a moment, before dissolving into shadow and appearing farther down the street

Conclusion:

Zaneta fades from view, and the only remaining trace is the amulet she gave them. There is an unnaturally thick mist blanketing the copse, and the players find themselves on a narrow path. There is little visible to either side, and only the way forward is clear enough to travel. After a short walk, the mist begins to dissipate, and the players find themselves in the city of Zobeck.





Gears of Time

An early snowfall has come to Zobeck, and a dusting of snow coats the ground and buildings. The PCs step through the mist of the shadowy path to stand just across the Puffing Bridge on the eastern edge of the city. There is a signpost that directs visitors to the different districts of the city. They are currently in the Dock District, but on the opposite side of the city lies the Gear District. The gear tattoos on Zaneta's arms make this a likely place to find her former employer, the Geargrinder's Guild. Darkness has fallen, and as the PCs make their way to the Gear District, snow falls more heavily. The PCs see footprints and evidence of traffic in the snow, but no people on the street. Still suffering from life-blindness, a PC bumps into an unseen passerby. A cart wheels down the street, seemingly without a horse or driver.

Once the PCs reach the Geargrinder's Guild, the spirit of Zaneta appears. She looks at the guildhall and says in a dreamy voice, "I remember this," as she walks through the closed door and disappears. Reveal to the PCs that the Geargrinder's Guild has an office that would have information about its members, both current and former, in the back. They can discover this via a skill check, from an icon relationship, or from memories granted by Zaneta.

The guild building is composed of a large work floor with supplies, crafting tables, forges, and various machines. In its rear are three offices: one belonging to Guildmaster Krick-ok, one with business records, and one with designs and plans for guild creations.

DRAMATIC QUESTION:

Can the PCs discover who Zaneta was and where to learn more about her and her plight?

GEARGRINDERS' GUILD:

When the PCs enter the front doors, they see a patrol of clockwork guards on the right, marching toward them. The characters also see several mechanical spider-like creatures in various stages of completion. It is clear that the guild is completing a requisition of weaver spiders for the Honorable Order of Weavers. To the left are piles of materials, tables with grinders and saw blades, and machines that let out gouts of steam and flame.

Besides the mechanical guards, some clockworks move supplies back and forth. The Machines are on, but no workers are seen. Perhaps there is a shift change?

If the PCs approach on the right side of the building they are intercepted by the clockwork guards, which also triggers the defense mechanism in the incomplete weaver spiders.

If they approach on the left side, each PC must make a stealth check (DC 15). If at least half the party succeeds, they aren't noticed by the clockworks. Otherwise, the clockwork guards notice the PCs and will reach them in one turn.

Characters approaching on the left must also make a DC 15 check to avoid a hazard.

- **Sawblade +5 vs AC**—3d6
- **Gout of Fire +5 vs PD**—2d6
- **Blast of Steam +8 vs PD**—1d8

GEARGRINDER FIGHT CHART

PLAYERS	CLOCKWORK WATCHMEN	WEAVER SPIDERS
3	1	8
4	2	8
5	2	12
6	3	12

Counts do not include the guard watching the plan room.

ENCHANTED CLOCKWORK WATCHMEN

Level 2 troop [CONSTRUCT]

Initiative: +5

Halberd +7 vs. AC—7 damage

R: Tanglefoot cannon +7 vs. PD—Target is stuck (save ends).

Perfect lenses: This clockwork creature can see in nonmagical darkness as though it were daylight.

AC	18	
PD	16	HP 36
MD	12	



INCOMPLETE WEAVER SPIDER

Level 1 mook [CONSTRUCT]

Initiative: +6

Bite +6 vs. AC—4 damage

R: Shuttle Shot +6 vs. PD (1 nearby enemy)—4

poison damage and the incomplete clockwork weaver may move toward (and if possible engage with) the target as a quick action; the movement doesn't provoke attacks.

Natural 20: Use *unmaking*.

[*Special trigger*] *Unmaking:* One selected armor, implement, or weapon that the target is using is considered 'unmade' until the end of the battle. The target takes a cumulative -1 penalty to attack rolls for each unmade item they are equipped with. At the end of the battle, true magic items return to normal. Each item that is not a true magic item must save (11+) or become broken and useless.

Climber: This construct is shaped like a spider, and can climb like one.

AC	17	
PD	15	HP 7 (mook)
MD	9	

Mook: Kill one incomplete clockwork weaver mook for every 11 damage you deal to the mob.

The rear of the warehouse has three offices labeled "Guildmaster," "Records," and "Plans." It takes two move actions to reach the back offices.

- The plans office is locked (DC 20 to pick) and has another clockwork guard inside. It will attack anyone who tries to enter the office, and will attack anyone upon Krick-ok's commands. It won't necessarily attack otherwise.



- The door to the records office is locked (DC 20 to pick). A failure requires an 11+ save not to be noticed by the clockworks who will move to engage unless already defeated. Make as many attempts as needed. Kicking the door in is only a DC 15 check, but automatically gets the attention of the clockworks.
- The office contains records on members of the Geargrinder's Guild. These are well organized, and the characters find a ledger with Zaneta's occupation if they search for a few minutes.
- Zaneta was a lifelong mechanic of the Geargrinder's Guild, with several innovations credited to her. She was born 20 years before the Great Revolt, and was married to a man named Antal. She disappeared 82 years ago. The ledger lists Zaneta's address.
- The records office has a window in the rear, which is barred. A DC 25 removes the barring silently. A DC 20 check removes it, but causes it to crash to the ground alerting any remaining clockworks and Krick-ok.

Complications:

Feel free to use the complications for this encounter if your players are experienced with 13th Age or you want a more dangerous tone.

- If a fight occurs on the left side of the room, the hazards continue to affect the PCs during the battle. With a DC 15 skill check and a move action, the PCs maneuver their opponents into the hazards.
- Guildmaster Krick-ok is an older kobold with a mechanical eye made from fused enchanted glass lenses, which allows him to see the PCs. Unfortunately for the party, they can't see him. He emerges from his office a round after a commotion begins. He will direct the plans office guard to attack the PCs. In 1d4 rounds, Krick-ok reaches a can of grease with a spray nozzle and manages to coat the PCs, making them visible to the workers (but not vice versa). The following round, each PC is the target of a +5 attack vs AC for 4 points of damage as mallets, wrenches, and pieces of metal are thrown at the PCs. This will last until the PCs vacate the building or they're knocked unconscious (0 hp).



Using the Amulet:

Using the amulet in the workshop affects the clockworks so they do not notice the PCs for one full round.

Conclusion:

Fight, no fight, or retreat, if the PCs leave the building with Zaneta's address it's a victory. The clockworks will capture, but won't kill the characters. If things go poorly and the PCs are defeated, Zaneta appears in their midst and Krick-ok puts them back on the path. He sees Zaneta and the symbols she wears, and during the pause in the battle his magic eye allows him to see their intentions. He uses a ritual to allow the PCs to see and hear him. Krick-ok feels an obligation to help a past member of the guild, even one who has departed. He will release the party with Zaneta's information.

ICON SUGGESTIONS AND HOOKS:



The Illuminated Brotherhood is capable of revealing magic items that are otherwise hidden. The plan room contains a true magic item, a scroll containing a spell from the Deep Magic supplement, or a clockwork companion who will serve a member of the party (use the wizard's familiar).

The Dragon Sultan is famed for his military skill. Having previously studied his tactics, a character can cause an enemy to reroll a missed attack, targeting one of their allies within range.



The King of Bears rewards the bold. Making a mad dash through the hazards gets a +5 to DCs to avoid them and a +5 bonus to knock down the door or knock out the window bars.

The Queen of the Road can move her people silently through the night when need be. An advantage can be spent to allow you or an ally to reroll a failed stealth check at +5.



SCENE 2:

When the PCs find the address, they discover that Zaneta's house was torn down in the intervening years. In the center of the lot is a makeshift shrine to Rava, which keeps new construction from the site. A statue of the goddess stands inside. Zaneta again appears and begins to search the ground for something. She seems more present now, but if questioned still doesn't know what happened. She only knows this used to be her home, and there is a secret here. Zaneta's thoughts trail away and she moves about the site as though she is doing domestic chores in her home.

There is a lever under the statue that lifts a trap door. If none of the PCs describe examining the statue, Zaneta can help by disappearing as she walks down invisible stairs near the statue. If they still fail to examine the statue, have the character with the highest wisdom roll a perception check. On a success, the PC happens to notice the lever. On a failure, the lever is too small to be noticed, but it's clear that there's a chamber below the statue. Brute force can solve the problem, but there's a reason this lot has remained undeveloped. Characters who damage the statue are the recipients of Rava's displeasure and lose a recovery until their next full heal-up.

DRAMATIC QUESTION:

Can the PCs survive the trap to find Zaneta's journals?

THE TRAP

A stairway leads downward into Zaneta's long-abandoned workshop. It is dusty and dark, but once the last PC reaches the bottom stair, torches magically light with bluish-white fire and a mechanical contraption sputters. Gears turn, springs tighten, and flywheels whirl as the room comes to life. A crude recording of Zaneta's voice emanates from the machinery. "Trespassers had best turn back while they still can."

Flurry of enchanted crossbow bolts trap: DC 18 skill check to identify which of the numerous mechanical devices will deactivate the trap; **+10 vs AC (all creatures in target area)**—1d12 force damage. Resets in 5 minutes.

If the trap is triggered, a small bell begins to ring rapidly from somewhere within the gears. A DC 20 skill check will disable the alarm, one way or another. The crossbow bolts are enchanted to avoid killing their targets.



THE JOURNAL

With the trap disarmed, Zaneta again appears. She seems pleased and more present. “Well I guess my little security system is still working,” she says. She walks to the table and seems to be lifting an invisible object. She is making a motion like she is reading a book. Flipping to the end, an angry expression crosses her face and she disappears. When the PC’s go over to where Zaneta was standing, they find her dust-covered journal on the workbench. The last entry explains that Antal had been doing work for a woman named Ginevra when he disappeared. Suspecting the worst, Zaneta plans to go to Ginevra’s residence and confront her—it even lists the address.



COMPLICATIONS:

If the alarm bell rings, the City Watch arrives to investigate. The watch can’t see the PCs, nor can the characters see the watch. The presence of a group of undetectable visitors certainly makes things more challenging. Can the watch see the journal floating up the stairs, as if held by an invisible intruder? Does a PC collide with an unseen member of the watch? How long can they remain in the workshop before they’re captured?

USING THE AMULET:

Using the amulet automatically disarms the trap.

CONCLUSION:

The players have the location of the last known sighting of Antal and the final place Zaneta visited before her death. They know it is unlikely Ginevra is still alive after 82 years, but perhaps the manor will contain a clue as to what happened so many decades ago.

Icon Suggestions and Hooks:



Exarch of the Wastes would appreciate the subtle magic that weaves through the workshop's trap. The magic of this trap makes sense to you. Roll twice on your disarm check and take the better result.

You know the tales of how the First-Duke Admiral survived many traps in his quest for knowledge from the oracles, including the Clockwork Oracle. The trap's attack roll automatically misses you and one ally.





Tragedy and Reconciliation

The PCs come to the manor house of Ginevra in Upper Zobeck. She has recently returned to Zobeck to pursue nefarious schemes. Predicting that she would have a use for her manor, Gievra paid caretakers to maintain the house and grounds over the years. Unfortunately for the current pair of caretakers, Ginevra and her ghoul henchmen were peckish after their long journey.

As the PCs approach Ginevra's manor, the Zobeck streets have truly become empty. Snowfall has covered many tracks during the cold night. Smoke rises from chimneys of the houses in the neighborhood, and candlelight is seen from most windows. Ginevra's house is the exception; while it appears maintained, its windows are dark, and no smoke rises from its chimney.

DRAMATIC QUESTION:

Can the PCs free the spirit of Antal from Ginevra's control? Can they destroy or chase away the darakhul?

THE GRISLY MANOR

The house the PCs enter is cold and dark, though its walls offer lanterns that can be lit. It appears well kept and richly decorated in paintings. A portrait of Ginevra as a young woman is signed by Antal. When the PCs later see the transformed Ginevra darakhul, they recognize her as the same woman.

