



# The Netbook of Darklords and Realms

**1<sup>st</sup> Edition**

**By Vayn**

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# Foreword

**W**elcome to The Netbook of Darklords and Realms. It has been a long and difficult journey to complete this small supplement to the Ravenloft campaign setting. There have been times when life has gotten so busy that I almost decided to scrap it. But, I stuck with it, and here it is, a total of five realms to aid Dungeon Masters in their Advanced Dungeons and Dragons campaigns. This is only the first edition of the NDR. Further updates will come as new realms and revisions are completed. I will also be opening the doors to submissions. Details on how to submit works to the Netbook are listed on my homepage (see the last page for contact information). As well I hope to complete some illustrations to be included in the Netbook, to help clarify my ideas and improve the overall quality of the work.

In the future I plan to attain a larger staff. It has, up to this point been only myself working on this book. I will hopefully be acquiring help in the editing process of future editions. I also hope that this is only the start of my collection of netbooks. Others are in preliminary stages and are mentioned on my website. With any luck I'll complete one of them within the next few months.

I would like, at this time, acknowledge some of those who inspired the contents of this netbook. Primarily these include J. Downey, creator and player of the original Achren Arcanon, and P. Pollard, creator and player of Daark Falle. It these players, in a campaign I ran with them for over six months, that inspired the first realm in this book, Mortua, and gave birth to the idea of creating an entire supplement of my own ideas. I would also like to thank B. Janes and S. Wall, two players in the first game I ever ran, a Rifts campaign. It was they who gave me the confidence to create my stories and ideas, and to share them.

Anyway, without further ado, I present The Netbook of Darklords and Realms, First Edition. I hope you enjoy it.

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# Mortua

**M**ortua is a land of the dead. Like many lands in Ravenloft, zombies abound here. This land however, more so than most, swarms with undead in all forms. They stalk the land endlessly doing the bidding of their dark master, Lord Achren Arcanon, the half-lich. It is he who claims rulership of this land... it is he who is thought to be Darklord. He is not. For there is only one true law in Mortua... no one truly rules here.

It is true, the lordship is uncertain. To ask the people of those few unfortunate towns within Mortua's borders they will simply reply, "The Lord Arcanon is master here." This does not reveal much, however, for there is another Arcanon who walks within these lands. The child son of Achren Arcanon, Senachren, hides throughout the endless wastelands, under the ever vigilant care of his loyal guardian, Emmette. And it is this boy who prevents Achren from achieving that which he most wants... true mastery.

## The Lord

### A

chren Arcanon is a most unique being. A necromancer of great power, he revels in the evil of his existence and finds only joy in the suffering which has filled his life. His fall into darkness was not a gradual series of mistakes and weakness before temptation. He was never the victim of some elaborate plot to destroy the good within; he never possessed any. He was evil from the start... a being who wished only to further expand the range of his black influence... one who's arrival in Ravenloft was inevitable.

He was born in a small province in Fonsir, in Krynn. His mother was a timid woman of little thought, and his father a rough soldier in the army of the Duke Ceril Beyman. They were never wed and much of Achren's childhood was awash in the shame of a bastard. His father he saw very little of... stopping by the village only occasionally to see to his welfare. The visits became more and more infrequent as Achren grew to adolescence and it became apparent to his father that Achren took after his mother and was weak of body. The soldier despised his son's weakness, knowing that the boy would barely be able to manage the chores he aging mother could not do, let alone take hand to a sword and fight. The disappointment grew and a wall of hatred grew between them.

Achren did not share his father's low opinion of his abilities though. His mind possessed power far beyond even the smartest in Fonsir and he saw it's vast potential. He took first to studying languages and later magic. This was a difficult task and his advancement was slow, as Duke Beyman had outlawed magic in Fonsir. This limitation angered Achren greatly and promptly drove him to betray his province when an invading army appeared on the eastern coast. Achren offered his services to the leader of the invaders, a man named Naelyn. With his help they quickly stormed over Fonsir and destroyed Beyman's forces. By Achren's own hand did his father die, and as an ultimate vengeance Achren then broke all laws of goodness and decency... he used his first necromantic spell, beyond his power at the time, and raised his father as a zombie slave.

With Achren's help Naelyn solidified his power base and earned the official title of Lord of Fonsir from the King. Achren was then appointed as one of Naelyn's advisors. It was then that he met the other three beings who would later accompany him on his travels: Daark Falle (the halfling commander of Naelyn's navy), Dracon (a dimwitted but loyal soldier), and Zeb (a savage who had personally slain over 100 of Beyman's soldiers in the battle). It was these four who were Naelyn's most trusted subjects and they did most of the official work throughout the province, from tax collecting, to eliminating supposed traitors, and most notably... inspiring fear in the villages which would speak against the Lord.

A few years later Naelyn chose to attempt to expand his borders into the King's territory. To accomplish this he began to have Achren and the others skim funds for a new army from the taxes due the King. This did not go unnoticed and the King's rage forced Naelyn into pinning the blame on his four advisors. Achren and the others were forced to flee. They escaped to the Outer Planes and found themselves in Sigil. It was here that Achren's power truly began to grow.

They acquired work as adventurers; retrieving magical materials for a wizard named Quartermass. This allowed them to visit countless other realms including many of the Inner Planes. They soon became both feared and powerful, and continued to do as they pleased to further their power. Each became well known for their mannerisms.

The savage Zeb, a drunkard whose only thoughts were for violence and pain. He slew more innocents throughout the multiverse than could be counted. The fool Dracon was as a child playing with fire. His dangerous stupidity caused death and misery wherever he went. Daark was Achren's most trusted ally. His carefree ways soon became sadistic pleasures as he took advantage of all that crossed his path. And of course Achren Arcanon became as evil incarnate. The suffering caused by his foul spells was felt not by a few unfortunates who made the mistake of meeting him; all those who his cold gaze fell upon felt it.

Others joined their menagerie of evil. Most suffered death quickly whenever one of the four became angered. Others managed to escape with their lives, only to become stalked like rabbits to an unfathomable demise. One, named Vayn, a priestess, actually became an ally of sorts even beyond the time she served with them. But this was not all together a good thing.

It was Vayn who unwittingly led them each to their ends. She was unknowingly the servant of a Pit Fiend from Baator named Peneteth. After she escaped his service he turned his eyes to Achren and the others. Through manipulations of them and those near them Peneteth furthered his own agenda and caused such things to happen that many could not dream. It was through his influence that Dracon died at the hands of a Baatezu. Later Peneteth's influence brought Achren's temper to an height that caused him to express his frustrations with the savage Zeb with a contagion spell that left him helpless before a 12 year old boy with a table knife. Now only Daark and Achren remained.

Soon Achren fell prey to these dark manipulations and was tricked into the bed of a Baatezu female. She seduced him and left him in shock as she fled back to Baator. This simple mistake would bring about Achren's greatest pain.

Much of the influence came in the form of a Tiefling named Emmette, who worked for some time under the guise of being a friend. Emmette was a servant of Peneteth whose job it was to keep a close eye on those who were being manipulated. Once he was discovered Achren and Daark's anger towards him reached a point where they chose to plunge into Baator to track him and Peneteth down and slay them.

After much difficulty they reached their destination only to find Peneteth expecting them. He first presented Achren with his bastard son, Senachren, a child who at birth possessed all the magical knowledge that his father had. With this came a prophecy that Achren would one day be destroyed by his son. The child then was given to the care of Emmette. Achren was so enraged by this that he instantly attacked Peneteth. The battle that raged between these two powerful magical beings was like none ever seen. The energy released almost consumed even the rugged Daark. But it was not to be, as it was Daark who made the killing blow. Using a magical blade named Hellbearer Daark attacked, plunging it deep into the black heart of the fiend. Together they tumbled from the high ledge where they fought and were destroyed in a pit of fire. Now only Achren remained to face his son and Emmette.

As he closed in, the magical energy crackling about his hands in readiness, he was caught unprepared when the mist arose. It came suddenly, without warning, and there was no escape. He, Senachren, and Emmette, were taken by Ravenloft.

In the months that followed Achren learned much about his land, which sits on Darkon's northern border. Most notably he discovered that he couldn't leave. He took as his home a replica of the Mortuary from Sigil, where he had spent time as a Dustman (see Planescape), and began trying to learn where he is and why. He also began sending his undead to find Senachren, knowing that the child must be out there somewhere.

## Appearance

# A

chren Arcanon is a half-lich, a result of magical backlash from a resurrection spell. He stands a little over six feet and weighs 180 lbs. His right side is that of a man in his late twenties, while his left is that of a rotting corpse. Ragged black hair crowns his head and black robes are his usual choice of clothes. All in all he is frightening to behold and when he wishes to avoid mad panic in those he approaches he usually pulls his hood over his face or wears an elaborate platinum mask over the left side. This is a rarity though as Achren is in no way ashamed of his monstrous appearance. He frequently goes out in public with his face in full view and no gloves covering the left hand. His feeling is that since he is Lord he can appear however he wishes. Any who react at his appearance with violence or if they attempt to summon help usually die quickly.

Senachren Arcanon is a baby. He bears his fathers black hair and has eyes that reveal the knowledge he possesses, but beyond that there is nothing that separates him from other children. He is almost a year of age and is just beginning to attempt walking. He cannot speak yet and never leaves Emmette's side.

#### Current Sketch

# A

chren wishes nothing more than to see his son slain. He spends his days and nights seeking out his son with any magic at his disposal. His zombies travel far and wide throughout Mortua trying to find some clue as to Emmette and the child's whereabouts. This has been to no avail.

For that is Achren's curse. More than anything he wants to rule everything within his sight. He lords over the people of Mortua with a merciless hand, and over the dead with an even more unfeeling magic. However, he is not able to maintain his control. Whenever his eyes turn for but a moment from his people, Emmette and Senachren use the time to increase their power and take what they can get from the people. They often go into the towns of Mortua to collect taxes, place judgements, even change laws, all under the nose of Achren. The people do not even realize something is amiss. Their minds, but some influence of the Dark Powers, fail to distinguish between the two lords. As such Achren is unable to be certain his power is absolute anywhere.

Even worse in Achren's mind is his failure of ultimate control over his zombie minions. These are the creatures he has by his own magic created. It drives him mad that he cannot even maintain control over them, for even as a child Senachren can at anytime influence the zombies to do as he pleases, even attack their master. Achren hence lives in fear of those he needs to maintain what power he has. He must even live in fear of himself. Senachren can also exert influence over Achren's undead half, causing Achren's own body to betray him. The constant nervous state he lives in is driving him to even worse states of evil. Achren knows... it's only a matter of time till he destroys himself in frustration.

#### The Land

# T

he land of Mortua is wasteland. It's covered in vast expanses of cold tundra, and swamps and marshlands on the verge of destruction in the onslaught of chill winds. The forests are endless woods of sickly looking and dead trees, and the rivers are black with filth.

The summers of Mortua are a hot and humid misery swarming with flies. Attracted by the swamps and the stench of death that permeates the land, these insects are a damnation upon native and traveler alike. The Lord Achren himself finds the insects incredibly bothersome as they pester his rotting flesh constantly.

Conversely, the winters of Mortua are frozen and lifeless. Snow covers the ground and those who journey too far from their hearth often die in the chill winds. Some say the winds come from Arcanon Mortuary itself, as Achren tries each winter to freeze his son to death himself.

Few landmarks stand upon this land. The deep forest to the west stops suddenly at the farmlands surrounding the small village of Denshire. This village possesses a cemetery of vast proportions, unsuitable to the town's diminutive size. It stretches to cover an area almost one-third the size of the farmlands and dwarfs the village itself. Even those who have lived in Denshire their whole lives and that have generations stretching back into it's uncertain past know little of those buried there. Denshire cemetery, the say, is the resting-place for everyone Achren ever slew.

To the south lies the smallest of Mortua's swamps. It reaches all along the lands western half of the southern border and ceases at the road leading to Darkon.

To the north of Denshire stands Arcanon Mortuary, it's tower barely visible above the twisted trees. It stands two stories, cloaked in black soot from some past the people do not know. Walls surrounding the mortuary are new but crumbling, kept up only by the efforts of the undead slaves that built them when Arcanon arrived. Deep in the bowls of the mortuary are the crematorium furnaces, which heat the imposing structure. That is one place few

have seen and lived to speak of. The gates of Arcanon Mortuary are always open, as stands the twin front doors. A testament to Achren's dark nature... the dead may always enter.

Surrounding Arcanon Mortuary and extending to cover the entire northern realm lies the Bardak Wastes, a harsh tundra land that only the truly strong can endure. Here is where the land gives way to the mists, rising from the River Sigjan to span the entire border. Few know of the creatures that wander this place, but all have heard stories of mobs of zombies that trudge about brutally killing all they find.

East of Denshire along the road one can reach the capital of the land, Lowhaven. This large city clings to survival with all it's worth. Sheltered from the winds coming from the west it enjoys a certain respite from the cold. It also enjoys the status of being the only road out of Mortua. To the east trees cover the land only to again be broken by the largest swamp in Mortua. Journeying to the east from here is hazardous at best and hence not many go on to see the third and final settling in Mortua, that of Tangest.

Tangest is stuck directly in the eastern wastelands. It is probably the least fortunate of the towns of Mortua. Formerly a port town before snatched up by the dark powers, the docks and ships that once rested against a backdrop of blue oceans now only lie rotting on the frozen rocks. Primarily the swamp takes up the south of Tangest, to be broken only by a small outcropping of trees in the southeastern corner. For further details on the land see the map.

## The Folk

# T

he people of Mortua are a strong lot. The harsh weather conditions force them to be. The vast majority of them live a farming existence, with the exception of Lowhaven which makes it's living from trade and timber.

The small village of Denshire is actually a replica of an abandoned village from Achren's homeland of Fonsir. It came to Ravenloft when he did and those living here are completely unaware that until that time they did not exist. Perhaps they came from a distant past or future when Denshire is populated... who knows.

Denshire is a village of farmers most obviously. The farmland surrounding the small settling is about the only really fertile soil in the realm. Though they are men of better than average strength they are by no means warriors and avoid a fight at all costs. This is not to say they are cowards. In fact very little actually frightens them. Living so close to Arcanon Mortuary they have seen much in the way of the supernatural, not the least of which being the frequent presence of zombies stumbling across the fields. It can simply be said of this people that they are smart enough to avoid a fight when they know they are going to lose. They make not action against their harsh Lord, preferring instead to stay out of his way as much as possible. Achren in turn has influenced the Denshire way of life very little. Some say he has a special place in his black heart for these people.

The people of Lowhaven, by contrast, are Achren's enemies. Though he makes no direct attack on them he makes it no secret that he despises their existence. It is these people who most help Senachren and his guardian survive the constant pursuit by Achren's minions.

Lowhaven, due to its more hospitable environment has bred its people less rugged and more decadent. They enjoy a life of extravagant pleasures and few worries. As such they are no where near as tough as the farmers from Denshire with whom they trade. Few have ventured beyond the city limits and hence have not witnessed the zombies or other dark creatures. This makes them far easier to be frightened. Though they have no direct hatred of their Lord they speak ill of him when they think no one is listening and at times small groups begin to speak of revolt. It is at these times when Emmette and the child are most seen. Achren promptly smothers these rebels before their ideas spread, often leaving their mysteriously ravaged bodies as a warning, or far worse. He many times casts special spells upon troublemakers, zombifying their appendages as reminders of his power. Few seek to further stir his wrath after this.

Then there are the people of Tangest. These are odd people who live in a constant state of turmoil. Their land came to Ravenloft during one night while invading orcs mustered just inside the forest. When the people awoke expecting to be overrun by armies from the wood they instead found that not only was the army gone... but so were the trees, as well as the ocean from which they made their livelihood.



Since that strange night many have wandered forth to try and discover what has happened. Those few who survived the trek and discovered their new situation in the land of Mortua, and the rulership of Arcanon, have never managed to return to Tangest. As such the people of Tangest are completely in the dark as to what has happened to them. Most are convinced they were destroyed by some evil magic of the orcs and now live in the world of the dead. This has resulted in a rapid change in their society. They are now, as a whole, quite mad. They have begun to live in seclusion, trying to avoid one another out of fear and mistrust. Each member of the once peaceful community is now convinced that the others are demons from hell trying to capture their soul. Strangely this has done nothing to their day to day routine. They still awaken each morning and go about life as usual, trying to find a way to survive amidst the unfertile wasteland and murky swamps. At night, however, the society crumbles as fears of that dreadful night they were taken reemerge. Many have dug tunnels under their former dwellings and stay underground at night, emerging only for supplies and to spy on the rest of the townsfolk. Others run rampant about the streets as if searching for some unseen enemy. Even worse is the fact that since this transformation, many of the people have become cannibals, feasting on their own dead wherever and however they may be found. Strangers to Tangest may at first find the day civilization a calm rest from the horrors of Ravenloft. But as any that have traveled the Demi-Plane of Dread frequently already know... nothing is ever as it seems.

At night strangers become the focus of the madness of the town. All within its borders seek the newcomer and try to kill him, or send him into their own warped delusions. Many times... they succeed, and the adventurer joins the nighttime ritual.

## The Law

# T

he law of Mortua is as uncertain as the Lordship. The most prominent law is, of course, Achren's law. He and his vast armies of undead serve as the defense of Mortua. This force is powerful and mysterious enough that few even try to invade. Those that do are quickly disposed of and join Achren's legions as undead. The undead serve only as the national protection however. The actual enforcement of Achren's few decrees is handled by the local authorities.

Denshire is too small to rate it's own police force. Its laws are primarily enforced by the burgomaster, who acts as the judge in most cases. A voluntary militia exists to deal with any threat that disrupts the peace of the village. Fortunately the most trouble that arises is an occasional drunken fight or a need to stop wolf attacks.

Lowhaven is a little more complex. It has a full time police force which patrols the streets and guards the road into town. This police force does not, however, obey the laws of Achren Arcanon. In fact they believe that the creature that comes to town occasionally is not actually Achren, but rather a monster that terrorizes the people. This is one of the reasons Achren dislikes Lowhaven; the guards there frequently attack him. If Achren wishes his will to be enforced he tells the burgomaster, who gives orders to the guards. This works only for a short time however, and soon the guards go back to their usual laws.

Tangest has not law enforcement at all, and Achren has a tendency to avoid this town.

Achren himself has very few laws he imposes on his people. The first is strict orders not to attack the undead that wander the land. His other laws include orders not to come to the Mortuary and not to give any help to Emmette and Senachren. Most of his other laws depend on his mood and whatever he requires to achieve his goals at the time.

# Confronting

## The Lord

# A

**Achren Arcanon,**  
(15th Level Half-lich Necromancer), Lawful Evil

Armor Class	1	Str	12
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/Hit Dice	15	Con	12
Hit Points	45	Int	19
THACO	16	Wis	16
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	7
Damage/Attack	1d8		
Special Attacks	Spells		
Special Defenses	½ Damage from Non-Magical Weapons		
Magic Resist.	Immune to 1st Lvl. Illusions		

Most beings flee upon first seeing Achren Arcanon. His half-undead visage inspires fear in all those who look upon it, and Achren uses this to its best advantage. He does little to hide his monstrous appearance, preferring instead to let it intimidate his friends and enemies into obedience.

Being a half-lich Achren enjoys certain bonuses he did not have as a fully living man. He now enjoys a certain immortality, his living side aging slower than normal. Even when it does die there is little doubt that the undead portion will overtake him completely and he will become a full lich. He also possesses the chill touch of the lich, if only to a lesser degree. This he can inflict by touching opponents with his undead hand, doing 1-8 HP of damage. Finally he has a limited infra-vision through his undead eye, giving him only a -2 penalty in total darkness.

These benefits naturally come with certain unfortunate side effects as well. His charisma, once one of his best features, has plummeted greatly, and shrinks even further with each passing year of rot and insect bites. He also suffers greatly from an eternal battle with his undead half. This is apparent mainly in two instances. If a priest of high enough power succeeds in an attempt to turn him there is a 50% chance that Achren will be forced to flee the scene. Also, since Senachren has an innate ability to control Achren's undead he also possesses an ability to control Achren himself. This is explained further in the section on Senachren Arcanon.

Achren is not a man of battle. His choice is usually to allow his servants to fight for him, as they are expendable and in great number. He prefers to stay back from actual fighting and use ranged spells to destroy his opponents. He is also not one to go easy on enemies. The faster and more efficiently he can eliminate them the better. As such his opening attack is usually a spell of great power, as are those that follow. Few can get the drop on him in battle as he surrounds himself with his undead minions and views much of his environment through their eyes. He rarely wastes time on elaborate plots, and is more apt to outright onslaughts to show his superiority. His one true weakness is his temper. Achren despises insolence and betrayal to the point where he often uses vast amounts of energy eliminating those responsible, leaving little for greater tasks at hand.

If Achren is defeated in battle he will resurrect in a few days as his undead half takes over and he becomes a true lich. The only way to prevent this is to destroy the magical amulet which he uses as his soul's last respite in the face of destruction, and to burn his body. If either of these actions are not taken Achren will, whether reform and his soul, wherever it is, return to his body, or else his soul will possess and dominate the next person to touch the amulet. The victim of the later will, over the next year will begin to resemble Achren, and become a half-lich. If both the amulet and the body are destroyed Achren will completely die and Senachren will achieve full Lordship in his father's place.