As the characters round a corner, they suddenly face two transparent figures, an middle-aged man and woman, both of whom suffer from terrible wounds, as if mauled by wild animals. They float near the PCs, horrified expressions on their faces, eerily whispering, “Why? Why?” While they’re aware of the characters, they’re too distraught by their state to respond to questions. An appropriate icon advantage may provide insight into what’s to come, of course.

A foray into the kitchen leads to a disturbing scene: the caretakers, half eaten and laid out on the kitchen table. The darakhul ghouls waited for the party to discover the bodies, hoping the distraction would allow them to spring an ambush. Ginevra and one lich hound act during a surprise round if the PCs are caught off guard.

If the battle features a large number of mooks, have the mooks appear in waves as they’re alerted from different parts of the manor. In my playtest, the party helped me by splitting themselves. This allowed for an exciting fight as half of them had to battle through a mook ambush on the basement stairs to reach the other half battling Ginevra and the rest of the foes

The haunt of Antal serves Ginevra, but tenuously. Every round after the surprise round, Antal acts on initiative count 20.

He attacks the PCs:

Poltergeist activity: +8 vs AC (1d3 enemies)—1d8 damage.

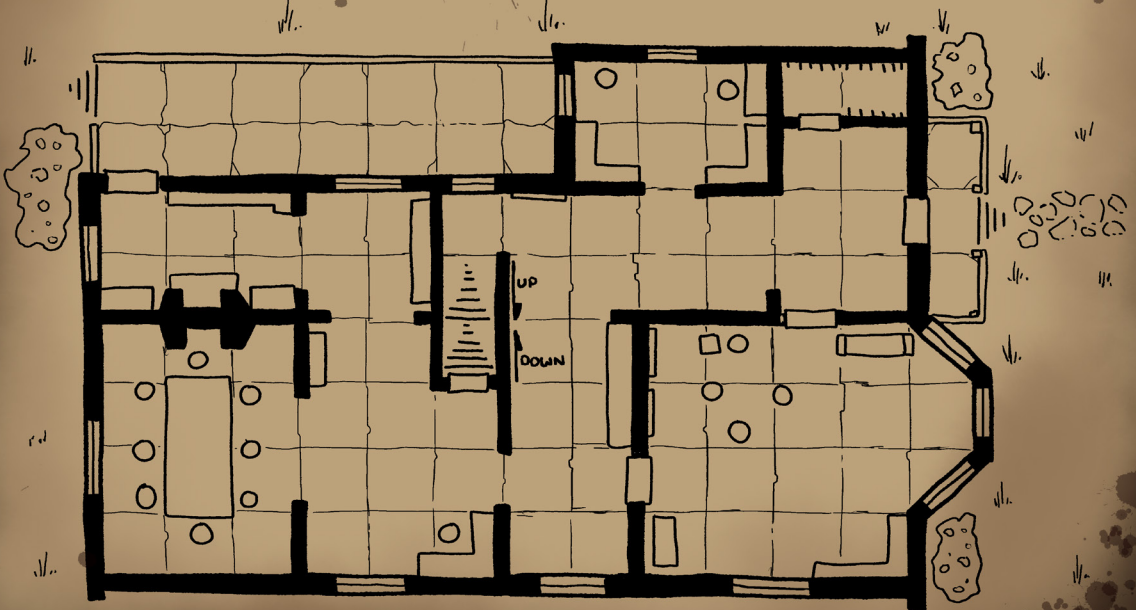
The PCs sense that this haunt is Antal and the apparition moans the name of Zaneta. Each round, the haunt will impart visions to the PCs:

- Round one, the PCs see Antal painting the hanging portrait of Ginevra. Ginevra professes her desire for Antal and proposes that he leave Zobeck with her. She promises him power and riches if he does.
- Round two, the vision now shows Antal rejecting Ginevra’s proposal. Enraged, Ginevra savagely attacks Antal, subdues him, and makes him the victim of a dark sacrifice.
- Round three, the vision shows Antal as a ghost watching the confrontation between Zaneta and Ginevra and whitensing his wife’s murder.

The PCs can convince Antal to throw off the shackles of Ginevra, his murderer, with successful roleplay or a DC 15 skill check. He will then turn his attacks against Ginevra and rest to the undead foes.

When the escalation die reaches 3, Zaneta’s ghost appears. If the party hasn’t persuaded Antal to turn against Ginevra by this time, the presence of Antal’s love breaks through Ginevra’s spell. Zaneta will also join the battle, pulling at Ginevra’s soul and making her vulnerable to all attacks.





GINERVA FIGHT CHART

PLAYERS	GINERVA	ANTAL	DARAKHUL	LICH HOUND
3	1	1	2	1
4	1	1	6	1
5	1	1	6	2
6	1	1	12	2

LICH HOUND

Level 3 troop [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerable: holy

Soulrender Bite+8 vs. PD —10 negative energy damage

Night howl: Against living foes, the lich hound's crit range expands by 2 (crits on 18+).

Into the shadows: On rounds where the escalation die is odd the lich hound may teleport to any point nearby or far away. If the lich hound is in shadows or darkness when it teleports, the move doesn't provoke attacks.

Lifesense: The hound is aware of living nearby or far away creatures, and is immune to the effects of invisibility, blur and other magical attempts to conceal or disguise the presence of the living.

Feast of entrails: As a free action when a nearby or far away enemy fails a death save, the lich hound immediately teleports so that it is engaged with the dying enemy and does 6 negative energy damage to the target.

Resist negative energy 11+: When a negative energy attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 11+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 19

PD 17 **HP 45**

MD 11

DARAKHUL CITIZEN

Level 2 mook

[UNDEAD]

Initiative: +5

Vulnerable:

holy

Tearing Claws

+5 vs. AC—5

damage

Vicious Bite

+5 vs. AC—3

damage and the target is stuck (save ends). If the target is already stuck, it becomes stunned (save ends both effects).

Ghoulish resistance: Resist negative energy and poison 16+. When a negative energy or poison attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 17

PD 16

MD 12

HP 9 (mook)

Mook: Kill one darakhul citizen mook for every 9 damage you deal to the mob.



GINEVRA

Double strength level 3 leader [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerable: holy

Shadow claws +8 vs. AC—13 damage and 4 ongoing negative energy damage (save ends).

Vicious Bite +8 vs. AC—8 damage and the target is stuck (save ends). If the target is already stuck, it becomes stunned (save ends both effects)

R: Grave's pallor +8 vs. PD—4 ongoing negative energy damage. Each failed save by the target against the ongoing damage increases the amount of ongoing damage by 4.

Limited use: Once per battle.

Blood casting: Using shadow claws or vicious bite, the ghoul removes vital organs from a dead or dying creature in order to enhance its magic (treat as a coup de grace if the creature is still making death saves). Consuming the organs as a quick action before the end of the encounter grants a +1 bonus to the ghoul's next attack roll and if the attack hits, treats the damage as if it was a critical hit.

Reanimate the fallen (Recharge 16+): Once per battle 1d3 nearby creatures with 0 hit points or less, and whose total levels do not exceed 6, regain half their total hit points as temporary hit points. The reanimated creatures act under the control of the necrophagus savant. If the necrophagus releases control of them, or if the necrophagus is destroyed, the creature loses its temporary hit points.

Ghoulish resistance. Resist negative energy and poison 16+. When a negative energy or poison attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 19

PD 16

MD 16

HP 81



Complications:

If you don't mind tracking conditions and making a few extra rolls, you can make Antal's attacks more interesting. Roll for 1 effect per turn per 2 PCs (round down) or 2 effects per round if turned against Ginevra.

1. Feel Antal's sorrow: target is weakened (save ends).
2. Feel Ginevra's betrayal: target is stunned until the end of their next turn.
3. Feel Antal's conflict: +8 vs MD—target is confused (save ends). If only one enemy is left, replace confused, with stunned.
4. Hurling object: +8 vs AC (1d3 enemies)—1d8 damage
5. Disturbing memories: +8 vs MD—5 damage
6. Ghostly grip: character is stuck (save ends)

Using the Amulet:

Using the amulet frees Antal of Ginevra's control and it turns on her.

Conclusion:

If the PCs are successful, Antal's soul is freed. Zaneta rushes to his side, and the spirits embrace and move on to where good souls go. As the lovers fade from sight, the players can hear the sound of an owl nearby and realize that the life-blindness must have lifted.

Icon Suggestions and Hooks:

The Oracle of Kammae grants a gift of insight.

You are not surprised by the darakhul ambush, and the battle starts with the escalation die

advanced to 1.

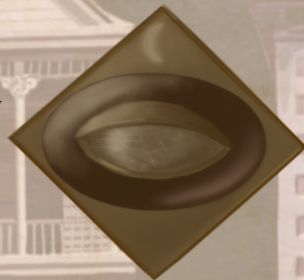
Can necromantic spells hurt one so steeped in the ways of the dead? An icon advantage from the Blood King allows you to reroll a failed save from a condition gained during

this battle.

A positive relationship with the Ghoul Emperor allows you to take command of some of these upstarts. By using your action, apply the confused condition to 1d3 darakhul henchmen, hard save ends. A negative or conflicted relationship means they are

vulnerable, and your critical range expands to 17-20 against all undead enemies.

Baba Yaga has sown much strife and reads hearts and desires like a book. You know that you can turn Antal against Ginevra and add +5 to your skill check to do so.



Continuing the Story:

Did the PCs like the setting? Fascinated by the automatons and creations of the clockwork city? Intrigued by the mysteries of the Margreve Forest and their shadow fey pursuers? Eager to battle with not just mindless undead, but a whole undead empire that makes any right-thinking person tremble at the mention? Kobold Press has plenty of great adventures and setting material for the Crossroads area of Midgard where Zobeck is located. Published products and blog entries written for other games systems can be converted to 13th Age without much effort.

What was Zaneta working on in her workshop? Had she discovered a dark secret that had to be protected? Is this why a shrine to Rava was placed at the site? The PCs escaped or incurred the wrath of the shadow fey; will they demand retribution or repayment? Did the party steal clockwork secrets from the Geargrinder's Guild? What do they find and how will they use this knowledge?

Credits:

[Tales of the Old Margreve](#).. Copyright 2010, Open Design, LLC; Authors: Tim and Eileen Connors, Michael Furlanetto, Jonathan McNulty, Ben McFarland, Richard Pett, Steven Robert, and Dan Voyce

Krick-ok, Gear Grinder's Guild from [Zobeck Gazetteer](#) by Wolfgang Bauer with Christine Stiles Open Design.

The idea of a the "Dramatic Question" comes from Kelsey Dionne of [The Arcane Library](#), who has designs great adventures that use a minimalistic style of presentation that makes them easy for GMs to run. Though 5th edition, they can easily be run with 13th age.

The Quicklings in the first encounter were modified from the quickling supplement from Escalation Press. [Quicklings, Escalation Press 2017](#). Author: Denis Faupel

Clockwork hounds and watchmen, Ginevra the Necrophagus, and Lich Hound, Darakhul Citizen based on material from [Midgard Bestiary 13th Age Compatible](#). © 2014, Open Design LLC; Author: Ash Law

Map: [Rose Point Manor](#) Cartography by Dyson Logos is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Playtest credit Eleanor Murphy, Lauren Lima, Amanda Zaiter, and Sabrina Santiago.

MIDGARD'S SMALLEST DRAKES

BY PATRICIA BAKER

Midgard's Smallest Drakes

One of the things I love about Midgard is its variety of dragons, drakes, and all things draconic. From the Mharoti Empire to the kobold ghettos to the drakes that play a part in everyday life, dragons of all shapes and sizes have a place in Midgard. The Book of Drakes by Adam Daigle and Mike Welham explores some of the many drakes that inhabit the world. Most of the drakes that have been described in the official Midgard lore are 5 lbs or more, making them larger than cats. In a world with such amazing diversity, drakes could come in even more diminutive variations. The drakes in this article are all the size of a ferret or smaller, but their dimensions do not determine their threat level. Some of the smallest drakes travel in groups large enough to present a challenge to anyone posing a threat to their swarm.