#### Spell List

1st Level (5 Per Day): *Alarm, Armor, Burning Hands, Cantrip, Chill Touch, Detect Magic, Detect Undead, Find Familiar, Grease, Hold Portal, Identify, Magic Missile, Read Magic, Shield, Sleep, Tenser's Floating Disc, Unseen Servant, Wall of Fog.*

2nd Level (5 Per Day): *Deafness, Detect Evil, Detect Invisibility, ESP, Flaming Sphere, Glitterdust, Knock, Know Alignment, Locate Object, Melf's Acid Arrow, Protection From Cantrips, Spectral Hand, Stinking Cloud, Summon Swarm, Web.*

3rd Level (5 Per Day): *Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Feign Death, Fireball, Flame Arrow, Hold Undead, Lightning Bolt, Melf's Minute Meteors, Monster Summoning I, Nondetection, Protection From Normal Missiles, Sepia Snake Sigil, Vampiric Touch.*

4th Level (5 Per Day): *Contagion, Detect Scrying, Dig, Enervation, Evard's Black Tentacles, Fire Shield, Ice Storm, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Monster Summoning 2, Remove Curse, Selective Mummify (See Below), Shout, Wall of Fire, Wall of Ice.*

5th Level (5 Per Day): *Animate Dead, Bigby's Interposing Hand, Cloudkill, Cone of Cold, Conjure Elemental, Contact Other Plane, Dismissal, False Vision, Magic Jar, Monster Summoning 3, Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound, Summon Shadow, Wall of Force, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone.*

6th Level (2 Per Day): *Antimagic Shell, Bigby's Forceful Hand, Chain Lightning, Conjure Animals, Contingency, Death Spell, Ensnarement, Glasse, Globe of Invulnerability, Guards and Wards, Invisible Stalker, Legend Lore, Monster Summoning 4, Repulsion, Reincarnate, True Seeing.*

7th Level (1 Per Day): *Spell Turing.*

Note:

Selective Mummify

(4th Level Necromancy)

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 1 Turn

Area of Effect: One Human-Sized Limb

Saving Throw: None

This spell was designed by Achren himself as a particularly cruel way to control others. The spell is a short ritual spell which transforms a pre-selected limb into undead matter. The limb continues to obey the body it is attached to unless the spellcaster says otherwise, at which point it obeys whatever instruction is given it by the spellcaster. This is Achren's way of insuring traitors cease their unlawful ways. Should they continue to disobey his orders after this spell is cast they often find themselves being attacked by their own arm, attacking others for no good reason, or even stealing or some other unlawful act. This has the affect of whether driving the victim mad, turning him from his ways, or causing him to be driven away from his loved ones. It is perhaps Achren's favorite spell for the misery it causes. The material component is dead flesh, which must be burned. The limb must be tightly bound and all blood flowing to it cut off during the ritual. Any blood trapped in it must be bled out.

# S

## Senachren Arcanon

0 Level Half-Baatezu, Neutral Evil

Armor Class	10	Str.	1
Movement	3	Dex.	2
Level/Hit Dice	1	Con.	5
THACO	20	Int.	19
No. of Attacks	1	Wis.	17
Damage/Attack	1d4	Cha.	15
Special Attacks	None		
Special Defense	Summon Undead		
Magic Resist.	50%		

Senachren Arcanon is a child with little power to defend himself. He depends on the protection of Emmette, and of the undead which he can easily control. Battle will only ensue if Emmette is unable to peaceably resolve any encounter, and an attempt at escape fails.

Senachren himself is granted certain benefits from his baatezu heritage. The first of which is a fierce scratch with undetectable, retractable claws, doing 1d4 points of damage. He also enjoys a 50% magic resistance, due to both his baatezu half and the magical properties of his father. Only +1 or better weapons can harm him.

The vast majority of Senachren's power comes from his strange relationship to his father. Senachren is able, at any time to summon and control 1d10 of Achren's undead. This can even be done at a distance, allowing him to control undead even within the confines of the Mortuary. This control is greater even than that of Achren; none can

wrest control from the child. These undead are also exempt from priestly turning. This domination lasts for 1d6 turns, upon which time the zombies will depart, having no knowledge of what has past. Senachren is aware of when his control fades and alerts Emmette for them to leave beforehand, so that the released zombies do not spot them.

Senachren also has an ability which he, as yet, cannot use. He is fully versed in magic and knows all of his father's spells. This would make him a very formidable foe to say the least, but he is unable to use this knowledge until he becomes an adult and his mind matures to the point where magical energy won't rip it apart. This is the thing that Achren fears the most and why he works so hard at finding his son. If Senachren ever does grow up to be able to use Achren's magic then there will be no stopping him.

# E

## mmette

14th Level Tiefling Illusionist, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class	8	Str.	7
Movement	12	Dex.	16
Level/Hit Dice	14	Con.	12
Hit Points	29	Int.	16
THAC0	16	Wis.	14
No. of Attacks	1	Cha.	14
Damage/Attack	By Weapon		
Special Attacks	Spells		
Special Defense	See Below		
Magic Resist.	Nil		

Though he is not a lord, Emmette is Senachren main protection from the hostilities of the world. A such he is included in the Confronting the Lords section.

Emmette is a Tiefling (See Planescape Campaign Setting™). He was born in Sigil and spent most of his early life there. It was only when he journeyed out to see the rest of the multiverse did he begin having major difficulty in life. His first adventure out beyond the Outlands landed him in the forced service of Peneteth. He was then assigned to watch over, and inflict influence upon, Achren and his Associates. Emmette did so to the best of his ability and made a lifelong enemy of the necromancer.

Then Emmette was summoned back to Baator for special instruction. He was there assigned to guard the well being of Senachren Arcanon. Moments after Achren arrived and attacked Peneteth. In the wake of the battle came the mists, and he and Senachren were transported to this strange land, which, they have discovered, they cannot leave.

Emmette is truly loyal to Senachren. He protects him with his life, never faltering in that duty. This protection goes beyond Peneteth's assignment, as Emmette has no remaining feeling of service to the foul pit fiend. Emmette truly loves the child and will see no harm come to him. To this end he seeks to supplant Achren's lordship and allow Senachren to become ruler.

Emmette is about twenty years of age and stand about 5' 10". His hair is brown and is pinned behind his long Tiefling ears. As a member of this strange race Emmette possesses another strange feature, called a Plane Touch. In him it manifests itself as a feeling of paranoia upon whoever Emmette's blue eyes look upon. It's quite unnerving to even the most hardened individual.

This Illusionist wields only a quarterstaff in battle, preferring to use spells. In cases of emergency, however, he keeps a small dagger in his boot. He possesses an infravision of 60ft and can create magical darkness in a 15ft radius once per day. He is also resistant to cold based attacks, taking only half damage, and gets a +2 bonus to save against fire and electricity.

Emmette does not like to fight and will avoid battle at all costs. His only concern is to get Senachren to a safe distance before something happens to him. If pressured into battle Emmette will unleash whatever illusions can best distract his opponents and use the first available chance to escape. If defeated in battle his last act will be to use

a single wish, gained from a ring he wears on his finger, to cause one of his attackers to take his place and protect Senachren.

#### Spell List

1st Level (5 Per Day): *Cantrip, Change Self, Detect Magic, Read Magic, Grease, Phantasmal Force, Dancing Lights, Audible Glamer, Nystul's Magical Aura, Spook, Ventriloquism.*

2nd Level (5 Per Day): *Blur, Deafness, Fool's Gold, Hypnotic Pattern, Improved Phantasmal Force, Invisibility, Leomund's Trap, Mirror Image, Misdirection, Whispering Wind.*

3rd Level (5 Per Day): *Illusionary Script, Invisibility, 10-foot Radius, Phantom Steed, Spectral Force, Wraithform, Leomund's Tiny Hut, Melf's Minute Meteors, Delude, Blink, Gust of Wind.*

4th Level (4 Per Day): *Fear, Hallucinatory Terrain, Illusionary Wall, Improved Invisibility, Minor Creation, Phantasmal Killer, Shadow Monsters, Vacancy.*

5th Level (4 Per Day): *Advanced Illusion, Demi-Shadow Monsters, Dream, Major Creation, Seeming, Shadow Door, Shadow Magic, Teleport.*

6th Level (2 Per Day): *Demi-Shadow Magic, Eyebite, Project Image, Veil.*

7th Level (1 Per Day): *Mass Invisibility, Shadow Walk.*

#### Closing The Borders

## T

he borders of Mortua can be closed by either of the two Arcanons. Each can also take them down if the other erects them at an inopportune time. This can lead to occasional times of chaos at the edges of the land. Travelers often report that the barriers preventing entrance and exit of Mortua frequently go through bouts of rising and falling. This can last for hours, depending on the will of the two lords involved. Usually there is no real reason for these wars... just a battle of wits between the two.

The actual form of the borders depends on who raised them. When Achren wishes the pathways into his land closed the land at the borders turns gray and putrid. Any who walk upon this land or breathe the sickening air slowly become undead. As they walk their limbs stiffen and their flesh begins to rot. If they do not turn back they will soon become zombies and be totally in Achren's control.

If Senachren raises the borders the land at the edges breaks free and falls, revealing pits of molten lava and fire. The heat rising from this place will incinerate any who try to cross within 1d4 rounds. Even those protected from fire and heat are not safe as splashes of magma soar up to cover any who try to cross. The sheer weight drags passers down to the pits where they drown in the lava.

Either of these two methods is quite effective. Few who attempt escape from either lord live to speak of it.

#### Encounters

## O

viously the most common encounters in Mortua are undead. They span across the land from border to border in all forms. Skeletons, zombies, hecuvras, even dracolich and undead beholders are scattered about the wastelands. The chance of encountering such a being is about 30% during the day and 60% at night. This chance lessens by 20% in the winter, though at times lesser undead are found frozen where they stand. These undead, when defrosted will continue on their way as if nothing ever happened. An undead beholder and about 30 greater zombies guard the Mortuary itself.

There are two other encounters that are possible if one wanders the land enough. The first is Emmette and Senachren. Their constant hiding from Achren's servants make it necessary for them to travel all over Mortua. It's therefore a possibility that players may meet them. Should such a meeting happen there is usually no combat, unless the players seek to harm either of the two, at which time Senachren will summon all the undead in the area to attack

and Emmette will unleash his most powerful spells. Most likely the encounter will consist of Emmette trying to convince the player to help them in their fight against Achren.

The second of these unique encounters can barely be explained. There are three greater zombies wandering individually throughout Mortua. These three are under nobody's control and meet only rarely for purposes yet unclear. The most unusual feature of these zombies is that each one resembles one of the three of Achren's old companions, Daark, Zeb, and Dracon. They travel back and forth across Mortua on their own agenda. They have never been known to speak to anyone, and have never attacked anyone without being attacked first. If destroyed

# Damius

these zombies reform in an unknown location shortly after and continue on their trek. Achren is aware of these beings and seeks them out almost as earnestly as he seeks Senachren.

Other encounters include bears and wolves, and vast swarms of flies of all kinds.

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## W

here do dark thoughts most like to dwell? In the depths of the subconscious such things as few can imagine lurk, waiting for the moment when they can rear up and send their unsuspecting dreamer into the depths of the Demi-plane of Dread.

Damius was a town in which freedom and goodwill reigned. Who would have suspected it harbored such evil? Who would have guessed that, even as people lay themselves to rest for the evening, poison would spread throughout the kingdom... to condemn all who dwell within.

The Lord

## T

here is no true darklord in the small island of terror called Damius. This land, which was thrust into horror by its own people, has no one being to blame for their misfortune. Each and every soul native to this place is at fault, and so the lordship goes to them all.

You see Damius is ruled by dreams. The moment one walks in through its gates it becomes apparent. Strange occurrences become commonplace. An air of mysterious curiosity and tingles of chilling dread fill the mind and soul of travelers who visit. Danger begins to lurk around every corner, the innocent become fierce and the fierce... but phantoms screaming in the night.

When the town of Damius, which makes up the bulk of the island, rested in its home in a peaceful prime material world, the people who lived in its borders enjoyed such paradise as few could imagine. Taxes were light, holidays plenty. Crime and violence were unheard of and nothing brought more joy to the people than helping one another in times of need. It was heaven. But it could not last.

Like in all things, good cannot exist without evil. The people of Damius worked so hard at preserving their utopian lifestyle they became blind to what was happening to them. Slowly, for entertainment purposes first, dark thoughts began to surface in their minds. As someone who would laugh at a friend tripping a sadistic sense of humor spread about the land. It caught on quickly... the people desperate for an escape from their stifling peace. Soon it grew to an enjoyment of controlled violence. Then hunting. Soon wise hearts began to fear what they would become.