These drakes are common enough in Midgard to be encountered in most locations. There are three types of miniature drakes: the magically created drake, the symbiotic drake, and the swarm. Magically created drakes are enchanted creatures. Some are only active when triggered, but others are alive, and their abilities are magically enhanced for a specific purpose. Symbiotic drakes have formed relationships with the urban settings that have become part of their habitat. They have abilities that the citizens of Midgard find useful, and in return they are able to live in relative safety with many of their needs provided for them. Swarms are, as the name implies, drakes that live in large communal groups. These have unique characteristics and abilities based upon where they live, what they eat, and what they like to collect.

The characteristics that set dragons and drakes apart from the common lizard, snake, or other reptile are intelligence and sense of self. These creatures may not always speak in a language we can understand, but they have their own culture, hierarchy, motivations, and loyalties. They are not meant to be dumb animals acting purely on instinct, and encounters involving them should reflect their ability to solve problems, work as a team with other creatures, and even understand the motivations of their enemies.

MAGICALLY CREATED DRAKES

COIN DRAKE

The first coin drake began his life as a small winged lizard, but his fate was sealed when a wizard who had been the victim of one too many pickpockets captured him. Through a series of enchantments, this small reptile became convinced of his dragon-born heritage and equally convinced that a single coin was his horde. The spell did not simply grant hubris though; it granted power to match the bravado, but only if the horde is threatened. The coin drake can be bought and sold with his coin, and as long as the transaction is lawful, the drake remains passive and happily accepts new ownership. If his coin is acquired through theft, or he is attacked, his secondary enchantment kicks in. Upon the loss of his coin, the drake lets out a powerful shriek. His size and strength increase, and he becomes aggressive in defense of his tiny horde.

Unfortunately the initial spell also resulted in the destruction of several of the wizard's robes and damage to his shop, as thieves were routinely triggering the metamorphosis at inconvenient times. So a spell rewrite granted the tiny dragon the ability to instead project his increased size and abilities directly into his foe's psyche.

Nip – A sufficiently high pickpocket roll or trap check (DC 15) will only result in a nip from the drake as a warning against taking his coin. Should the target choose to continue, they would trigger the defense mechanism.

The company you keep – The psychic projection affects the thief and their allies.



Coin Drake

2nd Level Troop (DRAGON)

Initiative: +6

Golden Talons +6 vs MD—6 damage

Midas touch – On a natural even hit, the target is wounded with phantasmal molten gold from the dragon's claws, taking 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends).

Disperse – Upon reaching zero hit points, the vision is broken, and the dying coin drake spawns five additional coin drakes that will each claim a nearby gold coin as their horde. One of these will return to the original coin and take it back to its rightful owner, but the other four may claim coins of nearby creatures. Should the coin drake claim a coin that is not in possession of its rightful owner, it will return the coin to that person or to the place where that person left it. The cycle will repeat only once per day if a drake-claimed coin is stolen.

AC	18	
PD	12	HP 30
MD	16	

How to Use This in Your Game

The primary use of this drake is to present a little extra challenge to players who have an easy time funding their adventures through pick-pocketing or other theft. It can also serve as a way to reward players with a tiny, living, magical security system, since defeating it spawns additional drakes that may attach themselves to PCs' coins. It's adorable and useful. Who wouldn't want a tiny pocket drake that protects their gold as if it was his own?

Hook:

Do you feel lucky?

In an estate east of Gybick, a lord was overthrown by a rival and fled the area. This rival who has stolen the estate and its contents has a problem. The previous lord has a massive treasure room with a hill of gold coins at its center. Sitting atop that hill is a lone coin drake. Since the drake's rightful owner is still alive, he will not tolerate his coin being removed from the treasure room where it was deposited. The new lord has no way of knowing which coin belongs to the drake. If he kills the drake he knows more will spawn. Those drakes would likely attach themselves to coins in the treasure room. Everything in the treasure room is stolen, so every time he kills another drake, it will claim more and more of the stolen treasure and refuse to allow anyone but the rightful owner to remove it from the room. The new lord requests the adventurers either devise a way to determine the correct coin or hunt down the overthrown lord and persuade him by any means necessary to sell the drake coin. Adventurers may decide to double-cross their employer and restore the lord to his estate, or they may attempt to determine which coin belongs to the drake. A less heroic party may remind the lord that if he dies in the course of their persuasion, his heir will become the owner, and they will have to persuade him next.

Icons:

Negative: The Dragon Sultan does not acknowledge the coin drake as a true dragon. A non-dragon was responsible for the enchantment that created this abomination, and he would gladly destroy every single one of these imposters. The coin drake truly believes he is a mighty dragon on par with the great elemental dragons, and he is insulted by the rejection of this imputent dragonkin upstart.

Positive: The Oracle of Kammae has little use for money, but even less use for the Dragon Sultan. This little dragon's defiant attitude towards him has earned the tiny enchanted lizard a place in her temples.



CHASTITY DRAKE

An elderly wizard residing in Zobeck with his five beautiful daughters lived in fear of the day some adventuring bard would seek entry to his tower by using charismatic trickery on his sheltered maidens. The virtue of single and married people throughout the kingdom had long been threatened by the silver tongues of adventurers. This wizard was having none of their tomfoolery. Through years of carefully crafting magic, he developed the chastity drake.

When dormant, the chastity drake has the appearance of a small, golden, dragon-shaped brooch. Imbued in its very core is the essence of a drake who believes with all of its heart that the dignity and virtue of its charge is a part of its personal horde. When a suitor attempts to seduce the NPC wearing the brooch, uses magic to enchant them, or exercises mind control, the charm activates. The little golden drake snaps to life and attempts to bite the target on the face. If the drake misses, the brooch's owner and those who witnessed the event are alerted to the less-than-honorable intent behind the target's words or deeds. If the attack succeeds, the bite produces a bright purple image of a weasel on the target's face, indicating they attempted to besmudge the honor of one of the town's virtuous citizens. The drake returns to its owner and goes back into stasis.

Naturally, desperate fathers throughout the kingdom have made the wizard a very wealthy man. Even a few husbands are known to wear the brooch at the behest of their jealous wives. Adventurers might even consider purchasing such a brooch for themselves as it can increase their own chances against being enchanted or mind controlled.



Scoundrel's mark: +5 vs PD (creature attempting seduction or mind control)—the target treats Charisma-based skill checks as if they were two levels more difficult (normal tasks become ridiculously hard) for one hour.

Miss: the target treats Charisma-based skill checks against the brooch's owner and all witnesses as if they were one level more difficult (normal tasks become hard) for one hour.

How to Use This in Your Game:

As the GM, you may not wish to see your sessions devolve into descriptions of how characters seduce every sentient creature in town. This provides a way to gently curb that sort of behavior using in-world consequences. As a player, you may wish to purchase one of these for your character both for protection against NPCs with mind control powers. Lastly it might just be a way to throw an additional challenge into gaining information for a quest.

Hook:

The Mark of Betrayal:

The daughter of Lord Heartwell is pregnant, and the scoundrel who seduced her is nowhere to be found. The young lady wears the chastity drake. She is convinced that someone has taken her love against his will. The lord is certain that the drake is a fake, and he demands retribution against the merchant who sold it to him. Was the boy a spy sent to gain access to the home? Is the merchant in on the plot? Or perhaps the boy's intentions were true, and he was kidnapped or killed by some other villain.

Icons:

Negative: The Queen of Night and Magic prefers to be able to manipulate the general public, and these little trinkets are often obstacles to her henchmen. Ordinary citizens that should be powerless to refuse the suggestions of her proxies are instead wise to their tricks.

Positive: The Hidden Princess finds these tiny enchanted drakes useful in determining the intentions of those in her inner circle. People attempting to use subterfuge to gain access to her will find that her royal attendants are adorned with these tiny guardians.

This magic item shouldn't be used to prevent players from taking actions that rob another player of agency. That's never okay, and should be stopped immediately using safety tools such as the X-Card.



CRYPT DRAKE

There is a real grave-robbing problem in Midgard. Certain groups appear to have no respect for the dead or the grief they inflict on the living when Grandma has to be shoveled back into her overturned coffin. Public outcry has reached the ears of the Stonemason Guild in Salzburg, and they have fashioned a solution.

The crypt drake is a small stone statue of a sleeping drake. Beautifully crafted and sometimes adorned with gemstones or gold leafing, these statues make an attractive addition to any coffin, sarcophagus, or crypt. This is not just a sentimental token intended to look pretty and ward off evil spirits, though. This little dragon has teeth. Through a ritual performed by a priest of Volund, the soul of a previously departed drake is mystically tied to the stone form

If the grave or the drake is disturbed or there is a failed attempt to disarm or destroy it, the tiny statue is activated, and the drake's soul inhabits it. With lightning speed, it leaps upon the thief, landing a vicious, diseased bite that inflicts necrotic damage. This bite has the unmistakable odor of a corpse that has been rotting in a hot swamp for days.



This odor is so powerful and so horrendous that anyone nearby the infected target will be overcome with nausea. The trap then resets, resuming its peacefully sleeping position, and the drake's soul returns to the afterlife until needed once more.

You smell like death: +10 vs AC—10 necrotic damage and all nearby creatures take 1 necrotic damage if they end their turn nearby (hard save ends).

How to Use This in Your Game:

As with most traps, this is intended to add a little extra challenge to the routine task of procuring random items or solving story puzzles. Cinematically, it is more entertaining to inflict an embarrassing penalty rather than just having crossbow bolts shoot across the room. The damage dealt by the nausea could be adjusted upwards to use this trap as a way of ensuring one character remains far downwind of his companions during a surprise attack. It could also work as a timer, reducing the time players would be willing to stay in a confined space.

Hooks:

The Nose Knows:

After many days on the road eating stale rations and sleeping on hard earth, the party is excited to see the free city of Salzbach on the horizon. They decide they can push a bit further to make it there rather than camping for the night. On the road approaching the city, they pass a wagon with a covered bundle in the back. The smell coming from the wagon makes the entire party retch, and only the fact that their stomachs are empty saves them from coating each other in vomit. Suppressing the rising bile, it occurs to the PCs that what they are smelling is the unmistakable odor of death. There must be a foul plague in the town. The PCs continue on to town, stopping in the inn where there is a man standing on a chair complaining loudly. Others in the bar are shouting in agreement. It appears there have been a rash of grave robberies, and the constable is raising a reward for the capture of those responsible.

Icons

Negative: The Emperor of Ghouls finds these traps a nuisance in his troop recruitment efforts. It's true the necrotic damage they inflict has little effect on his proxies, but they don't all smell like death, and he has no love for the heaving sound heard when his returning forces enter the confined spaces of their poorly ventilated crypt.

Positive: The Blood King has had these drakes installed on the coffins of all his favorite lieutenants. Is there anything worse than being rudely awakened from a daytime nap by some fool with a wooden stake?



SYMBIOTIC DRAKES

MESSENGER DRAKE

Communication across large distances is important in any society. In a world where magical creatures make standard mail delivery hazardous, creative solutions are necessary. One such non magical solution is the messenger drake.

Messenger drakes are small winged snakes trained to fly between designated posts. They are about half a meter long and generally match their coloring to the region they come from. Drakes from the woodlands are green or brown and drakes from the arid climates tend to be tan or orange with patterns that would help them blend in if seen from above. Messenger drakes have pale underbellies, so they are less noticeable against the sky. Their wings are leathery and not capable of lifting off from a grounded position, so they sleep upside down with their tails curled around a branch. To achieve flight, they drop and glide until lift is established. They do not have claws or feet with which to grip a package. As such, they rely on the leather harness attached by the drake postmaster or their owner to carry their parcels. They are capable of carrying a small scroll pouch as well as the few coins needed to facilitate the delivery of the message.

Messenger drakes are trained to fly to one location within the town or city their owner resides in, which has been designated as the drake post. Once they reach the local post, the message is attached to a different drake who is trained to go to the region's capital. There, the message is routed to a different drake who can carry it either to its destination town or to the seat of the empire where it can be routed for international delivery. Once the message reaches



its destination post, it is passed to a delivery page for last-mile distribution. These jobs are often done by kobolds or orphan children who, for a meager coin, run message tubes between the post and individual houses or businesses. The cost of this service depends on the distance the message must go. Each depot along the way charges a set amount to move the item to the next location.

Because communication can be sensitive, many of the noble houses in each kingdom have drakes that are trained to fly only to the post at the castle or the houses of other nobles. Since each drake is trained to make the flight between only two points, kings and nobles often keep roosts of drakes on hand and use the aid of invisibility spells to ensure their messenger travels undetected.

How to Use This in Your Game:

Does a PC need to communicate with an icon's agent? Does the crown need to know about an invading force at their border? Does the PC have an ally in a neighboring town who may be able to provide information or assistance? Is the PC miraculously not an orphan and desires to communicate with their relatives? Perhaps your PC would like to have their own personal drake who could fetch magic scrolls while the PC is away from the city. A messenger drake addresses these issues in a way that matches the magic of Midgard.

Hook

Neither Snow Nor Rain Nor Heat Nor Gloom of Night:

The king has just received an urgent message from a lord in a far northern providence. There is an army at the border, and the kingdom will be lost if all forces are not immediately sent to defend the region. The king is suspicious of the message and dispatched his own personal drake in a direct flight to the lord to confirm the message. He requested the lord send a response to a secret code in his reply. The reply drake returns, but the response does not contain the code the lord should have sent. There is a spy somewhere in the delivery line of the message drake. There is likely an invading force preparing an assault on the kingdom, and the king doesn't want to tip off the spy that he is aware the drake's message was swapped. He needs some adventurers who are not tied directly to him to find the spy and discover which neighboring kingdom is involved.

Icons

Negative: Baba Yaga trades in secrets and lives to spread discord through false information. Messenger drakes allow people to communicate and verify facts. This makes it necessary for her to work harder for her plots to succeed.

Positive: The First Admiral is particularly fond of these winged messengers. You can't just ride your horse across open water to notify generals of the outcome of battles. He has a drake roost on all of his larger ships.



WEIGHTS AND SCALES DRAKE

Merchandise trades hands every day in the major cities of Midgard. There is a constant flow of traveling merchants going from one town to another. With such a variety of goods traveling from all over the known world, a reliable way to ensure that each merchant is using a fair method of determining the weight or amount of items transferred is essential to build consumer confidence. A natural solution, the weights and scales drake, began appearing in marketplaces soon after trade became commonplace.

The weights and scales drake has a natural obsession with balance. Inaccurate scales are a personal affront to the creature. It does not care who the offending party is. A poorly-weighted scale in the presence of the drake will result in the angry creature screeching loudly at the owner of the establishment until the scale is rebalanced properly. These drakes do not report to any master and stubbornly resist any attempts to train, bribe, or negotiate with them. Shop owners tolerate this intrusion because the presence of these creatures in their shop reassures customers of their status as an honest business. Patrons of the businesses often bring sugar cubes or other small treats to reward the drakes for their work and ensure they are present when the transaction occurs.

A diminutive creature, the weights and scales drake is about the size of the palm of a human hand. It looks like a common gecko but has a thinner tail and is inclined to stand on its hind legs to get a better view of its surroundings.



It has wings but they are mostly used for gliding down from high posts and cannot support long distance flight. They reside in the rafters and tent frames of the trade centers, carefully watching the transactions and occasionally hunting for small prey or eating the sweets the shop patrons provide.

How to Use This in Your Game:

This can serve as a way of reassuring PCs that they are getting a fair deal in the market. It may also serve as a way of discouraging PCs from defrauding merchants whose help they may need later in the adventure.

Hook:

The Balance of Power:

Someone is poisoning the weights and scales drakes. There is a large merchant show coming to town in three weeks. Without the drakes present, the people of the city and those traveling to the show are unlikely to make purchases. The city needs the tax revenue, and the local merchants need the additional business to survive the lean winter months. There is a mayoral election in a few months, and the current mayor suspects his rival is attempting to destroy the economy and cost him the election. The adventurers are tasked with solving the mystery and saving the remaining drakes.

Icons:

Negative: The Queen of the Road doesn't care for this unelected judge of her traveling merchants. The drakes prefer a stationary life, so traveling merchants have an extra air of untrustworthiness since the drakes do not inhabit their carts. At least that is the excuse traveling merchants give for not having these drakes when they are on the road.

Positive: The Illuminated are thrilled with

the presence of these drakes in the markets. Acquiring trade goods at a fair price is a serious concern for these master craftsmen.



POISON DRAKE

Assasination by poisoning is a real problem for nobility. It is said that many a royal lady owes her slim figure to a fear of eating what she is served. Of course every royal court has historically had food testers ready and somewhat willing to risk their lives for the crown. That is an acceptable price for royals to pay to be able to dine confidently, but not every poison is fast acting, and slower poisonings can be just as deadly to the nobility and the royal tester. Even those that do appear quickly cost the royal house a valuable servant, and good help is so very hard to find.

Fortunately, a ranger traveling a remote area near Lake Tahtien came across a rather unusual little black drake. The ranger had set several poison traps hoping to lure a winter wolf. While checking her traps, she noticed the little drake hovering above the bait and taking little nips off of it. Each time he took a bite, a little red skull glowed on his back. Recognizing this could be a useful trait, the ranger negotiated with the creature, offering food and protection in exchange for his poison-testing services.

Soon the drake's fame spread, and every Royal court needed his presence. The ranger was tasked with acquiring more drakes. Both she and the drake refused to give up the location of their glen, and so only the wealthiest and most powerful rulers have a drake at their table. Pampered and fat, the little black drakes have hardly a care in the world. Their royal benefactors keep them at their sides day and night so all the luxuries afforded the royal are afforded the drake.



The drakes are sentient and quite intelligent, having keen perception in matters of court gossip. In the wild they speak a language that is very similar to draconic, but they have all been taught common as a necessity of court life. Because they find matters of court and the juicy rumors so very interesting, many of these drakes have picked up several languages. Never assume the drake is not listening or does not understand your conversation.

How to Use This in Your Game:

Where there is a tale of political intrigue, this nosey little drake probably has a claw or two stirring the pot. It is a natural fit for an explanation as to how information came to a royal's attention. You may use it to prevent the poisoning of an NPC that needs to survive to the end of the adventure.

Hook:

The Poisonous Plot

The PCs have the great privilege of dinner with the powerful Lord Karaash in Harkesh. He has heard tales of their accomplishments and wishes to host a small banquet where he can assess them and possibly offer future work. On the evening of the banquet, a last minute guest is added to the list: the Dread Sultan. A seat is arranged at the head of the table for the ruler of the Mharoti Empire. Dread Sultan Ozmir Al-Stragul takes his place, and the other guests are seated as well. To the right of the sultan, a small chubby black drake sits on a pillow, happily observing the conversations around him. The first course is served and everyone shifts their attention to the little black drake who is fed a bite from the sultan's plate. An audible gasp is heard throughout the room as a tiny red skull appears on the drake's back. Guards rush to Lord Karaash and press a sword to his neck. Lord Karaash is a close ally and loyal supporter of the Dread Sultan. The lord protests his innocence and swears he wouldn't poison the sultan's food. The small drake also chimes in saying the food didn't taste like any poison he had ever been exposed to. Lord Karaash begs Sultan Al-Stragul for a chance to investigate. The sultan is not known for his mercy, but agrees to give him 48 hours to find the culprits. Is it really a poison? Who would have been able to plan this attack at the last minute?

Icons:

Negative: No poison drake will work for the Ghoul Emperor. They do not find his crypt an appealing home and have zero desire to spend their lives eating whatever ghouls eat. The emperor is insulted by their rejection and has vowed to find a poison they aren't resistant to.

Positive: No one loves their poison drake more than the Dread Sultan Ozmir Al-Stragul. It is said that this drake is the one creature in the world the Sultan completely trusts. He likes that dragons have a position near the thrones of all of his allies and enemies (except the Ghoul Emperor), and is plotting ways to turn these little drakes into spies for his empire.



SWARM DRAKES

PLAGUE EATER DRAKE

Disease is a fact of life in Midgard. One plague or another is always infecting the population. This has resulted in diets of a certain group of small drakes adapting to the available food source. Plague eater drakes seek out any creature who has recently died as a result of infection. This is mostly useful to citizens as it means the carcasses of rats, pigeons, and other animals infected with plague are removed without the risk of infection to a sanitation crew. It is less desirable when they attempt to attack the body carts filled with corpses of plagued citizens.

Plague eater drakes are about the size of a ferret. They are sickly green with skin that looks like their scales have all fallen out. Pustules of varying sizes cover the drakes, but these are not an affliction to the drakes, rather they are a defensive mechanism intended to discourage anything from touching the drake. They have leathery wings and fly easily, but they are more likely to scurry between corpses than fly long distances. They are nocturnal, but they scavenge in groups, and they return to a hive-like nest in the daytime. The side effect of their dietary preference is that they have developed an extremely high resistance to disease and a moderately powerful breath weapon that spreads a less virulent version of the plague to anything that attacks. Generally, the drakes are quite dosil and avoid contact with the citizens of the city, but when attacked, these drakes act as a swarm.



The breath of the drake is prized as a fortifier for poison resistance potions. Unfortunately this can only be acquired from a live drake. Live drakes are notoriously difficult to keep since they are intelligent and will seek any opportunity to escape. Hives will send out troops to rescue captured members. They do not react favorably to being trapped or tricked.

Plague Eater Drake

2nd Level Troop (DRAGON)

Initiative: +3

Death grip +7 vs AC —7 damage

R. Plague breath +7 vs PD —4 damage and 3 ongoing poison damage (save ends)

Pustule pop— When hit by a weapon or force damage, the plague pustules pop spewing diseased ickor. Engaged enemies take 3 ongoing poison damage (save ends).

AC 18

PD 16

MD 12

HP 36

How to Use This in Your Game:

Plague eater drakes can be a useful foe for encounters where the PCs have been sent to determine the cause of any plague based death of either NPCs or livestock. Their presence would be a clue that the death is a pathogen being spread by villains and not straightforward magic or violent killing. In contrast, if the drakes are not present it could indicate that although the death might look like a disease, it is really something less natural. It could also be a side quest from a merchant who wants to barter a needed item for the services of brave adventurers who are willing to lure the drakes to a potion vat and entice them to use their breath weapons to fortify his latest shipment of poison resistance potions.

Hook:

Death Comes to Town

The plague is hitting the town of Aucken hard. People and cattle have been falling victim to this latest pestilence, and the dead are being carted just outside the city to a pyre as is currently winter and the ground is too hard to give them all a proper burial. A man who has lost his wife and daughter begs the adventurers to guard his family's bodies until they reach the pyre as he cannot bear the thought of the drakes eating them. It's raining and dark, and the pyre cannot be set until morning, but the bodies of the deceased cannot remain inside. While guarding the wagon, the adventurers notice the drakes are ignoring most of the bodies and fighting over only a couple corpses. Plague eater drakes are not known to be picky about who they eat as long as the death was due to disease. Is it possible something other than the plague is causing the carnage in Aucken?

Icons:

Negative: Baba Yaga has a habit of capturing plague eater drakes and using them to fortify potions. They hate her for it. She views them as another dumb creature and holds no strong emotion either way, but the drake has enough distain to ensure this feud will last all the years the witch has left.

Positive: The Ghoul Emperor isn't fond of the drakes for cleaning up all the dead corpses lying around, but they are useful henchmen who willingly work for diseased dead flesh, and he has an abundant supply.



BARNACLE DRAKE

This drake once feasted on the coral and algae of the coastal areas as well as fish and other aquatic creatures. As ships became common in the waters, it developed a taste for barnacles that grew on their sides. A symbiotic relationship soon formed between the sailors who enjoyed the reduction in barnacles and the drakes who viewed the ship as their liar. When the ship is in motion, they cling to the sides of the ship just above the water line, using their strong barnacle crushing claws. If the trip is an extended voyage, the crew brings additional rations to feed the drakes in case they are forced to travel at a pace that doesn't permit the drakes to hunt. When the ship stops at port, the drakes hunt for fish or crustaceans to eat.

Barnacle drakes are greenish blue with light colored underbellies and are similar in appearance to a sea dragon. They are long and slender and have fins on the backs of their legs and on their tails. They are very fast swimmers and are capable of lasting hours underwater without breathing. They have extremely sharp claws and a beak-like bony protrusion on their snout that they use for cracking shells and tearing fish as they don't have teeth. When threatened, they spew scalding salt water at their attackers. Originally they were native to the waters of the Ruby Sea and Middle Sea, but with merchant trips traveling farther and farther from these areas, the drake's range has expanded.