A fight against the growing evil became necessary, and King Amethon and his royal court took arms to the call. Laws were written forbidding these new pleasures, soldiers began patrolling the streets, and soon only mistrust and silent rebellion reigned. The people began to hate the King and his lofty ideals. They had found a pleasure in evil and wished no one to disturb it. They chose to fight. The King, desperate to squash this uprising and deluded by his own sadistic desires, ordered that anyone who took part in one of these illegal practices would be hung. The people responded by attacking the soldiers and starting a massive rebellion.

The first night of the rebellion the people laid siege to the castle of Damius. Soldiers inside began to devise ways of destroying this resistance. The peaceful life they all once knew was gone. In its place was a savage fight, bred from a peoples unwillingness to accept anything short of perfection of spirit, and a knowing that they could never succeed in that.

Then the first arrow was shot, out of tired boredom, from a guard on the tower. It flew straight and embedded itself in a small girl, not ten years in age. As she fell she used her last breath to curse her own people, swearing that all will fall as foolish dreamers, and never awaken until they attain the mutual peace they seek.

By morning the whole town was swept by a sleep deeper than death, and the mist rose to take Damius to its new home, among the islands of Ravenloft.

Since that time the town still lies in sleep. They dream a collective dream which has become corporeal and covers the entire town, reaching to the gates. No one knows how long they've been like this. They no longer age... sleeping motionless for eternity. Their world has become one of the mind, where anything they can think of becomes reality.

They have not yet come near their goal of peace. The peasants seek rebellion and sadistic violence, the soldiers and the King seek control and to squelch the desires of those in the town. Their dreams follow suit. The people use their dreams to play cruel jokes on those who would enter the wall of the town. These jokes can range from being annoying to being deadly, even torturous. Meanwhile the soldiers do their best to dream of barriers and horrors meant to rob visitors of their hope and stifle their imagination. Either is not an enjoyable fate.

A few among both groups have reached a certain truce, trying to end the little girls curse. They are few but do their best to further their cause. They use their dreams to help visitors in any way they can, in return for the visitor's aid in converting others. These rare benefactors are always in danger from their counterparts however. Both groups usually bombard those that are found out until they are driven mad. This can result in catastrophe for travelers.

## Appearance

# T

he people of Damius are an average looking group. They are neither physically weak nor exceptionally strong. The same holds true for the soldiers. The peasants wear light colored clothes, preferring tones of blue and lavender. The soldiers wear banded mail marked with a symbol of a blue dove. They tend towards brown hair and eyes and fair skin.

The most notable feature of the people of Damius is that they are asleep. None ever awaken, despite any punishment they take. They sleep so deeply that they can be moved, screamed at, beaten, or even burned without waking. They may only respond to situations with dreams, and that only to a limited degree (see below).

Since the sleep came upon them suddenly many can still be found going about day to day routines, riding horseback, pushing wagons, eating, whatever. The animals have also fallen asleep and will not awaken. If one wanders into the soldiers field in the castle courtyard one may find two soldiers in the midst of a practice joust, still on their horses, who apparently collapsed mid-run.

## Current Sketch

# N

ot much changes in Damius. The people still sleep and dream. Night and day still rise and fall. Even the ever-present wildness of the dream does not change the town permanently. Things still get old and fade. Bodies of the dead rot and metal rusts. Only the people seem untouched by this. However, once might not that even though decay grows throughout the town, the effects of decay never actually occur. Metal hinges never squeak, rotten food still provides nutrition without ill effect (as long as one is within the town walls), and the dead cannot be raised by necromancers. Everything just freezes as if they sleep.

Travelers who journey into the town notice nothing unusual until they enter the gates. Once they pass within though they are subject to the laws of the dream. Part of this is beneficial however. As long as one exists within the dream one cannot die of old age. Other things may still kill them but age will never again touch them until they exit the town, upon which they will continue on as if they never entered. But even this has its downfall, as will become apparent in coming sections.

There has been little progress toward ending the little girls curse. Most everyone in the town believes that the way to achieve the peace she spoke of is to get everyone to do things their way. This of course results in more violence and anger. The people who are aware of their plight do desire escape, but none yet have the willpower or the intelligence to do so. As such they go on in a never-ending nightmare, each trying to create their own utopia.

## The Land

# T

he town of Damius makes up the majority of the realm. Beyond its wall lies only a small area of sparsely forested wood, not a mile thick, which surrounds the town, ending at the mists. A single road leads up to the gate. There is a deathly silence over this area.

Once one steps beyond the iron gates one enters a new world, almost completely unaffected by the laws of reality. Though it's appearances seem that of a normal town, creatures, forces, and matter are all subject to spontaneous change at the whim of the dreamers.

The town centers around a single large road that extends from the gates to the main entrance to the castle. Side roads lead off to various dwellings and businesses and circle the back of the castle to the service entrance. The houses and most businesses are structured from wood and stand usually about two stories high. Military buildings are all made of stone and are found close to the castle or within its courtyard. Two large stone towers stand at the southeast and northwest corners of the town's 20-foot high outer wall. These originally served as watchtowers against outside intrusion, but the guards asleep within face the interior of the town, oblivious to the forest and south road.

The castle stands six stories high and is the dominant feature of the land. It has three towers which extend from its forward corners and the center of its back end. Flags once adorned many of the now empty expanses of wall, but these were torn down by the people of Damius and now lie scorched at the foot of the castle. Even the flags which fly from poles upon the towers are tattered to the point of being unrecognizable. The main gates are barred shut from both within and without, a curious standoff to say the least. The service entrance however is wide open, having been smashed in by some unknown force. The level of power involved in this damage is such that even the stones to which the hinges were attached have been broken free.

There is usually much of value within the town. The people of Damius were not poor and wealth and treasures can be found in their houses, businesses, and the castle itself. Other travelers have already taken much of this, but some remains untouched. Few wish to remain long to gather riches in this land as it is so obviously cursed. Many of the treasures to be found here are not what they seem, however. Many items are dreamed up by the people of Damius and, while being useful within the towns borders (as long as the dreamer wishes them to be useful), they quickly vanish if moved beyond the gates.

## The Folk

# T



hey are all asleep. This is their most primary feature. They awaken for nothing and no one. They are so entrenched in their dreams that their only knowledge of the world outside is through them. This has the affect of convincing all but the most enlightened of them that they are in fact not asleep. As dreams seem natural in our minds despite any break from reality, so is it with them. They live a constant nightmare of intertwining and mind-warping imaginations, all seeming to them as being the perfectly logical reality of life.

For the most part each individual in the town exists only in a kind of omniscient presence in a radius of about fifty feet from where they sleep. Beyond that they are forced to view the world through an imagined body, usually an idealized version of themselves. When in this limited perception they lose their awareness of the fifty foot area they sleep in and are hence more vulnerable. Due to this the people of Damius are rather territorial, or in the least... centralized, departing their safe-zones rarely. Though they have no awareness of their sleeping bodies they can and will defend them from any who seek to harm.

This defensive posture makes up the vast majority of the interaction with any visitor. Otherwise they only act as secondary minds to any strange creatures that they create, taking on whole different personalities in order to facilitate their own delusions. Mainly the dreamers are too caught up in their own Wonderland-like fantasies to even notice visitors. This changes quickly if the sleeping body is disturbed.

It is a rare occasion that players will ever speak directly to the people of Damius. This usually occurs only if a dreamer reaches his perception beyond the fifty-foot area, but can happen within. Should such a meeting take place the usual reaction of the dreamer will be fear, panic, and anger. They do not trust or tolerate outsiders, fearing that any intruder could be sent by the king as a spy, or vise versa, depending on which side of the debate the dreamer lies on. They are terribly difficult to speak to and are prone to screaming for help. Should one try to inform them of their curse they claim that it is all lies and instantly vanish back into their own domain.

The only two exceptions to this rule are the enlightened dreamers, and any sleeping visitors. The enlightened members of Damius have become aware of the curse and seek to rid themselves of it. They are eager to talk with waking persons and usually try to get help in convincing the others in town. These very few people however have sacrificed their dreamland in return for knowledge, existing only within ten feet of their bodies and unable to go beyond. They are also persecuted by the other dreamers and are forced to constantly guard their bodies from attack. This makes them rather paranoid and hinders clear communication.

Sleeping visitors, which will be discussed more later, are the other exception. Having wandered into Damius after the curse took effect they are usually aware of the plight of the land. Unfortunately they lingered too long and fell into the curse themselves. These beings are just as limited as the enlightened dreamers but are far more aggressive in their attempts at escape, trying to destroy as many other sleepers as possible. Communication with these being usually involves mournful wails of despair and eager requests that visitors help by destroying all sleepers within Damius' borders. Any who have discovered much about the nature of the curse will probably warn the players to flee the town, lest they will have their dreams added to the ongoing nightmare.

## The Law

# T

here is no real law in Damius which can be efficiently enforced. All the laws which formerly governed the land have become almost nonexistent since the onset of the curse. The people themselves follow only laws within their own areas, and feel any within those areas are subject to them. These laws can range from simply not killing, to defining how people are supposed to dress. Any who break the law are at the mercy of the dreamer who holds sway over that area. Punishment is usually not pleasant, as the minds of the people of Damius are filled to over-flowing with perverse tortures.

Within the castle and in areas controlled by sleeping guards there is a more stable law enforced. They still hold true to the king's decrees and hence only those who break the laws of the land are at risk. Aside from basic laws against theft and murder there exists the more recent and troublesome order, that any who participate in any form of violent, anti-social, perverse, or evil act can be immediately put to death. Enforcing these rules is left up the soldiers themselves, who often dream up garrisons and punishers to take care of the task. For minor discrepancies imprisonment is often a consequence. This is difficult to enforce since escorting a prisoner to the dungeon usually requires that the soldier remove his perception from its safe haven. Many dream up temporary cells within the area to keep offenders. Release from these prisons is usually rather difficult.

Confronting The Lord

# A

s there is no distinct Lord in Damius the details of facing him are naturally different. There is no one being which must be destroyed in order to rid the land of the horrible curse. There is no real list of stats to govern such an encounter. Rather, here is described two ways by which Damius may be freed from its plight.

The first is the aggressive approach. To accomplish this one must seek out each of the sleepers within the town's walls, and kill each and every one. Once these people are all slain the dream will collapse and Damius will be normal again, free from alterations upon reality.

This is not as easy as it sounds. No dreamer will allow himself to be simply destroyed. Using whatever means his mind can summon the sleeping victim will attack and destroy the perpetrator. This can range from monsters of any size and description throwing themselves in full rage upon the attacker, or summoning flames or voids of freezing emptiness. In any case the destruction of a dreamer is an unhealthy task, usually only accomplished by the greatest of warriors or wizards, or by ingenious trickery.

Each dreamer has the power to create matter and manipulate matter and creatures within his area of influence. Beyond it his power fades and players may rest in relative safety. The effects caused by dreamers are only temporary however. Changes to the structures indigenous to the town are false and are instantly repaired if the dreamer lets the image go or perishes himself. Creatures likewise vanish. Damage caused by these creatures or any forces at the dreamers command, however, is real and will not fade with the dream. For example: If a dreamer imagines a wall has been removed from a nearby house then that wall is indeed gone until such time as he releases the image or he dies. However, if that dreamer created a giant or a tornado which smashed through the wall, then that wall is really destroyed and will not return when the dream fades.