The drake is not a kept pet. It is an intelligent creature with its own motivations for remaining with the ship. They generally ignore the crew and passengers, only surfacing on the boat under normal conditions if the crew is leaving rations for them. However, if the ship is threatened by any force seeking to damage the ship, the drakes are very territorial and will fight fearlessly to defend their lair.



Barnacle Drake Swarm

1st Level Troop (DRAGON)

Initiative: +4

Barnacle breaker + 6 vs AC—5 damage

**C:Scalding salt water breath +5 vs PD
(1d3 nearby targets)**—3 damage

Salt in the wound: On a natural even hit, the target takes 3 ongoing damage.

Salty— When the swarm becomes staggered it can use its breath weapon as a free action for one attack.

AC 17

PD 15

MD 11

HP 27

How to Use This in Your Game:

The barnacle swarm can be an added foe for a water battle where your PCs are expected to overtake a rival ship. It could also be used as an additional challenge if your PCs are expected to do something nefarious to a ship in the harbor. The crew of the ship, harbor guards, pirates on rival ships, or sea monsters are obvious choices for foes that would fit in an encounter that includes this dragon.

Hooks:

The Missing Ship

A swarm of drakes has appeared off the coastline with no ship. A large and very important vessel was due into port, but has not yet arrived. The local dockmaster is worried the ship may have met with foul play.

It's a Long Swim Home:

The party bought passage on a boat leaving Terminus Island tomorrow morning. The PCs are given quarters on the boat so that they do not have to get a room in town. During the night, the captain bursts into their quarters and says there is a mob headed for the dock, and the ship must depart immediately. The boat is already headed out of the harbor by the time the adventurers reach the deck. Supplies are non-existent, but they should be able to pick up a few things on the other islands on their way back to Barsella. Unfortunately, one day in, a large storm descends upon them, and they are blown far off course into the Uttermost Sea. They have no food and only a limited supply of fresh water collected during the storm. They will need to sail as fast as they can for the last known location of Leviathan Island and hope that they are able to make it. This means they cannot stop for the barnacle drakes to hunt, and they do not have rations to feed them. The drakes are hungry—very hungry—and the crew are starting to look tasty.

Icons:

Negative: The Oracle of Kammae enslaved the sea god Nethus, and the drakes have not forgotten nor forgiven this offense.

Positive: The First Duke-Admiral of Triolo, Cadua, has been sailing since he was a lad. These drakes have proven themselves valuable allies against pirates.



CARAPACE DRAKE

The trees have eyes, and apparently they also have claws and a rather macabre looking nest. The carapace drake builds its lair high in the canopy of the oldest trees in the deepest parts of the forest. These hives host scores of these small flightless drakes, but due to their remote location, few ever come into contact with this drake.

Carapace drakes are about the size of a squirrel, but no one would mistake it for something so fluffy. Their natural color is brown, but starting at a young age they collect the small bones and carapaces of their prey. They chew these into scaly armour bits and attach them to their own scales with a caustic concoction of their saliva mixed with tree sap. They hunt in packs and use the large stinger attached to their tails to paralyze their prey, allowing them to take down creatures many times their size. The larger bones or scales of the victim are stripped of any remaining edible flesh and attached to the exterior of the nest to help fortify it against enemies. The look of the nest can be quite disturbing, but given the aggressive behavior of the creature, you likely won't be looking at it or anything else for long.

The carapace drake is very territorial, but the bark-like chirping of their warnings to each other can be heard a great distance from the nest. They occasionally relocate their nests as the hunting requires, but they have a varied diet and can sustain themselves on sap and nuts should prey be hard to acquire. They are intelligent and capable of communication with non-drakes, but their temperament is so poor that they are more likely to hurl insults than try to negotiate or explain their motivations.



Carapace Drake Swarm

3rd Level Spoiler (DRAGON)

Initiative: +8

Paralytic sting +7 vs PD—5 damage and 5 ongoing poison damage (save ends)
Fossilized - On a natural even hit, the target is hampered (save ends). If the target is hit while hampered, they are stunned until the end of the drake's next turn.

R. Bone storm +8 vs AC—10 damage

Nest defense: Drakes gain +2 to all defenses while fighting when their nest is nearby.

AC	19	HP 50
PD	18	
MD	12	

How to Use This in Your Game:

The journey across a large region can be treacherous, and there are really only so many times you can have dire wolves attack the PCs. This provides another side encounter for a party traveling through the woods. Carapace drakes align themselves with red caps, bugbear schemers, and other intelligent creatures that can stomach their ruthlessness. They often have a mutual defense agreement, so taking on a carapace drake hive will provoke attacks from additional foes.

Hooks:

Deep Woods

The carapace drakes usually nest deeper in the woods, but lately nests are creeping closer and closer to town. The Greyson boy was killed last week and his bones hang in the tree. His poor mother can see his skull from her back porch. The townsfolk need someone to clear the hive, return the Greyson boy's remains, and find out what is scary enough to drive the carapace drakes from the center of the forest.

Some players are uncomfortable with descriptions of children being harmed, even if it took place in the past and “off camera.” Be sure this isn't crossing the line for your players. If there's a risk, use an adult resident of the town, rather than a child.

Picking Bones

Merchants are disappearing on the road through the Margrave Forest. Their carts are found still full of trade goods and gold, but even the horses are missing. The highwaymen who typically stalk the road haven't been seen lately in the taverns, and it seems unlikely they would leave so much loot. Something is definitely wrong on the Black Road. Someone needs to investigate and see what is causing these mysterious happenings.

Icons:

Negative: The King of Bears has had many encounters with these drakes. Between their desecration of the bodies of their enemies and the indiscriminate way they kill the innocent, the King of Bears would like nothing more than to remove all of them from his forests.

Positive: The Queen of Night and Magic enjoys the suffering these little drakes inflict. She welcomes their mischief and uses them to guard areas deep in the woods when she has need of a staging area for an invasion or other nefarious scheme.



MAGPIE DRAKE

This drake shares its larger drakonic kin's love of shiny things. It is less selective about what sort of shiny items it collects: a piece of glass and a gemstone hold the same value. Although the value of the treasure may vary, it is no less voracious in defense of its horde than its distant cousins.

Most major cities have magpie drake colonies. The drakes are generally looked upon as pests by the citizens, but they do help manage the local rat population. Their communal nests are treasure troves of both useless trash and highly valuable coins, rings, broaches, and other small trinkets. They build these nests in high towers and occasionally in abandoned structures. A small group of average citizens would be no match for an entire nest of magpie drakes. Drake nests are dangerous places, even without the drakes. Every surface is covered with broken glass and shards of metal, making them difficult to clean out. Even if the building housing the nest is set ablaze, the drakes simply move to another building and start a new nest.

Magpie drakes are no bigger than a sparrow. They are grey and have wings like a bird and a tuft of feathers on their tails that they use as a rudder. They are intelligent, and as a group, show intelligence greater than the sum of its parts. They don't generally talk to non magpie drakes, but that is a choice, not a mark of what they are capable of understanding.

When neither the drake nor the nest are threatened, the magpie drake is docile—even a bit skittish. They happily fly from perch to perch throughout the city, hunting vermin and waiting for someone to carelessly drop a coin, break a glass, or leave a piece of jewelry near an open window. These treasures become theirs. They are cunning thieves, sneaky and fast. Mostly, they collect for their own purposes, but they can be hired for the appropriate amount of shiny items.



Those who mistake its small soft appearance and quiet nature for weakness do so at their own peril, though, as they are capable of defending themselves. Magpie drakes have a gizzard-like organ in their throats, and they fill this with glass that they crush into tiny shards. When frightened or angry, they spray this glass back on their attackers with a force great enough to sandblast layers of flesh off. They are also inclined to go for the face when they attack and are particularly fond of scratching out their victims' shiny eyes.

Magpie Drake Swarm

2nd Level Troop (DRAGON)

Initiative: +9

Not the Face +7 vs AC—7 damage

Soft Spots - On a natural even hit or miss, the drake's next use of not the face targets PD instead of AC.

R. Death by a Thousand Tiny Cuts + 8 vs AC

—6 damage

AC	18	
PD	16	HP 36
MD	12	

How to Use This in Your Game:

The party needs a ring for a quest. Unfortunately, it was stolen by a magpie drake at the behest of a greater villain or simply because the drake likes it. A tale in a tavern of an urban treasure room might lure the PCs to a magpie drake nest. An encounter could also be a way to slip them a magic ring or trinket they will need later in their adventures.

Hooks:

Not In My Neighborhood

The mayor of the free city of Zobeck has a problem. The records department for the city is partially located in a tower in Upper City, and magpie drakes have infested the tower. Typically, the drakes have nested in the Kobold Ghetto, but a fire broke out last week, and now they are in his part of the city. He needs them exterminated, and he will pay handsomely in addition to allowing the party to keep any treasure found in the nest.

Finders Keepers

The party has been sent to Jerriberg to meet with Araena of the Rafting Crew, the newest guide at the company. The town has suffered two recent explosions that injured townsfolk and damaged property. The source of the blasts remains undetermined, and outsiders are not warmly welcomed. Araena suspects a local is responsible and asks the PCs to weed out the responsible party. Araena introduces them to the town mayor, Elias Whipsong, who gives the group his signet ring so the townsfolk will know the PCs can be trusted. Taking the ring, the party goes to the market to begin their investigation. A merchant asks to examine the ring before he will talk. The party complies with the request, but the merchant accidentally drops the ring, and a magpie drake swoops in to grab it. The party must go to the drake nest and retrieve the ring. This could also be a way to have the party acquire evidence the drakes have stolen in the chaos of the saboteur's attack.



Icons:

Negative: The Illuminated view these drakes as winged thieves. They steal metals and stones from the city's craftsmen and leave messes on the carefully crafted stonework.

Positive: Baba Yaga uses these drakes as spies and thieves. They go largely unnoticed throughout the city, which works to her advantage. The witch appreciates any creature willing to part with information for the price of broken spell bottles.

SAND DRAKE

The deserts near Kel Azjer are a harsh place. Caravans crossing the deserts for trade face a host of ways to meet their demise, but the primary threat is bandits. While the untimely deaths of the area's merchants are a threat to free trade, the carnage left behind has been a boon for the sand drake population.

Swarms of sand drakes are major scavengers in the region. They do not generally hunt, but they will defend food they have claimed, so attacks have occurred when the site of a recent bandit attack is being investigated or when loved ones attempt to retrieve the bodies of their fallen before the drakes have finished eating them. Even though they are intelligent and capable of understanding why a person might want to retrieve a body, they prioritize their need to eat over everything else.

Individual drakes are tiny; one would fit in a halfling's hand. They travel in swarms of hundreds of drakes and appear like sand storms on the horizon. They are speckled tan and brown with strong insect-like wings. Their skin is coarse like a cat's tongue. When they feel threatened, they form a storm cloud, circling the threat and deliberately brushing against their attackers as they whip past, taking tiny bits of flesh off and skinning their foe alive, layer by layer. If engaging their enemies directly is not optimal, the drakes can attack from above, too. The drakes' wings are transparent and curve inward like a magnifying glass. They coordinate their attack and aim the sun at their opponents, burning them like ants.



Sand Drake Swarm

2nd Level Troop (DRAGON)

Initiative: +6

Haboob +6 vs AC—7 damage

Brown Out - On a natural even hit, visibility is reduced, and the target is dazed (save ends)

R. Sunburn +6 vs PD—5 damage and 3 ongoing fire damage (save ends)

AC 18

PD 16

MD 12

HP 36

How to Use This in Your Game:

These drakes will align themselves with other scavengers and bandits in a desert setting. They can provide an extra challenge to an escort adventure or even just an otherwise uneventful trip across the desert.

Hook

The Easy Job

The Stone Desert has long been known as a treacherous place. Bandits have left bodies scattered around for years, but it's been weeks since there was a bandit attack on the road between Inkabut and Cindass. The guard patrols have done a fantastic job cleaning up the dessert route. The party has been hired to escort a caravan from Inkabut to Kel Azjer, and it really should be a chance to make some easy gold. Of course with so few dead bodies, the scavengers are getting desperate.

Icons

Negative: The Exarch of the Wastes has noticed that these drakes have started appearing in the Wasted West, and they are not welcome.

Positive: The drakes are an issue on the trade roads to and from the Mhorati Empire. The First Duke Admiral has no personal love for the drakes, but the enemy of his enemy is his friend, and he is willing to overlook some of the trouble they have caused him to ensure they continue to plague the Dragon Sultan.



LEY LINES



BY JOŠ MURPHY AND
TIM BAKER

Ley Lines

Ley lines are conduits of magical power that course through Midgard. Spellcasters can tap into this unpredictable source of energy, often increasing their spells' potency, but at a risk to themselves and those who are nearby. This ability comes naturally to some spellcasters, while others must find the right arcane mentor or ancient text to learn such secrets.

Ley lines flow along the extra-planar shadow roads. Certain individuals are able to momentarily travel along a shadow road, slipping between the planes only to reappear elsewhere. Those who are particularly adept at ley line travel gain the ability to bring allies alongside.

While ley lines receive an in-depth treatment in several Midgard products, 13th Age avoids narrowly defining where an adventure needs to be located to take advantage of a talent. Thus, we've attempted to capture the spirit of Midgard's ley lines without bringing their complexity to 13th Age.

Ley Line Strength

At the beginning of each battle, a player whose character is sensitive to ley lines rolls a d20 to determine how strongly a nearby ley line affects the location. Roll only once per battle, regardless of the number of eligible PCs. The strength of the effect can be described as being impacted by a combination of the battle's proximity to the nearest ley line and the intensity of that ley line. Subsequent battles in the same location still require a ley line strength roll—ley lines are known to subtly shift in location and power over time.

1-6	Weak access
7-15	Strong access
16-20	Titanic access



Ley Line Caster (Talent)

Can be taken by any spellcaster.

You can see ley lines and draw on their power. Spells that deal damage are modified based upon this battle's ley line strength roll.

Weak access: When you hit with a harmful spell, you deal additional damage equal to your level. This applies to spells that deal exclusively ongoing damage, but only when the attack initially hits.

Strong access: The additional damage also applies on a miss.

Titanic access: Your enemies are also vulnerable to your spells. The first time each round when you roll a natural odd miss on a spell attack, you automatically regain the use of one recharge spell and roll on the backlash table. You don't recharge a spell on a fumble, but you do roll on the backlash table.



Backlash table (d8)

1.	Partially blinded: you are weakened until the end of your next turn
2.	Magical explosion: all nearby creatures take damage equal to 1d6 x the level of your spell
3.	Shadow road jaunt: switch positions with one random nearby creature
4.	Eldritch feedback: take 5 ongoing damage (save ends) (champion: 10, epic: 15)
5.	Display of light: your closest ally is dazed until the end of their next turn
6.	Gravitational anomaly: you are stuck hard save ends
7.	Feeling woozy: you are hampered (save ends)
8.	Arcane drain: lose a spell of your choice for the day

Champion Feat: Your bonus damage is now equal to twice your level.

Epic Feat: Your bonus damage is now equal to triple your level.

Ley Line Movement (Talent)

Can be taken by any spellcaster. Your GM may also grant access based on an appropriate background or one unique thing.

You take advantage of nearby ley lines to briefly step onto a shadow road, returning to the world in a different location. Your ability is based upon this battle's ley line strength roll.

Weak access: Once per battle you may teleport as a move action. Place yourself in a nearby location you can see.

Strong access: After using a ley line to teleport, you have resist damage 12+ until the end of your next turn.

Titanic access: As a free action after using a ley line to teleport, you may make one basic or at-will attack.

Champion Feat: When an enemy targets you with an attack, you may use ley line movement immediately as a free action if you haven't already used it during this battle. The enemy has a 50% chance of missing you with the triggering attack. If you are also affected by a blur spell or similar effect, the % miss chance stacks. You may not use ley line movement again during this battle.



THE GOOD STUFF

TALENTS FOR INFUSING YOUR CHARACTER WITH UNIQUE SPIRIT



BY
MAXIMILIAN SCHMUECKER
AND SAM STIRLING

INTRO BY
CHAD "DOOMEDPALADIN"
MIDDLETON

Art: Maximilian Schmuecker

The Good Stuff

Talents for Infusing Your Character with Unique Spirit

Alcoholic beverages are part of the social and religious fabric of many cultures in Midgard, from Zobeck's Sisterhood of Brewers and their mind-boggling number of specialty brewhouses, to the bearfolk mead halls of Bjornrike abuzz with clouds of bees. For the worshipers of the Northern Pantheon, alcohol—specifically mead—is both the promise of hospitality against the harsh wind and the immortality their gods so enjoy. In the dragon-ruled Mharoti Empire, it can be the only thing that makes the non-scaled slaves' lives bearable. Far to the west, rum and grog are almost the only thing some swashbucklers consume.

Clerics grant perfect clarity to those that imbibe their blessed brews, while salty Barsellain sea-dogs bob and weave as drunken masters across the decks of ships. Shadow-fey rogues literally steal the perfect memory of exquisite wines, while the powerful God-Kings of the Southlands use it to see the future and empower their spells. So tip back a drink and send a little prayer to Ninkash; what you're savoring is truly one of the greatest gifts and most useful tools mortal races have ever received.



BARD

DRUNKEN STAGGER (Talent)

Twice per day, as an interrupt when an enemy is about to attack you, pull off a stunt that leaves people wondering if it was incredible skill or (more likely) the insane luck of an inebriated fool. This might include tripping and falling just at the moment when two enemies were trying to hit you, causing them to hit each other; getting flung out of reach of your enemies by the rope pulley you accidentally entangled yourself in; or reaching for the bottle you dropped just when the BBEG swings their Zweihander to decapitate you. It guarantees a miss and also gives you a situational benefit. This will not harm the enemy (in most occasions), but gets you out of trouble.

COMMANDER

LIQUID COURAGE (Talent)

You sit down with your soldiers and share a drink with them. In this moment, you are a friend, not of a distant commander. This cannot be combined with the Tactician or Strategist talents. When you weigh the odds, you can rally as a free action if you wish to do so. As a commander with the Liquid Courage talent, you gain a bonus tactic, A toast. To victory!

Champion Feat: When you weigh the odds, you can drink a potion as a free action.

A Toast. To Victory!

You share a drink from your flask and give a rousing speech, boosting the courage of your allies.

Free action, during a short rest ♦ **Recharge** 16+ after battle

Limited Use: You can only use this tactic during a short rest. The effect takes place at the beginning of the next battle.

Target: 1d3 nearby allies

Effect: The target's attacks gain 1d4 bonus damage (champion: 2d4, epic: 3d4) until the first time you have been staggered or until the end of the battle.

Adventurer Feat: The tactic now affects 1d3 + 1 nearby allies. **Champion Feat:** You can include yourself as one of the targets.

Epic Feat: The recharge roll is now 11+.



DRUID

Circle of Hedonism

The Druid of the Circle was introduced in the [Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths](#) expansion. You will need this book to make full use of the Circle of Hedonism.

This circle uses ingredients from the natural world and imbues them with primal magic to craft brews. A brew is a type of potion that loses its efficacy during a full heal-up. You or your allies must consume the brews during their adventuring day. Any brews left unconsumed lose their magic and become ineffective during a full heal-up. They might still be delicious, however. Drinking a brew works exactly like any other potion, requiring a standard action, unless stated otherwise. You can never drink two brews in the same round, even if you have access to an additional standard action. The same type of brew cannot be consumed more than once to stack effects, even if the brew offers variant bonuses. Consuming a subsequent brew of the same type causes the effect of the first brew to end.

You know all the basic brew recipes. The number of brews you can craft in a day depends on your level and whether you are an initiate, adept, or master, as per the unified level progression table (Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths p. 83). You may craft a type of brew as many times as you like, as long as you haven't reached your maximum number of brews crafted that day. Unlike casting spells, brews must be crafted before a battle. You can craft as many brews as you like during a quick rest, as long as you don't exceed your maximum brews crafted per day.



Art: Maximilian Schmuecker

Circle of Hedonism Talents

Brewmaster

You can craft 3 bonus brews per day.

Eleven Herbs And Spices

Once per day during the crafting of your brews, you increase the recovery die size of yourself or one of your allies by one step (d6 becomes d8 and so on). The effect lasts until your next full heal-up.

Epic Feat: The bonus now affects 2 targets.

Fat Reserves

At the start of combat, you can spend up to 2 recoveries as a free action and add them as temporary hit points.

Leadbelly

You gain resist poison 12+. You also gain access to booming burp and the Lager of Bilious Belch brew recipe.

Booming Burp

Ranged attack

At-Will (once per round)

Target: 1d3+1 nearby enemies

Attack: Strength OR Dexterity + Level vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 per Level + Constitution damage

Miss: Damage equal to your level.

Lager of Bilious Belch (Leadbelly Brew Recipe)

When consumed, this lager immediately builds up into a noxious gas in the drinker's stomach, resulting in an ear-shattering belch followed by a cloud of disgusting stench.

Effect: You can immediately make the following attack as part of your standard action.

Bilious Belch

Attack: Constitution + Level vs PD

Target: 1d4 nearby enemies in a group (adept: 1d4+2 enemies; master 1d6+2 enemies)

Hit: 1d6 per level + Constitution force damage and the target takes 5 ongoing poison damage (champion: 10, epic: 15)

Miss: The target takes ongoing poison damage equal to your level

Moonshiner

Special: This talent requires at least one talent from the Circle of the Moon.

You gain access to the Drunken Monkey beast aspect. Each time you drink a potion while in beast form, roll a d20. On an 18+, you activate the Drunken Monkey aspect as a free action without expending its use. When the Drunken Monkey aspect is activated in this way, your previously active beast aspects remain active at the same time.

Drunken Monkey

Daily, or recharge 16+ for adepts; Quick action

Initiate effect: When you hit an enemy with a melee attack, make the following follow-up attack against the target as a free action:

Attack: Strength OR Dexterity + Level vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 per level + Constitution damage

Adept effect: As the initiate effect, and the crit range on your follow-up attack is expanded by 1. When an enemy rolls a natural 1–4 on an attack roll against you, turn their roll into a natural 1.

Circle of Hedonism Brew Recipes

Ale of Ability

Initiate, Adept: While crafting, choose one ability score that this brew will benefit.

Master: The drinker can choose the ability score when consuming the potion.

Effect: Apply a +1 bonus (brewed by an adept: +2; brewed by a master: +3) to all skill checks that use the affected ability score until the end of the battle or scene.

Broad Cider

Effect: Your size increases until the end of the battle or scene. Small PCs (like halflings) no longer benefit from the small racial ability. Just how large are you? If you drink this brew inside a structure built for medium creatures, you're going to hit your head a lot. And if you're in a cozy halfling home? That's going to be a tight squeeze, indeed.

Once per battle, you can use your increased size as a quick action to succeed at an improvisational effect. You can reach objects on high shelves without the use of a stepstool, intimidate foes, leap over a chasm, or grapple a giant.

Scrumpy of Slurring

Effect: You slur your magic-laced words so badly that you and all nearby creatures must make a hard save or lose the ability to speak sensibly (hard save ends). Spells attacks can only be cast successfully on a natural 11+ by those affected. Otherwise, the spell fails, but is not spent.

Cinnamon Fireball

Effect: Gain the draconic breath weapon racial power until the end of the battle. If you already have this power, you can use it twice during the battle.



Djinn Tonic

Named after its ability to make your wishes come true. (It does not contain any actual djinn. At least not a live one. Therefore, the potency of the wishes is limited.)

Effect: Gain an icon relationship advantage with complication (a 5 on an icon relationship roll) with an icon of your choosing until the end of the battle or scene.

Pale Man's Ale

Special: This brew recipe requires at least one talent from the Circle of Decay.

Effect: You are considered sorta dead as per the Necromancer talent until the end of the battle or scene. You don't bounce back from death in the same manner as a necromancer, however. There's a spectrum of sorta dead, you see.

Particularly devious game masters won't allow players to communicate ideas verbally to each other during the battle if their characters are affected.