Beyond the difficulty of facing the forces of the almost godlike dreamers, there is yet another problem which can assault adventurers who seek to destroy the people of Damius, or even those who wait too long with the town's borders. Any who go to sleep within the walls of Damius will not awaken. They are instantly caught up in the curse and have their own minds connected to the dream. This goes for any who go to sleep naturally, or those who suffer from anything that would make them unconscious. This is the fate which befalls many of the travelers who come to Damius. Throughout the town the sleeping bodies of adventurers can be found, many in situations poised for battle against the destruction of the dreamer's creations. Sleep can only be found beyond the town's gates. Any who fail to sleep must make a constitution check -2 for every night they remain awake. Failure indicates collapsing from exhaustion. This penalty doubles for days when strenuous work has been done, such as battle.

The only other method for freeing Damius is to fulfill the little girl's curse and restore peace to Damius. In order to do this one must first convince everyone within the town to cease their attacks upon one another and attain enough of a truce that they will talk. Then steps can be taken to convince the people to form a reasonable compromise in their society. The peasants of Damius will not settle for having to give up their freedom to enjoy their various pleasures, and the government will not accept public violence and perversions as permissible acts. As such an agreement must be reached by where rules can be enforced restricting such acts, without removing the basic right to the free action of the people. This is no easy task and both sides will be most hesitant to accept any solution, having been fighting over this point for years. The difficulty is enormous and could take years of diplomacy.

All in all the more aggressive method is probably the most efficient, but such an act of utter evil would no doubt cast any who attempt it into the eyes of the Powers of Ravenloft.

Note: The section detailing the method of closing the borders is not necessary in this case. The borders of Damius do not close.

## Encounters

# E

ncounters in Damius are more varied than almost anywhere in the multi-verse. Strange creatures are exceptionally commonplace here and new forms of creatures, both evil and benevolent, are frequent. All lies within the imagination of the dreamers, and hence anything their imaginations can grasp can and will appear in Damius.

In game terms, the GM can reasonably place any creature, trap, structure, natural, or unnatural force within the setting. Even things not suited to the environment are possibilities. Whales can be dreamed up swimming half buried in the gravel, and deadly spike traps can close in on characters out in the open air, with no sign of pulleys or gears controlling such machines. GM's are greatly encouraged to let their imaginations run wild. This is a great opportunity to try out newly created beasts, or try silly comedic encounters reminiscent of Lewis Carol's "Through the Looking Glass". All is possible.

Rules governing this are simple. Nothing generated from dreams can extend outside of the town walls or beyond the fifty-foot radius surrounding the body of the dreamer in question. Also no more than five man sized creatures or objects can be created at any one time. Any creature or object too large to fit within the predetermined confines cannot be created. Finally, any thing created cannot severely alter the general form of the town. The outer walls cannot be moved or even damaged by the dreamers, and buildings cannot be obliterated by anything they summon. Damage may be done to the buildings, to a very large extent, but the foundation will always remain to show where structures were.

The only real encounters possible in Damius are the slim possibilities of meeting with another travelling

# THE CARRION SEA

party, or being attacked by the various molds that have begun to form on the rotting food stocks of the town. These molds, as well as several other creatures (such as undead) which may wander in from time to time, do not sleep and are therefore unaffected by the curse.

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## W

ho has never dreamed of treasure-hunting on the high-seas, with pirates and cannon and ships with sails like the clouds. We have long held a fascination with the age of buccaneers and swashbuckling adventurers, and of course with the fabled pirate treasure that looms over the hearts of all who hear of it, bestowing desire like a hurricane. This is the essence of The Carrion Sea, a place where only he with the fastest ship and sharpest cutlass can survive.

## The Lord

## T

he Lord of The Carrion Sea is one Mr. Giles Christian, former first mate of the pirate ship Seaman Juliet. Christian was a man of great trust, giving his carefully and striving hard to acquire others. Such it was that he earned the trust of his captain, the fierce Captain James West. West took Christian as a cabin boy when he was only 15. Christian served well, and before long became invaluable to his captain. He was promoted to first mate at the age of 23, and remained in that post for a further fifteen year. He befriended all who served in the crew, and was quick to find and eliminate any who would mutiny. Together he and Captain West became feared through the waters of their home, and few ships ever failed to relinquish their treasure upon the Seaman Juliet's approach.

It was in Mr. Christian's 38th year that he fell from grace. Captain West, a man of 55 years, was growing weary of the sea and wished to retire and spend his remaining years in peace. But being so wanted as he was, he could not do so easily. Treasure, the likes of which he had gathered would not go unnoticed no matter where he

settled with it. He made plans with Christian to hide the treasure and make sure no one would find it until West was ready to retrieve it himself, after the authorities forgot him.

Their scheme was simple, the Captain and a few men would go ashore and bury the treasure, leaving Christian to mind the ship. Once the treasure was hidden well West would kill the crewmen and return to the ship with the only map. Once they were away from the island, West would hand the ship over to Christian and be put off at his chosen destination. Sadly, things would not go so well.

Waiting aboard the Seaman Juliet Christian began to have dark thought arise in him. Voices, almost ethereal came to him and tempted him, igniting his greed. Soon he could no longer stand the struggle within and gave himself fully to his desire for West's riches, riches he himself had a part in acquiring. He waited until his captain returned and then struck with a fury that surprised even him. Startled by his trusted mate's treachery West was unprepared for the blade which cut his side. He fell under a single blow, bleeding to death on the deck. But as he lay dying he swore Christian would never possess the treasure, nor would he ever again leave this island. He then used his last ounce of strength to fire his pistol at the barrels of gunpowder by the cannons. In a deafening explosion the Seaman Juliet was destroyed, taking it's Captain and the map to the treasure with it. Giles Christian was thrown clear, suffering only from a shattered arm that never was able to be used again.

Christian continued to live upon the island with no name ever since. He searches, day after day, for the place where the treasure was buried, driven by a force of greed far beyond even his own comprehension. Every day he collapses in defeat, his only company the mocking voices of his own desire. The quest has driven him quite mad.

## Appearance

# T

he years have not been kind to Giles Christian. His face is weatherworn and parched, his hair a mess of tangles in dusty browns and grays, and his clothes suffer from many tears and stains from living so long on an island with no supplies. His body is skinny to the point of starvation, though there is much on the island to eat, and his right arm lies lifeless at his side.

This is not to say his is old and weak, by no means. Christian is a man of almost inhuman strength and agility, fired by the madness within him. His only physical difficulty, aside from his arm, is his endurance. As he has aged he has grown to become very tired. He cannot sustain any hard labor for more than a few minutes. The only exception to this is the search for the treasure, and protecting it from those who come to the island. In these two things his greed propel him, despite his fatigue, and hence he lives in a constant state of exhaustion, collapsing at sundown every day, which accounts for much of his mental condition.

The only real life to be seen in Christian is his eyes. The burn with a desire unmatched in this world. His eyes are so strong it can even infect those who dare to gaze into them.

## Current Sketch

# C

hristian continues his daily search for the treasure, covering the island time and time again, hoping to discover something he missed. His exhaustion fills him to insanity and he frequently finds a desire to equal he greed in rest. But the dark powers of Ravenloft will have no mercy upon him. When his need for rest brings him to the point of salvation they bring him back into the fold with a desire even stronger than before.

From time to time, in the other areas of the Carrion Sea, a map arises, a map to the island of no name, and the treasure within. It finds it's way about, through treachery and weakness, until it falls into the hands of one strong enough to keep it from all those who covet. The person then proceeds to get a ship and hunt for the treasure, no matter what the cost. They are filled with a desire almost as great as that of Giles Christian. Any who stand in the way soon perish.

Once he reaches the lost island he will seek out the treasure, invariably finding Christian in the process. Christian, fearful of the theft of his unfound treasure, and desirous for the map and a way off the island, will attack

with incredible fury, slaying all who dare to step foot on the shore. Unerringly in these battles, however, both map and ship are lost, leaving Christian alone again, with his desire restoked. And so the powers of Ravenloft keep their prize in place.

## The Land

# T

he Carrion Sea lies just south of the Sea of Sorrows, possessing no coastline against the Lands of the Core. It consists of a body of water approximately equal to that of the before mentioned Sea of Sorrows and about three large islands. It is also littered with an endless score of small islands, only a few of which have been charted.

The three islands are named Argos, Tempest Island, and Canian's Bow. They lie in the center of the Carrion Sea, about a day's voyage from each other. Upon them are the only large settlements in the entire sea, but are but a 3rd of the entire population therein. The other two thirds exist scattered about on the smaller islands..

The largest of the three, Tempest Island, is regularly hit by hurricanes, making existence there very difficult. On this island is the smallest town in the trio of islands. Named Tidal Post for its strength against the constant bombardment of storms, it has a population of about 100, primarily fisherman. The waters around Tempest Island are filled with fish, giving those who chose to live in such conditions a good living, however farmland and trees are nonexistent here so much trading is done with the other two islands.

Argos, a forested island south of Tempest, is well known for shipbuilding. It is the richest and most populated island, possessing two large settlements on the east and west coasts: Carrion City; population 500, which gets its name from the Sea, and Jason's Bay; population 350 which is where ships are built and put to sea by the master craftsmen of Carrion Sea. Both towns are well constructed and enjoy a high standard of living.

Canian's Bow is the smallest of the three islands, making its living from the sea and the land. It is named for a peculiar rock formation on its northern peninsula, which juts out fifty feet above the water in a long smooth curve, like the bow of a ship. Canian's Bow has only one small town of 175 people. Named Mephisto's Face it appears as just a thrown together mass of shacks and platforms against the western cliffs. Ships dock here from all over the Carrion Sea, making trade the primary income to the island.

The smaller islands scattered throughout the sea are as varied as they come. Some are populated, others have not even been set foot on. Cannibalistic savages who do not take kindly to visitors inhabit some. In any case, there is such a variety among them that a man could sail his whole life and not even find them all, let alone experience them. Most of the civilized islands lie close to the three large islands. As one ventures further out the islands become less and less friendly or inhabited. Each holds its own secrets and dangers, and one could even by chance stumble onto the nameless island the Giles Christian calls home.

The sea itself is surprisingly blue for a dark realm of Ravenloft. The sky is usually clear and the air is as healthy as could be asked. But even in this glorious beauty of the sea there is danger. Hurricanes rise up at a moment's notice, destroying all in their path. Winds die off suddenly, leaving ships adrift for weeks in the blazing heat. All manner of creatures of the deep lurk about the waters, waiting to strike passing ships. And perhaps worst of all, pirates roam these waters constantly looking for ripe prey. An unprepared ship could soon find itself at the bottom of the sea from a moment with any of these threats.

## The Folk

# M

ost of the people who live in the Carrion Sea are a rough and hearty sort. Life on the treacherous water has forged them into hardened fighters, protecting what's theirs with unsurpassed stubbornness and striving to increase their holding with almost as great a passion.

Most are not people of vision. They work for their livelihood, trying to make the best life they can from their resources. They hold no real dreams of riches and power, feeling energy wasted on such thought be put to better use in more realizable notions. Those few who do show ambition usually end up leaving the Sea and seeking their fortune somewhere else, or otherwise become pirates to steal wealth and power. Very few actually gain any kind of great existence on the islands. Those who do usually serve the Governor.