FIGHTER

Take the Edge Off [Talent]

When you rally or heal using a potion, immediately roll a save against a save ends effect.

In addition, you gain the feel the pain maneuver.

Feel the Pain

Flexible melee attack

Triggering Roll: Any hit when your character is staggered

Effect: Spend a recovery to add a 1d12 to your damage (champion: 2d12, epic: 3d12).

Epic Feat: On a natural 18+, you also heal using your recovery.

MONK

Drunken Master [Talent]

You use your Constitution to determine your number of ki points. You no longer follow the form progression. Instead, you can freely choose if you want to make an opening or flow attack. You no longer receive a defense bonus from your forms. This talent is incompatible with the Kensai talent from *Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths*.

Ki Power (Surprisingly Effective): You can spend 1 ki point to make a finishing attack instead of an opening or flow attack. You must choose to use this power prior to making the attack.

Please send feedback to max.schmuecker@mail.de. I'm always interested in improving my designs.



TROLLKIN



BY JOŠ MURPHY

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TROLLKIN in MIDGARD

In the Midgard Northland, trolls, ogres, and even the fey sometimes couple with humans, and the offspring are called trollkin. Looking at a trollkin, it is sometimes hard to determine their exact ancestry, but they are often tall, lean, and rough looking. Many have green or brownish skin, but not always, and their inhuman blood can express itself in various ways.

Many trollkin live in the northern Midgard climes, away from civilization, in tribal groups. However, they are found throughout Midgard, and in cities will often live amongst other trollkin in their own neighborhoods. These urban trollkin find work that utilizes their strong, hardy, nature.

Names do not carry great importance in the trollkin community and change to match the nature and deeds of the trollkin. Names often describe physical characteristics or trollkin behavior such as Kidney-eater, Broken-nose, Gnome-slapper, Blue-feet, and Throws-logs.

If you're looking to play the tough half-orc type while drawing from Midgard lore, the trollkin provides the appropriate archetype.

Trollkin

+2 Str or +2 Con

Shake It Off (Racial Power)

You roll your saves vs conditions and ongoing damage at the start of your turn instead of the end of it. If you succeed, ongoing damage ends before you take further damage.

Champion Feat: Your saves vs conditions and ongoing damage are one tier lower. Hard saves are now 11+, normal saves are 6+, and you automatically succeed on easy saves.

The following racial talent may be selected as a substitution for a class talent.

Unkillable (Racial Talent)

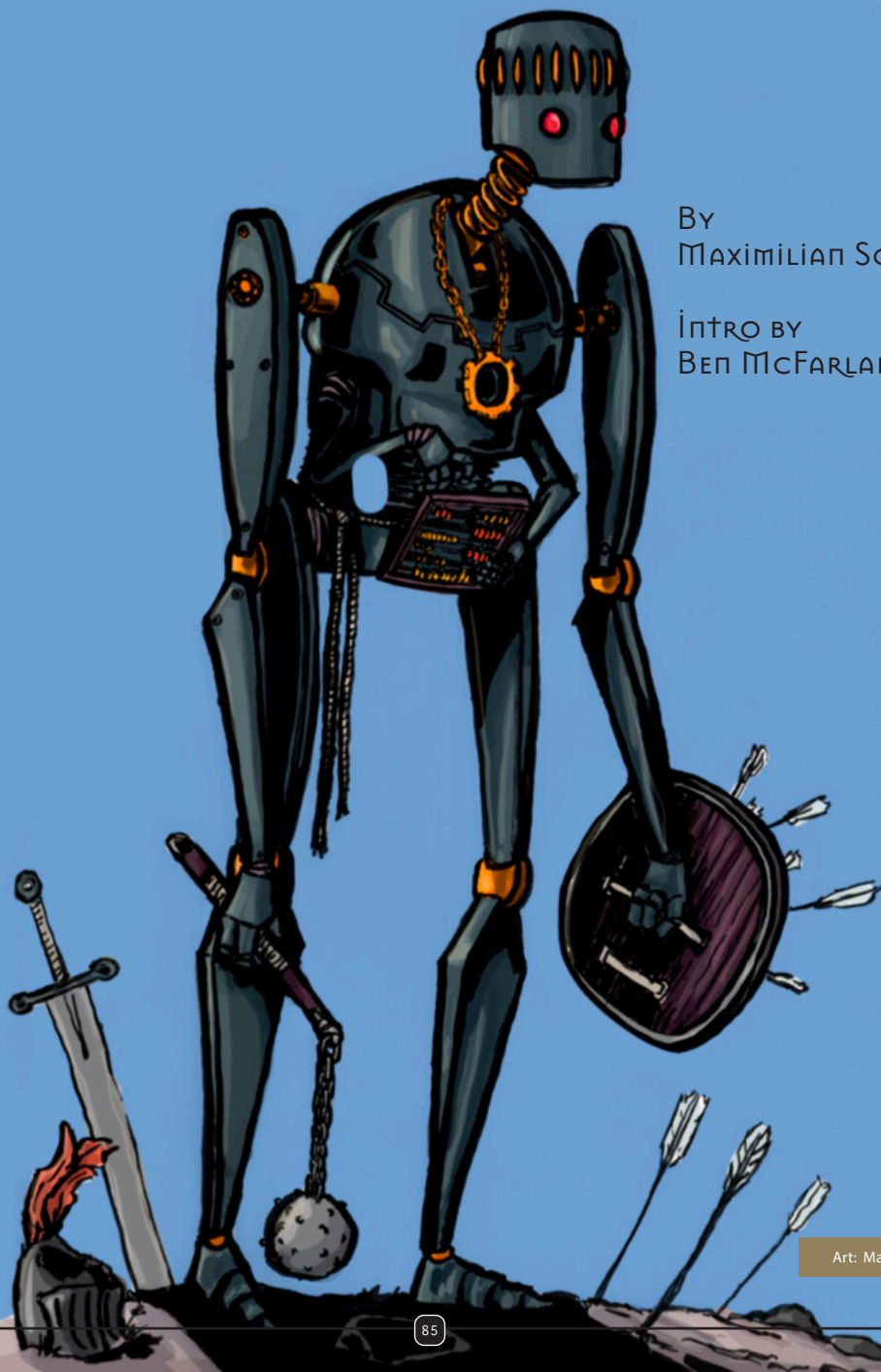
As long as you are above 0 hp, you regenerate 1/4 your average recovery (round up) in hp every round. This talent only manifests in combat. Outside of combat, your regeneration manifests as recoveries. If you take fire or acid damage, you won't heal on your next turn and must roll a save (11+) or take a quick rest to activate the power again.

Champion Feat: Once per battle, as a free action on your turn, spend a recovery, but do not gain hit points. Beginning on your next turn, Unkillable doubles in effectiveness, regenerating 1/2 your average recovery (round up) until the end of the battle.

GEARFORGED

BY
MAXIMILIAN SCHMUECKER

INTRO BY
BEN MCFARLAND

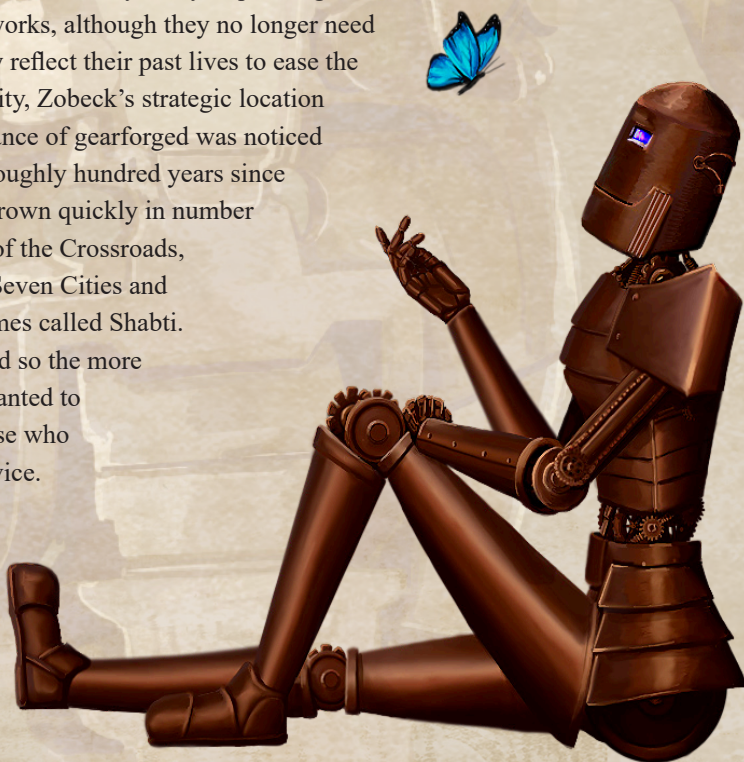


Art: Maximilian Schmuecker

Gearforged

The most iconic race of Midgard, perhaps only second to kobolds, gearforged are newly arrived to the world stage. Their story begins with the revolt of the people of Zobeck against their king, the lord of House Stross. Zobeck's patron goddess is Rava, Lady of Gears and Clockworks, and she favored the artisans rising up to depose the monarchy. Her priests developed the ritual that allows a person's spirit to be bound to the soul gem of a gearforged, and their memories written into a spindle of gears. This meant a great number of veterans and elders were given new life in glorious frames of steel and brass, able to march into battle against the king's army with little fear of suffering a deadly wound. These freshly transformed partisans helped turn the tide and won the day for the common people of Zobeck; it became a free city ruled by its citizens rather than nobility. Gearforged were accepted as heroes and welcomed into all parts of Crossroads society, because they are merely the respected members of the community given a new lease on life in a beautifully crafted form.

Unless an accident occurs during their transformation, which has happened, gearforged generally remember their past lives and the sensations of flesh, but do take a while to readjust to their newly constructed body. They require regular maintenance and winding of their clockworks, although they no longer need food or water. Their forms generally reflect their past lives to ease the transition. While not an enormous city, Zobeck's strategic location makes it a hub for trade; the acceptance of gearforged was noticed and their popularity spread. In the roughly hundred years since their appearance, gearforged have grown quickly in number and spread throughout the cultures of the Crossroads, particularly Zobeck, as well as the Seven Cities and Nuria Natal, where they are sometimes called Shabti. However, the ritual is expensive, and so the more recent transformations tend to be granted to the wealthy, people of status, or those who receive it as a gift or reward for service.



Gearforged in 13th Age

Gearforged bodies are usually designed towards a purpose, and their abilities differ accordingly.

Gearforged don't need to sleep, eat, or drink, but they do need maintenance and oil baths. They cannot drown or choke, but poison gases can still damage them. We don't attempt to nail down the precise implications of a living being inhabiting a mechanical body. We leave it to the player and the GM to decide on a case-by-case basis if a gearforged is affected by something. Record each ruling as you make the race unique to your group. This is an opportunity for a character's one unique thing to shine as well.

When you choose gearforged as your race, you gain one design for free. You can optionally spend a talent to gain an additional design. You must choose at least two of your talents from your class talents. For an adventurer tier character, this limits you to one free design and one design gained from a talent.



Gearforged Designs

Combat Model

+2 Str

Supercharge (Racial Power)

Once per battle, you can spend a quick action to begin supercharging. On your next turn, your first basic melee attack deals double damage.

Champion Feat: When you use supercharge, deal damage equal to your level + your Strength modifier to one engaged enemy.

Scout Model

+2 Dex

Small: You have a +2 AC bonus against opportunity attacks.

Leap (Racial Power)

One battle per day, you can fly at the rate you normally move until the end of your turn. You must land at the end of your turn or fall and take damage (as per the tier).

Champion Feat: You can use leap in two battles per day.

Tank Model

+2 Con

Entrench (Racial Power)

You can spend your move action to gain a +1 bonus to AC or PD until the beginning of your next turn. If you move voluntarily, such as intercepting a target, the bonus is lost.

Champion Feat: When you use entrench you also gain a +1 bonus to MD.

Tactician Model

+2 Wis

Spring the Trap (Racial Power)

When you roll an 18+ on your initiative, you gain a surprise round for yourself only.

Champion Feat: Your highest initiative ally may act during the surprise round.

Scholar Model

+2 Int

Machine Learning (Racial Power)

You gain an additional adventurer feat at level 1. Champion feats are available at level 4. Epic feats are available at level 7.