The people of the Carrion Sea are also very superstitious. Most fiercely believe in the dark magics of the savage islanders throughout the Sea. To protect themselves they often adorn their houses with protective herbs, markings, or lucky objects. They also are great storytellers, spinning yarns about any number of heroes and villains, most tragedies. In fact the tale of Giles Christian is a favorite, drawing crowds of children around the old men who tell it. However, this particular tale is feared as well, and it is considered to be incredibly bad luck to speak it, or even make mention of the characters, on board a boat.

## The Law

# G

overnor Wallace Stilborn is the current leader of the civilized folk in the Carrion Sea. His office is based in Carrion City and it is from here he commands his armada against invasions and pirate attacks.

Under Stilborn are a collection of officers responsible for the various towns and islands. These officers enforce local laws and organized guards and militia to keep peace. Most are corrupt, taking protection money from civilians to ensure their safety. The people don't like this, but several attempts at gathering support to replace the officers and Governor Stilborn have failed, and hence people just accept the corruption as a part of life. In return they help the lawmen as little as possible, even hindering them at times.

The captains and admirals in the armada report only to Governor Stilborn. They attack any pirate ship on sight and actively patrol the waters seeking them. Any ship they encounter is flagged for boarding and official sailing documents must be presented or both ship and cargo are impounded.

In actual fact this is all part of Stilborn's plans for riches. He enjoys kickback from his corrupt officers but wishes greater wealth, such as a king. As such he has given order to the fleet to take great freedom in applying his laws, giving him a frequent influx of goods from even innocent ships. None ever try to claim what he takes. He has heard of the treasure on the nameless island and actively seeks a map to the hidden place.

Giles Christian is little more than a legend to the people. He holds no sway over them and is not involved at all in government.

## Confronting The Lord

# G

iles Christian,  
(16th Level Thief), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	6	Str	18
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/Hit Dice	16	Con	7
Hit Points	53	Int	12
THACO	12	Wis	11
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	5
Damage/Attack	By weapon		

Special Attacks None  
Special Defenses None  
Magic Resist. Nil

Giles Christian is, to say the least, obsessive. He is so possessed with desire for the treasure of Captain West he has lost sight of all else. When encountered his first instinct is to kill the intruder lest it find and steal the treasure. He will act on this without question trying to kill his opponent as quickly and completely as possible.

If he suffers too much in a fight he will retreat to heal and rest. He does not give up however, and will resort to using backstabs, ambushes, and traps to do the job.

Somewhere inside him he still desires only to get off the island. He knows that visitors are the key to that end, but his obsession with the treasure will not allow him to leave without it, and in the end neither goal is possible. Battle with Giles Christian invariably destroys the map and any method to get off the island.

Giles can be killed easily, as compared to some lords. It is for this reason that he uses his covert techniques, trying to stay out of sight as much as possible. Still the powers of Ravenloft do not want him to die and have given him a refuge near the center of the island. There, hidden high in a tree, grows a fruit that heals wounds. Christian will go there to heal any damage he takes. As such only by capturing him can anyone hope to kill him.

If he is killed then whoever killed him will inherit his obsession and take his place. Through this the cycle will go on. If he is removed from the island he will strive eternally to go back, unable to leave his beloved treasure. The powers will always aid him in this, making his escape and return possible.

The only way to end Christian's torture and end the cycle is for one who has the desire for the treasure to willingly destroy the map himself. This can only happen after vast loss is placed upon the subject. He must possess nothing, and have lost all that he cares about, even his soul, before it can outshine the desire for the treasure. Christian could do it, but much of his desire is his own, not magically bestowed, and he will not.

The treasure itself cannot be found without the map, which always perishes on the island. This is an influence the powers have that cannot be altered. The treasure must never be found.

## Closing The Borders

# G

Giles Christian is unaware that he is the lord of the Carrion Sea. He does not even know he is in Ravenloft. As such he cannot close the borders nor would he have any desire to. His world is that island. All he desires is there.

## Encounters

# T

There is an almost limitless number of encounters possible in the Carrion Sea, both on land and sea. Pirates abound, as well as Stilborn's corrupt ships. Sea creatures attack almost anything on the water, and creatures of the air do the same. And cannibals with dark magic seek to destroy visitors to their islands. There is little time to rest in this fierce realm.

Almost any ocean creature is available for an encounter. Pirates are usually 2nd-4th level Fighter/Thieves, and the armada consists of 3rd level Fighters. Average cannibals are 1st-4th level Magic-user Fighters.

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# Cacophony

## M

usic is enlightenment of the soul. A rapture in sound that stems from the very being of life. He who listens to a bard's melody can often find a respite from the horrors of the world. However, as music can lift the soul... so can it condemn it. The mountainous lands of Cacophony are a tribute to this dark side. Here music is feared, and those who play it dubbed servants of evil. Here only one song is heard... one instrument played... that of the Darklord.

### The Lord

## I

n years past the kingdom of the Cacophony Mountains held no profession higher than that of the bard. Musicians of every kind lived and worked and flourished here. The valleys echoed with the beauty of their songs, and theatres of immense grandeur were host to the most spectacular operas and symphonies any had ever heard. All who lived among these shining peaks and lush valleys did so with a heart of joyous melodies. But that was before Belladonna Von Croft.

She was the child of two of Cacophony's finest bards. Even before she could walk she showed immense talent for music and art, amazing both her parents and their fellow bards with her skill. The two bards began to train her to become the finest musician in the world. By the time she was ten she was the equal of any master in the land, her music stirring feeling and power like no other. The entire kingdom celebrated this incredible prodigy, a living symbol of their joy.

But there was something wrong, unknown to all but Belladonna. Though her music was masterful, bringing joy to all who heard it, somehow she had lost her own feeling in it. What to others was the most wonderful sound ever played by man or god, to Belladonna was no more than a jumble of notes on paper. She held no joy... no feeling at all in her music, and the more she wrote and played, the emptier the sounds were to her.

Still, Belladonna kept her feelings hidden from others. She did not want to deprive her people, who had loved her so, of their icon. She played for them in their theatres, and wrote symphonies of unsurpassed wonder. And she never told anyone about her unending emptiness.

This lasted until Belladonna was 25 years of age. It was then that her loving parents died, slain by a fierce mountain cat. Belladonna immediately set to work, writing a ballad for their funeral. She finished in amazing time, and was ready to play in the chapel, before the pyre that would consume her parent's bodies. She played... played before the entire kingdom... played with such precision, such perfection, that by the end even the stones had faces wet with tears. All but her.

That night she went alone to the Hall of Song, the largest theater in the kingdom. There she put her hands to the instruments of her trade and played. She played everything... from simple folk tunes to illustrious symphonies and concertos. She played all night, never stopping for even a moment, except to switch instruments. By dawn she lay exhausted on the floor, a wreck of passionless music.

Then an old man, the caretaker, entered and went to see what had happened. He went to her and asked if she was all right... was there anything he could do. He bent to take the violin from her wearied hand when a string snapped. The thin wire lashed him across the face, leaving a line of blood across his cheek. He let out a quick shout of pain and surprise... and something then happened.

Something stirred in Belladonna... something unfamiliar. She looked up at the man's face, pondering. What was it? Hunger... weariness? No... something more. Something about the sound she had just heard... it did something. Then she knew. It had summoned emotion. Shocked, she could barely contain her composure. She had to know for sure. She stood, the old man turning to wipe his face and apologizing for damaging the instrument. She lifted the violin, holding gently beside his head. Startled he turned. In a quick flash of movement she sliced the violin across his face, the wires whistling as they cut three clean lines over his eyes and nose. A screams of pain left the old



mans lips, and in that moment she knew it to be true... she had found emotion... and that emotion was hate. It was stirred up not by the beauty of the songs of Cacophony... but by the screams of agony in he people who lived here.

Dark thoughts swam through Belladonna's mind and heart for the rest of that day, torturing the poor caretaker with the instruments of music. His hands, lashed in the stings of a harp held him fast, as she brought down all manner of musical equipment upon him... striving for new, more stirring sounds. She thirsted... and this day she would begin to quench that thirst.

She worked until midnight, when the man finally died of blood loss and she collapsed into sleep. When morning came she, and the entire kingdom of Cacophony had found Ravenloft. And, as a gift from the powers, Belladonna found, upon the stage of the theatre, an enormous pipe organ, linked to an elaborate rack torture device. Now she had all she needed to make up for her years of passionless perfection.

# Appearance

## B

elladonna Von Croft now looks to be in her late forties. This has never been substantiated because, for reason later explained, no one in Cacophony can remember when she was younger.

She stands about 5'7", and is of a slender, yet stout build. Her black hair is graying, but is usually powdered anyway. Her dark eyes always seem lifeless when she is not playing her music, and her hands are very callused. Her main form of dress is that of the late Victorian age, but her dresses tend to reek of mildew.

### Current Sketch

## I

n fact only five years have passed since Cacophony came to be one of Ravenloft's Islands of Terror. Shortly after discovering the power in her new form of music, Belladonna used it to alter everyone's memory, making herself ruler and outlawing music (other than her own) in all forms.

She herself has not held up very well in the arms of Ravenloft. Her new source of power and passion has aged her well beyond her years and spreads that effect to anything she touches, including her instruments and clothing. This only increases her desire for the dark emotions her musical torture brings.

She rules from The Hall of Song (which she renamed The Hall of The Song), atop one of the lower peaks of Cacophony. From here she governs with an iron fist. The people know only not to disobey her... never understanding what exactly gives her power over them.

Music is, as said, forbidden. Belladonna has grown to hate all music aside from her own torturous melodies. Free bards are killed instantly, and those that were in Cacophony at the time of Belladonna's take over are her captured subjects for her tortures.

The only things Belladonna has no power over, and therefore fears the most, are the mountain cats. They roam outside of her rule, constantly stalking her and any who serve her. Belladonna often orders hunters to kill any cat they encounter, bringing their carcasses back to the Hall.

### The Land

# T

he mountains of Cacophony are one of the most astounding sites in all of Ravenloft. The rise with an awe and majesty almost unequaled anywhere. Their peaks shine with an ever-present snow, set among the clouds like fogged silver. They stretch east west across the realm, making up the vast majority of the landmass.

An almost unnumbered amount of trails and roads lead back and forth throughout the mountains, made by travelers and hunters. Tunnels are occasionally cut straight through the mountainsides to ease travel, but these are frequently the homes of families of mountain cats.

The main river that flows through the mountains, and is fed by them, is called the Minstrel's Tearfall, a reminder of the loss of music. It begins high in the west end of Cacophony and travels east through the valley. It is fed by numerous tributaries and it floods once a year in the spring thaw.

The Mists border the entire realm, reaching even up into the high peaks. Hunters and peasants fear to go into these areas of eerie mystery, thinking that it hides the realm of the devil himself. Any who come to Cacophony from the mists are looked at with great suspicion.

The valleys are where the majority of the people live. These lush, green lands are the settings for a few well producing crops of wheat and potatoes. The few trees are well taken care of and are the natural playgrounds of the children. Mines open up at the foot of the mountains, producing iron ore which is forged in local towns into fine crafts.

There are five towns within the borders of Mists. The largest, and closest to the Hall of The Song, is named Calistia, and holds a population of a few thousand. Calistia mirrors the mountains about it with towering buildings of stone and iron, reaching to the sky. It's people are mainly miners and blacksmiths, working the ore from the nearby mines. The Hall sit further up the mountain, about half a days hike. Formerly small taverns along the trail made the journey easier on those who attended the performances, but these lie in ruin now.

The other towns are Isonhill and Burdon, farming villages in the valley, with a population of about a thousand each, and the mining towns of Ironbane, Broken Falls, and Silmanton, with a population ranging from 500 to 1500. Other small villages lay scattered about, but these usually consist of only a few mining or farming families trying to pioneer new territory.

## The Folk

# L

ife is surprisingly good for the people of Cacophony, despite their oppressive and demented ruler. They are productive and happy, caring little about anything Belladonna does as long as it does not affect them. Unfortunately this is not so much a pleasantry of her rule as an influence the people aren't aware of.

Shortly after discovering the powers that her new music form gave her, Belladonna used it to manipulate the memories of the people of Cacophony. As a result, as far as anyone can remember, Belladonna has always been ruler of Cacophony, and music has always been forbidden. Now the peasant folk of Cacophony go about their lives, having forgotten what once brought them the most joy. They ask no questions when Belladonna enforces laws, nor do they wonder about the disappearance of criminals.

This memory loss fades under two circumstances. The first is the hearing of Belladonna's music. Occasionally, when she is particularly enraptured in her music, the sounds echo out of the Hall and throughout the mountains, faintly touching on every ear in the realm. At this time they begin to remember the horrors that she inflicted upon them, what she has done, and what she still does today. The memory stirs up anger in the populace and for a time after (a few days) she is looked down upon and hated.

The other circumstance is the hearing of other music. When songs of real beauty are heard they break through the fog Belladonna has placed in their minds and find the memories of the long lost times of joy and happiness, brought on by music. This memory is far worse to the people, as they only remember the good times and not how they lost them. They invariably begin blaming themselves for its loss, falling into deep melancholia for weeks.

The people are otherwise more or less ignorant of their lord. The few times she comes into town she is simply a powerful and mysterious visitor. And when she goes she is gossiped about and soon forgotten again. They're only real association with her is to deliver criminals, taxes, and supplies to her Hall.

With this naivete about Belladonna's evil rulership, the people are as a result, much more normal than most in Ravenloft. They are friendly to one another, raise families, and feel free to roam the countryside at night (unless there has been a recent cat attack). They are genuinely suspicious of strangers from the Mists, believing such to be demons from Hell. However, any kind gesture or openly friendly attitude is met with the same.

Most people here are farmers or miners, with a number of fine blacksmiths. They are therefore very down to earth types. They have a great sense of responsibility to themselves, their families, and their fellow countrymen, and also are quick to enjoy a rest from daily routine.

They appear as a stocky race, with ruddy features and brown hair. More akin to dwarves than humans, the people of Cacophony frequently wear beards and braid their hair. Clothing is usually in brown and green, made from thick, tough material, usually baggy.

## The Law

L

aw in Cacophony is no laughing matter. Nor is it a great concern to the people who obey it. So efficient is the militia employed by Belladonna that the people of Cacophony frequently have no idea there is one. This is, of course to Belladonna's advantage. The less her people know about what happens to criminals, the better.

The militia, usually made up of 2nd level fighters, are plain-clothes men serving under an officer, who doubles as the town tax collector. These unadorned soldiers are under constant orders to be undercover, trying to get involved in every illegal activity in the realm. Once the crime is committed they reveal themselves and take the criminal in. Militia are prevented from switching sides by a constant watch upon their actions, made by Belladonna's elite guardsmen. These are usually 5th level fighters and have but one duty... to catch traitorous militia. It works. Militia not involved in organized criminal activity roam the streets, watching for petty crimes and misdemeanors.

All crimes, no matter how small are punished the same way. Prisoners, without trial, are delivered to the Hall of the Song where Belladonna uses them in her dark music, torturing them to the point of madness. She takes care not to kill her subjects, as criminals are increasingly hard to find. Therefore she usually has a dungeon full of maddened criminals, each taking turns in her instrument of torture and music.

There are only two crimes which depart from the previous rule. Participating in the performance or creation of music is a great crime to Belladonna, who has grown to hate all but her own brand of song. The punishment for this is to be forced to listen to Belladonna's music for ten full nights. After which the subject is killed, and his body used to restring her instruments. The criminal's soul is then trapped in that instrument, and his screaming can be heard every time it is played.

The other crime is to be a bard. When Belladonna first came to discover her power, she gathered all the bards and used them as the subjects of her tortures. It was the screams of bards that wiped the peasant's memories. Now, whenever one is found they are taken to the Hall of The Song, where they are taught Belladonna's music. The experience unerringly drives them mad with the same passions that she possesses. They are then released. They immediately run for the mists, taking with them Belladonna Von Croft's evil song into another land.

# Confronting the Lord

# B

Belladonna Von Croft  
(15th Level Bard), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	7	Str	10
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/Hit Dice	15	Con	9
Hit Points	50	Int	13
THACO	13	Wis	17
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	15
Damage/Attack	Nil		
Special Attacks	Musical effects		
Special Defenses	Musical effects		
Magic Resist.	50%		

Belladonna Von Croft is not a being of battle and hence avoids such confrontations at all costs. Her main method of eliminating foes is to deceive them or manipulate them into causing their own demise. Should this not work she has her guards deal with the enemy. Only when all else fails does she make herself available to fight. Doing so places her at great physical risk, as she can fall easily at the point of a blade, but she is not without defenses.

Her method of attack is one of music. The same powers she uses on a large scale to control and punish her people and prisoners can be equally effective against any forward threats. She always carries one or more musical instruments with her. Using these she is able to summon her power and do battle magically. Only if these are eliminated is she truly helpless. A list of the effects her music can cause is below.

Killing Belladonna is relatively simple once her defenses are breached. She dies as any human, with no significant resistance to any attack. Of course this does not mean the end of Belladonna Von Croft. Ravenloft would never make it so easy to dispose of a darklord. Belladonna's resurrection lies in her music. Once she dies a magical paper will appear, marked with notes of what appears to be a beautiful ballad. It is in fact the same song written for Belladonna's parents. Should this song ever be played Belladonna will reappear to reclaim her lordship.

There are two ways in which she can truly be defeated. The first is a battle of music. This can only be undertaken by the greatest of Bards. A song must be played to Belladonna of such incredible beauty that it will summon good emotions in her, driving the wickedness from her heart and freeing her from her curse. The other method is simpler, but one which she has made great preparation against. She can be killed by the mountain cats. No spell or special weapon is needed. No circumstance makes it possible. At any time, should Belladonna be set upon by a mountain cat, she will die. Only when she truly dies will the people of Cacophony regain their memories and their music.

## Belladonna's Musical Effects

Belladonna can use her music to perform any spell from the Enchantment/Charm school once each per day. She casts them as an 18th level wizard. She also possesses the power to alter the memories of anyone who has been within the Cacophonian border for more than three months.

Her ability to play music that can drive people mad is not a supernatural power... just a skill she has acquired. Most of this form of music is caused by torturing someone (perhaps the listener) using her pipe organ or another altered musical device. It can also be caused by normal instruments played by Belladonna's hand, but without a subject being tortured within the music it is not as effective. All who listen to this music, or are a subject within it, must make a Save Vs Paralyzation at the following penalties:

Listeners	-2
Subjects	-5
Natural Music (no torture involved)	-1

# Closing the borders

## W

hen Belladonna Von Croft wishes her borders closed they seal in a manner like no other. She plays a song upon her pipe organ... sacrificing a life as she does. The music echoes out of the Hall of The Song and throughout all of Cacophony. The music is so loud that nothing can block it out, as if it is played in the minds of the listeners. All who hear it double over in pain, unable to move, including the innocent peasants of Cacophony. The closer one is to the border, the worse the agony. The pain lasts until Belladonna wishes it to cease, and never before she finds whomever it is trying to leave her realm. When at last the music and agony stop, all memory of it is wiped from the minds of the listeners, save those she wishes to keep it. Most who try to leave her realm never try again... thoughts of the terrible pain holding them like chains to the mountains.

### Encounters

## M

onsters, such as dragons and the like, are rare in the mountains of Cacophony. Normal animals, however, are numerous and troublesome to the local people. Mountain cats and bears regularly invade outlying farmland and only the efforts of Belladonna's hunters keeps them at bay. Most will not enter the towns, but instead will settle for those who stray from the well-trodden paths among the hills and mountains.

Human encounters are even less likely. Bandits are a rarity on even the roads distant from the Hall. Troublemakers and thieves are scarce, and there are practically no intelligent enemies, such as orcs and trolls, to speak of. Most human encounters will probably occur if the players themselves make trouble in the land. NPC's usually can't be trusted here and are almost certainly members of the militia. Therefore any illegal activity the characters undertake will place the militia on their heels almost immediately, will Belladonna's tortures not far behind.

All this is not to say there are no unique or monstrous encounters possible. Where there are mountains there are no doubt mountain monsters to terrorize villages, and evil beings able to harm the public without Belladonna's notice. Players can have many adventures against such things without stepping on Belladonna's toes, and she will gladly let them. However, it should always be clear to the dungeon master that Belladonna watches everything that occurs in her realm. If a player character steps out of line and does something to disrupt the easy flow of life in Cacophony, no matter what the purpose, she will inflict her justice. Below is a short listing of usual encounters.

Militia (2nd Level Fighters)  
Elite Guardsmen (5th Level Fighters)  
Common or Large Vats

Mountain Lions  
Cave and Brown Bears  
Giant and Wild Eagles

# THE LOST MISTS

1998

I

t has been theorized that whatever powers rule over Ravenloft have some goal in mind. They have a purpose they are trying to achieve by grouping together these darklords and those they rule over. If this is so then it stands to reason that there are elements in this complex, living equation that were not taken into account... wild cards that somehow ended up here. It is this idea from which stem the idea for the Lost Mists. Here is the realm of the forgotten... the unknown... the wild cards.

The Lord

T

he Powers of Ravenloft have created this land, if a land it truly be, as a storage place for the flotsam and jetsam that have floated their way into the Dark Domains unbidden. Those that are not required for any purpose or scheme always end up here, where they can have no impact on the rest of the realms. They are left in this cruel and empty waste to fend for themselves, having no meaning to the equation. The Powers have no interest in these people, and hence make no move to support any one lord over them.

Lordship is fickle here. It is given by right of strength. Whoever can take the office and hold it is the Darklord in the eyes of the people. This remains until another comes to challenge the place, or something occurs, a fatal error, that brings down the Darklord, leaving the space open. Anyone can claim it, be they a great general or a lowly outcast, it's all a matter of who has the wits to take the opportunities.

Most lords gain their power by offering and granting some form of civilization to the people. Left in this desolate land they yearn for order and will readily accept any who will give it to them. Those who do so frequently bring throngs of people to live about them, forming shantytowns struggling to prosper. The lordship tends to center around some ideal that appeals to the populace, be it goodness, commerce, or war. From there things just seem to take on a life of their own. But within a few years the lofty ideals will be forgotten, the people will grow weary of trying to prosper under the new lord, and he will fall. Within a month after the people leave there is but a hollow of a town, half covered in dust.

The rulers who actually do prosper and keep the peoples interest are few and far between. They frequently manage to avoid hostile takeovers from upstarts, and adapt to new conditions rapidly. It is perhaps these lords that are the most tragic. Sooner or later they themselves grow weary in their post, longing for it to end. These are men who would have been true kings in whatever land they hail from, but here can only rule a small gathering of unkempt misfits. It is the realization of this fact that tears down at the structure of the lordship and lays ruin to it. There has never been a lord in this land that lasted more than ten years.