Champion Feat: Once per battle or scene, when making a skill check related to knowledge, reduce the DC by one difficulty level.

Diplomat Model

+2 Cha

Like Clockwork (Racial Power)

You can decide to go last in the first round of combat. In exchange for delaying your turn, increase the escalation die by 1 prior to acting, but do not increment it at the beginning of the following round. Then, reset your initiative to act first in the second round, effectively taking two turns in a row.

Champion Feat: At the start of each battle, gain a +2 bonus to all defenses until your first turn.

MIDGARD CHARACTER Options

By Martin Killmann



Midgard Character Options

The Midgard Campaign setting is a classic high-fantasy setting with a distinct flavor and a few unique twists. Together with the 13th Age rules set, it's a match made in heaven.

That said, there are a few unique ideas in Midgard that didn't have a good representation in 13th Age yet, such as chaos-flavored bards, clerics of feline or beer deities, warlocks of Baba Yaga or the genies, and fateweavers granted their foresight by the clockwork goddess Rava. The material in this article aims to plug those gaps and allow you to bring those elements of the setting into your 13th Age campaign.

Note that the Fateweaver, Savage, and Warlock classes are in the [Dark Pacts & Ancient Secrets](#) expansion book, while domain spells for clerics are explained in [Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths](#).

Bard

College of Entropy (Talent)

Once per day per point of Charisma modifier, you can force a nearby enemy to reroll a d20 roll and take the second result.

Whenever the enemy's reroll is a natural odd result, you also roll on the Chaos Mage's High Weirdness table.

Adventurer Feat: Also deal damage to the target equal to your Charisma modifier (x2 at 5th level, x3 at 8th).

Champion Feat: If the reroll is a natural even result, the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Epic Feat: Gain 2 additional daily uses of this talent.

(See the [Midgard Heroes Handbook](#), p. 33, for more detail on this college.)



Cleric

The following domains have an associated talent and a list of spells, which can be taken by any cleric with the talent (similar to the domains in Dark Alleys & Twisted Paths).

Domain: Cat

You can communicate with all feline creatures, and you have advantage on skill checks versus feline creatures.

Adventurer Feat: If you have a pet cat, it gains one special ability from the wizard's familiar talent.

Nine Lives (Invocation of Cat): Use this invocation as an interrupt when you would take damage that reduces your hit points below zero. You negate that damage and you can heal using a recovery.

Champion Feat: The recovery is free.



Art: Maximilian Schmuecker



Cat Spells

Claws of the Spirit Cat (1st level)

Ranged attack

At-will

Attack: Wisdom + level vs. PD

Hit: 1d4 + Wisdom modifier damage

Natural even hit: The next ally to attack the target adds 1d4 to their attack roll.

3rd level spell: 3d4 damage

5th level spell: 5d4 damage

7th level spell: 7d4 damage

9th level spell: 10d4 damage

Adventurer Feat: If you engaged the enemy this turn, you can make the attack against the target's MD instead of AC.

Cat's Play (1st level)

Close-quarters spell

Daily

Effect: You can cast this spell for power or broad effect.

Cast for power: A nearby ally gains a +3 bonus to disengage checks, can see in the dark, and takes half damage from falling for the next 1d6 hours.

Cast for broad effect: As above, but target 3 nearby allies and the effect lasts until the end of the battle or scene.

Scratching Fury (3rd level)

Ranged attack

Once per battle

Target: One nearby enemy

Attack: Wisdom + level vs. AC; make three attack rolls

Each Hit: 5 ongoing damage

Miss: —

5th level spell: 10 ongoing damage

7th level spell: 15 ongoing damage

9th level spell: 25 ongoing damage

Lick Wounds (5th level)

Close-quarters spell

Daily

Quick action

Target: You

Effect: Spend a recovery to regain half your hit point total, and roll a save against each save ends effect. You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and disengage checks until the end of your turn.

7th level spell: The recovery is free

Summon Murderkitty (9th level)

Ranged spell

Daily

Effect: You summon a dire tiger (13 True Ways, p. 160), according to the summoning rules in that book. The tiger remains until the end of the battle, or until it is reduced to zero hit points.

Domain: Revelry

The Revelry domain is known as the Beer domain in Midgard, but it could also work for wine in a setting based on Greek Mythology, namely for Dionysos.

When a nearby ally uses a healing potion, they add your level to the hit points healed, and they can roll a save against a save-ends effect.

Champion Feat: All potions used by a nearby ally have their effect increased by one tier (i.e., adventurer to champion and champion to epic). Epic potions are unaffected.

Invocation of Revelry: You turn one serving of beverage per point of Wisdom modifier into a healing potion of your tier, which keeps the effect until your next full heal-up.

Revelry Spells

Inebriated Swagger (1st level)

Melee Attack

At-will

Attack: Wisdom + Level - 1d6 vs. AC

Hit: WEAPON + Strength damage

Miss: Damage equal to your level

Effect: Until the start of your next turn, enemies have a -1d6 penalty to attacks that target your AC or PD.

Intoxicate (1st level)

Ranged spell

Once per battle

Attack: Wisdom + Level vs. PD

Hit: 5 ongoing poison damage, and the target has disadvantage on attack rolls (save ends both).

3rd level spell: 10 ongoing poison damage

5th level spell: 15 ongoing poison damage

7th level spell: 25 ongoing poison damage

9th level spell: 40 ongoing poison damage

Bottled Courage (3rd level)

Ranged spell

Daily

Effect: You can cast this spell for power or for broad effect.

Cast for broad effect: Up to three nearby allies are immune to fear, and have advantage on saving throws against the dazed, weakened, hampered, and stunned conditions until the end of the battle.

Cast for power: As above, but only one ally. That ally also gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Drunken Stupor (5th level)

Ranged Spell

Daily

Target: A nearby enemy with 500 hp or less

Attack: Wisdom + level vs. MD

Natural even hit: The target becomes aggressive drunk. It has disadvantage on attack rolls, and will attack a random target within reach (save ends).

Natural odd hit: The target becomes peaceful drunk. If it is not engaged with an enemy, it will just sit down and do nothing (save ends).



Fateweaver

The goddess Rava / Ariadne ([Midgard Worldbook](#), p. 360) is known as the Spinner of Fate and the Patron of Weavers, which, if you put the two together, points to this class. The deity has an important second aspect—one of clockwork, gears, and industrialization—which started with the mechanized loom on historic Earth.

A fateweaver reskinned as a priest of Rava would have a very mechanistic and deterministic outlook on fate, which matches a lot of class spells that focus on reducing randomness and setting die rolls to specific numbers.

If you'd rather play up the fortuneteller side of the Fateweaver, the Kariv Wanderers are a well-suited cultural background ([Midgard Worldbook](#), p. 124).

Gears of the Political Machine (Talent)

You start the game with a bonus icon relationship die, for a total of 4. The first time you would roll these dice, you set them to the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 instead. After that, whenever you would roll icon relationship dice, increase each by 1 instead, up to a maximum of 6.

When you use a 5 or 6 on an icon relationship die, reset the die to a 1 with a different icon you currently don't have a relationship with.

Champion Feat: Once per day, as a quick action, you can swap the escalation die with one of your icon relationship dice. Reset the escalation die to zero at the start of your next turn.

Watchmaker's Touch (Champion Tier Meditation)

Close-quarters spell

Once per battle

Always: You gain focus until the end of your next turn.

Target: You

Effect: Choose a nearby combatant. Once before your next turn, when the target rolls a die, you can change the natural roll, up or down, by a number equal to your Intelligence modifier or less.

Fateweaver spells

Tik-Tok (5th level)

Close-quarters spell

Daily

Quick action

Effect: Set a d12 on 12. Whenever an opponent makes a d20 roll, you can reduce the d12 any number of points to reduce the opponent's natural roll by the same number. When the number reaches zero, pay any amount of hit points up to your current total to deal that amount of damage to all nearby enemies.

Rewind the Clock (7th level)

Close-quarters spell

Daily

Free action

Effect: Reduce the escalation die by 1. A nearby ally can take a standard action.

Focus: Target two allies.



Savage

Sword Dancer (Talent)

Your fighting style is a mesmerizing mix of sword movements, acrobatics, and dancing steps. While you are just as ferocious and deadly as any savage, you channel the battle fury into years of training and refined style.

When determining your armor class, you can swap your Charisma modifier for that of your Dexterity, Constitution, or Wisdom.

Adventurer feat: When making a disengage check, you can expend a frenzy die and add the result to the check.

Champion Feat: When you have no frenzy dice and an enemy misses you with an attack, gain a frenzy die.

Epic Feat: The first time you make a melee attack each battle, add your Charisma modifier to the roll.

(See Midgard Heroes Handbook, p. 39, for more background.)

Savage Powers

Swaying Sidestep (1st level)

Close-quarters power

Interrupt action

Once per battle

Trigger: An enemy hits with a melee attack against your AC or PD

Cost: 1 frenzy die

Effect: The enemy rerolls the attack with a penalty equal to your Charisma modifier.

Adventurer Feat: You can use this power against ranged and close-quarters attacks.

Dazzling Display (3rd level)

Close-quarters power

Quick action

Once per battle

Cost: 1 frenzy die

Target: One enemy you are engaged with

Attack: Charisma + level vs. MD

Hit: The target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Adventurer feat: You can make a check to disengage from the target.



Tantalizing Dance (5th level)

Close-quarters power

Quick action

Once per battle

Cost: 2 frenzy dice

Effect: Until the start of your next turn, you gain resist damage Cha+ to all damage. (When an enemy makes an attack against you, you take half damage from that attack unless the natural attack roll is equal to your Charisma ability score or higher.)

Sudden Crescendo (7th level)

Close-quarters power

Quick action

Once per battle

Cost: -

Effect: Gain a number of frenzy dice equal to the lower of your Charisma modifier or the escalation die. Gain half that amount if you are staggered.

The Curtain Falls (9th level)

Close-quarters power

Once per battle

Special: The escalation die must be 4+ to use this power

Cost: 2 frenzy dice per target

Target: A number of nearby non-mook enemies up to your Charisma modifier

Effect: Make a melee attack against each target.

Warlock

Baba Yaga Pact

Baba Yaga is a cruel and fickle mistress. She knows exactly what you desire, and she knows exactly what you fear, and she'll feed you both in small doses to keep you on a leash.

Warlocks and witches of Baba Yaga are often gifted children from small villages, taken under her wing, protected by her power from the superstitious and vengeful common folk, and used as a tool to spy on the high and mighty.

She prefers the subtle method of curses and hexes over flashy blasts, and would rather her agents escape and evade capture than make a stand. Most of her enemies are of more use to her alive.

Witch's Gaze

Pact power

Interrupt action

Once per battle

Trigger: A cursed enemy makes an attack against you.

Effect: The enemy rerolls the attack. If the reroll is a natural 1-5, the enemy hits itself with the attack instead.

Baba Yaga's Intuition (1st level)

"Of course my liege. The feeling of trust is mutual."

Hex

Close-quarters spell

At-will

Effect: You gain the uncanny ability to pick up subtle hints in a person's voice and demeanor about their true emotional state. This especially allows you to pick up the telltale signs of a liar. You have advantage on Wisdom-based skill checks to read people.

When the spell is active, the GM should always make this roll behind the screen when you interact with an NPC (but only once for the entire scene). They should drop hints about the target's emotional state, but if the roll fails, those hints will be misleading.

Genie Lord Pact

You made a pact to gain a share of the power of a Genie Lord, one of the powerful rulers of an elemental plane. You act as messenger, agent, and shock trooper, depending on what the situation requires. Servants of the genies love to flash their powers. Fire warlocks in particular are notorious for blasting their enemies to smithereens on the smallest provocation.

Gift of the Genies

Pact power

Quick action

Once per battle

Special: You can use this power only when the escalation die is 2+.

Effect: The next time you use a blast spell this battle, attack an additional target.

Waveblast

Close-quarters spell

At-will

Blast

Target: One nearby enemy

Attack: Charisma + Level vs. PD

Hit: 1d8 per level + Charisma damage, and the target pops free from you.

Miss: Your level in damage



Escalation!

WILL RETURN