Current Sketch

T

he Lost Mists have never changed, and probably never will. The empty horizon and death soaked land are all that can be expected and hoped for by the people within. It is because of this they place all their dreams on a new lord every few years. And every few years they are let down again.

Most people here latch onto the lord and try to stay near to whatever town has arisen around him. There are those that are wiser though, who simply wander from place to place, surviving without hope, and for the most part finding more than they would otherwise.

Everyday more people wander into the Mists to end up here. Everyday more people die, from starvation, thirst, hate, or just plain hopelessness. This is a place where the dead are the lucky ones, and to escape, even into another one of the cruel realms of Ravenloft, is like heaven.

## The Land

# T

here are few words to describe the look of the Lost Mists. It is almost a desert, but like it's on some other planet. The air is hot and filled with dust and smoke. The land is baked to a cracked rock hardness by the unseen sun in some places, in others it is covered by vast dunes of powder-like sand. The sky is sometimes red or gray, but is usually just a pale, smoky brown.

Gazing upon the horizon one can see no distant mountains or great oceans, just the continued endless wastes. Water is scarce here and is usually only found by digging deep wells to pump up the putrid moisture from the bowels of the earth. Those few places, mainly among the Land Rips, that actually have a stream or small river flowing through them are difficult to get to, and even harder to live in. Even these precious oases do not last for very long, disappearing whenever the land changes.

As little water as there is there are even fewer plants. Those that do grow are poisonous or covered in razor-like thorns. People here are forced to live off of whatever meat they can find, for there is little else to sustain them.

Travel is undertaken by few. There are no roads to lead the way, nor are there any stars to navigate by. Compasses fail to give reading here and only those with a good sense of direction manage to avoid walking in circles. Those that do dare to walk the distances are known as Wanderers. Only they know the few permanent landmarks in the Lost Mists, and only they can survive in the deserts.

Finally, there are the changes. The landmass that is the Lost Mists is not definite. There are no absolute borders and no one has ever walked far enough to find the Mists at the edge of the land. Every night, the moment darkness covers the land, the Mists of Ravenloft close in from the distant horizon. Visibility is almost non-existent, and sounds are mingled with cries of terror, sadness, and agony. This remains until morning, when the light arises again. Those who know what to look for immediately spot the differences. The land changes during the night. Features adjust, appear suddenly, or vanish from view. An area that was once a mass of hills could now stand as an empty plain. A blessed river may replace Cliffs that once towered into the sky. Anything is possible, and you may not wake up where you fell asleep.

Some believe this is part of the plan of placing the unwanted here. Ravenloft, just as it takes and uses people and monsters, takes and uses lands for whatever dark purpose. Since it is possible it may find people who do not belong in the Dark Domains, so is it possible it finds land as well. And all goes to rest in the Lost Mists.

As was said before, there are, however, permanent landmarks to those who know of them. The lands adjust around them, and sometimes they themselves undergo minor alterations, but they are always there, and are a haven for Wanderers who wish to keep their bearings. These places are few but too many to list here so I shall only give the main ones.

The Civilized Lands are a name given by the Wanderers to the area where towns are formed. It is about the size of a large island and neither "civilized folk" nor Darklord journey beyond them. This place is littered with the remains of towns, plundered by the populace or other scavengers before they moved on.

The Land Rips is the term given to the area of the Lost Mists permanently scarred by vast mazes of canyons. Here is also the area with the greatest water supply. Wanderers adore this place as a utopia. Unfortunately it is only such a paradise for those who can survive it. For although it is the most fertile and pleasant land, it is also the one with the highest population of monsters. Creatures of all type are attracted to this place by the water, and do not soon run because men have come here to rest. All who stay here must sleep with one eye open, lest they become a feast for the starving animals that lurk in the canyons.

Finally there is the Cauldron of Mists, which many believe is actually a prime source of power for those that rule over Ravenloft. It is a large crater in the middle of a vast desert of sand. The land here is freezing and few ever

wish to make the journey here. Those that actually do reach the actually crater, which can be seen spewing Mists into the sky for miles around, never return. Some speculate that there is a way out of Ravenloft here. Others fear that the Powers consume any who edge close to such an important place. Either way, Wanderers use it as a landmark and nothing else. They dare not go near it, suffering from horrible nightmares whenever they sleep close.

## The Folk

# P

People are scared. That fear leads to anguish. Finally they all give in to despair. There is no joy in the lives of those within the Lost Mists, except perhaps in seeing others pain. They are a miserable lot, placing all that remains of their hopes on an icon that it destined to let them down. Their hearts are empty and will stay that way.

Most people here simply strive to stay alive, even at the expense of others. They are greedy and cruel, admiring those with riches at the same time as plotting a way to steal some. They are hard, caring little for what goes on around them. They see the world as having given up on them, so they in turn give up on the world. Only a lust for power and strength keep them going. Only a desire for an end to the pain gives them cause to live.

Those who live in the towns are the followers. They blindly serve anyone who shows them leadership, any one who gives them a dream. They have not yet learned that the Darklords are no different than they are, and have no chance of achieving anything better. When the Lord falls they pack up what they own and follow whatever new savior arises into the deserts to build a new town. An endless cycle.

The exceptions to the rule are the Wanderers (which most players will no doubt be). These folk are aware of the futility of Lordship and will have nothing to do with it. They frequently see it that way even from the first moment they arrived here. As such they avoid the towns and their pathetic inhabitants, going there only to restock supplies occasionally. Instead they journey the lands seeking enlightenment or just plain survival. They battle the evils that they find, or join them as the case may be. But they inherently grow wiser with the sacrifice of civilized surroundings, and the embrace of the vast unknown. They are the heroes, villains, and those in between of the Lost Mists.

Every night the population of the Lost Mists increases. When the Mists roll in they not only change the land but they also deliver new people to be condemned. These people can come from anywhere, no exceptions. The only rule is that the Powers of Ravenloft had no use for them anywhere else. Once arriving they either take their place among the faceless mass of the townsfolk, or strive to overthrow the Lord and take his place, or else they become Wanderers. The flow never stops, and the population is stemmed only by the high death rate of the land.

## The Law

# I

In the Lost Mists there is but one true law, and that is placed upon the people by the Powers of Ravenloft. It states that no one may leave and no one may rule.

The Lords themselves place laws, but these are constantly changing to suit their whim and fall as they fall. When in power any law that is decreed is obeyed by the populace in the town, and enforced by the guard. Any who visit the town must obey all the laws currently in effect. Ignorance is not a defense and many have died because the Lord and laws changed between visits. However, the further one goes away from the town the less likely the law will be enforced, even at the few outposts that surround it. Beyond the Civilized Land there are no laws.

Here the Wanderers live by their own code. They obey only their feelings and answer only to their own conscience. If they wrong someone then the only authority they can expect to pursue is the person they wronged. Still, there is a certain unwritten code that most Wanderers follow. They tend to help one another in need, and are



expected to reward such assistance. Any place a Wanderer sets up camp is considered his land until he moves, and all must obey him while on it. These laws are usually followed, and when they aren't the offense usually doesn't result in bloodshed, unless it was very grave. Most of the time Wanderers simply spread the word to others of their kind about the offender, and those who meet him treat him in kind. Surprisingly these laws are more rigorously obeyed than those enforced in the towns.

## Confronting The Lord

# T

In this section I include only to clarify the position of the Lord in the Lost Mists. As the Lordship is constantly changing it would be useless to include stats here. Dungeon Masters are advised to design their own Darklord, suitable to the setting, and use him or her as seen fit. For long campaigns however, it must be remembered that the Lord will no doubt be replaced quickly and Dungeon Masters should adjust for this in campaigns.

The Darklord of the Lost Mists is for the most part no different from the average character. He or she is usually strong in some field of study, be that battle, magic, or rogue skills. They also must have a sharp wit, which is very necessary to beat out opponents and achieve Lordship. They must be very self reliant and quick to adapt to changing situations if they even stand a chance of remaining in power for long.

They gain no mystical power from their title. The Powers of Ravenloft grant them no special gifts or miracles. They simply have political authority over the townsfolk. The only thing that could be considered magical about the Lordship is the inherent curse that any who hold the title will lose it. It is a matter of conjecture as to whether this is actually a limitation placed upon the Lords by the Powers, or if it is simply a fact of ruling in an unruly land.

Lords do possess a benefit when in power however, even if it is earthly in nature. They are instantly given the authority and right to make laws upon the people, live however he wishes (with the resources of the town), and call upon a following of guards to protect him. These are all gifts of the office that seem to just happen once one claims Lordship. One immediately acquires followers despite current experience. Most guards usually range from 1st to 4th level. Particularly warlike Lords may have higher level fighters, and mage Lords will perhaps have a few wizards in the guard.

## Closing the Borders

# B

Borders do not close in the Lost Mists. This is for several reasons. The first is that no one has ever reached the edge of the land, so it's entirely possible they do not exist at all. Second, they are not shut from the outside because Ravenloft must, every night, bring more people in. Thirdly and finally, the borders of the Lost Mists cannot close because the Lords have no power to close them with. As no mystical power is granted to them with their title they do not have the ability to secure the realm. Only the Powers have real authority here, and they never allow anyone to leave.

## Encounters

# H

Here is where the Dungeon Master can really have some fun. Those who tire of the usually set of zombies, vampires, and werewolves from most of Ravenloft's realms find the Lost Mists a refreshing change of pace. There are no rules for encounters here. Anything and everything finds its way into these lands. In fact there are fewer undead and the

like here than in most other Ravenloft settings. The Powers of Ravenloft usually have a purpose for undead, so they don't end up in this strange place. Those that are here are usually created here.

Creatures from any other campaign setting can be found scattered throughout these lands. Anything that can be found in the entire multi-verse is a possibility. The only real exceptions are creatures that require large bodies of water. Other creatures that require certain environments not present in the Lost Mists may still live here, but are usually weak from the experience.

Dungeon Masters are encouraged to use their imaginations. If you have a creature you've always wanted to pit your players against but have never found a proper setting, go for it here. Perhaps you want to try your hand at creating your own monsters. This makes a great place to test them out

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# End Word

T

he Netbook Of Darklords and Realms has been a long difficult process to complete. Great effort has been taken to try and imagine environments suitable to the Ravenloft campaign setting. The information presented in it is by no means law, however. Dungeon masters should feel free to adjust things to suit their own campaigns. Freedom of expression is the only true rule to role-playing. Take it away and one might as well play Monopoly. Every gamer must find that in himself which he wishes to make a part of his game. The only purpose for my writing this netbook has been to aid in the creative process.

There is much more to horror than vampires and blood. There is an emotion present. One which most of us keep quietly tucked away, avoiding it. It is when we sit down to play an RPG, especially one such a Ravenloft, that we choose to let this emotion surface, let it taste freedom in our imaginary worlds. It is the goal of the horror genre to stimulate this emotion, and that cannot be done unless some thought is put into the story, both by DM and player. We must strive to allow ourselves to be scared. To place ourselves, temporarily, in a world were our fears are reality, and through this, rid ourselves of them so they cannot plague us in our day to day lives.

I have written The Netbook Of Darklords and Realms, given you a wider range of settings and possibilities to work from. Things from my own head. Now it's up to you. Enjoy yourself. Let loose. Make your storybook worlds as real as you wish (remembering that it's only a game), and have fun. There is much for characters to experience. More horror than this or any other book can transcribe. There is more to Ravenloft than darklords and realms.

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