

## Introduction

Legends and folklore warm spirits or set chills racing down the spines of an audience gathered around the fireplace in winter. Elders pass on heroic tales from battles fought in the springtime of their youth to the younger generation, leaving lessons of valor and awe in bright eyes. Stories carried from ear to ear distort and twist simple accounts of run-of-the-mill events into sinister mysteries rife with supernatural deeds. Storytellers, performers, mages, and old men have drawn upon the love and fear of the unknown to fuel their craft for centuries, deftly thrilling listeners or drawing a pallor of terror across their foes with but a few choice words. Creatures or events perceived by a dubious or wondering mind transform into unfathomable enigmas or forces of great power and doom, even for those who know better. Ennersea's rich mythos derives from the staggering variety of all things magical, mundane and monstrous present in the world, and the interpretations created to explain and categorize them.

This PDF infuses the *d20 System* with humanity's fascination for the unknown and its overwhelming need to understand the unfamiliar. In a world populated by house cats and hippocampi, shepherds and celestial scions, people regularly face unfamiliar situations and witness inexplicable phenomenon. Even cultural icons take on a new life when exposed to the masses; the reputation of the mounted Xo'quill horselords almost matches honoured khans in Orcan Hold, but southlanders live in absolute terror of the riders astride their wicked turjenkhan. These options are designed to utilize existing class abilities and features in the *Core Rulebooks* to help construct living legends. All the thematic elements, such as prestige classes and templates, are themselves unique to Ennersea.

*Aspects of the Mythical* is designed to offer you a wide range of character options for different character goals and for different levels. The contents are open and accessible to numerous concepts; as in life, a touch of the otherworld can occur anywhere or to anyone. All can potentially become the stuff of legends.

## Using This Product

This product is intended to supplement the *Player's Handbook* and the rules for Ennersea.net. It features new additions to the MUSH that expand on the options in character generation (CharGen), present new takes on existing rules and policies, and introduce new thematic elements.

*Aspects of the Mythical* is the second PDF produced for Ennersea's community. We draw upon player requests, new submissions, and brainstorming sessions to generate new material based upon a certain theme. Be sure to look for **red** text, links to more information.

## **Dreadlord**

A small village nestled in a narrow, rocky valley awaits them, the knife-edged peaks soaring into overcast skies alleviating none of the depressing aura of desolation about the landscape. Small houses cluster around a thin winding road, huddling together beneath the oppressive cloud cover. No children play in the street, chasing one another; no mothers stand upon the stoops, calling to them to wash up in preparation for dinner. A weak breeze blows fitfully from the south, carrying with it fingers of smoke Warriors in ash-streaked mail march in formation, the sere stench of burnt flesh taking up their wake. Behind them lies a wasteland, destroyed shells hovels and huts burning down to embers, bodies slain in charred fields calling a murder of crows and carrion birds to feast. No one waits outside to greet the armies of the Charlin, the inhabitants of another worthless hamlet harbouring traitors to the Fiend Prince long since fled to shelter away from here.

It is not the morningstars or the swords they fear, nor their own countrymen turning upon them. Most have heard the stories, if not seen the destruction, and in the souls of the Firandir'a, survival can be summed up as kill or be killed; crush or be crushed. With dispassion these villagers listened to the stories of couriers at the waystations, entertained the soldiers on fast mounts carrying news up to Crag Garith and down to Gerios. These words and warnings do not quicken their heartbeats.

They have run because of the rider at the head of the column, resplendent in obsidian-finished plate, astride a creature from the very hells. No horse is his mount, and he is no mere man. The name of the Dreadlord of Eldanoth is promise enough to empty out villages; unlike many boastful battlefield commanders, a Dreadlord fulfills the Hells' promises to the letter, with mercy for none who defy his lord.

If true champions of the Veluakir are rare, then the adherents worthy of consideration to become Dreadlords are legendary. The fist of Eldanoth's tyranny on the mortal realm must ascribe in every way to his beliefs and the Hells' standards; there is no room for uncertainty or cold feet where he is involved. Successful candidates prove absolute, unswerving loyalty to every aspect of Eldanoth's decree and moves to execute his vision and orders without hesitation. Celindari and Iluvatari ecclesiastic sages decry the Dreadlord as a sycophant to a wellspring of complete damnation, his will completely subverted by delusions of grandeur and divine blasphemy. They understand nothing of his character; his eyes are alight with flames of ambition, his soul tempered by divine purpose. In him, Eldanoth has revealed a glimpse of his master scheming, and the vision's force drives a Dreadlord to absolute allegiance. He knows, more than most, what lies for those who do not renounce the weak-willed deities when the Fiend Prince takes his rightful place at the head of the Veluakir.

In pursuit of perfection, Eldanoth shows no tolerance for imperfection. Though many Eldanothi aspire to be Called, pitifully few have the martial skills and spiritual mettle to

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withstand the demands of a Dreadlord. Just as every soldier aspires to become an officer of high rank, so each Eldanothi harbours within his heart the belief his merits in the name of his god should put him above his peers. When his achievements are vast, and when he unquestionably shows his unstinting devotion, then Eldanoth may consider a pious servitor to act as the leader of his Church's armies.

Eldanoth's choices may be unfathomable, but signs of his favour are unquestioned when they appear. When a faithful worshipper is witnessed wearing night black armor of raw energy around his body, then the champion is marked as a candidate. Clerics of the Fiend Prince usually then begin initiation rites as the champion continues to hone his martial prowess, blending together elements of the infernal faith with their highly regarded and equally feared military training regime.

Because of the unique qualities sought after in the Dreadlord, black-knights are the primary candidate for the prestige class. Though many warriors may aspire to become a powerful officer in the forces of the Hells, most lack piety and absolute faith necessary, but some fighter/clerics proceed down this path. Some have prior experience as priests serving in the clergy, but otherwise multiclass Dreadlords are very rare indeed.

### prerequisites

**Alignment:** Lawful Evil

**Base Attack Bonus:** 6+

**Feats:** Blessing of Piety

**Patron Deity:** Eldanoth

**Skills:** Intimidate 5 ranks, Knowledge (Religion) 10 ranks, Knowledge (War) 3 ranks

**Spells:** Able to cast *detect good* as a spell or spell-like ability.

**Special:** Perform three consecutive days and nights of ritual cleansing.

### Table 1-1: the Dreadlord

	Base				
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Master's Wrath 1/day
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Notoriety
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Prince's Dictum
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Swordbreaker
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Forged Spirit, Master's Wrath 2/day
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Infernal Vision, Prince's Edict
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Mantle of Terror
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Tempered Blade
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Prince's Damnation
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Infernal Transcendence, Master's Wrath 3/day

**Hit Dice:** d10

**Abbreviation:** Drd

**Class Skills (2 + Int Modifier):** Bluff, Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Knowledge (Religion/War), and Ride.

### class features

All of the following are class features of the Luminous Mystic prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The Dreadlord gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

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**Master's Wrath (Su):** All foes of a Dreadlord have reason to shudder at the mention of his name and title. Even within the Veluakir, the tyranny of Eldanoth knows no bounds and the Dreadlord does not hesitate to bring all in line with whatever means are necessary. He gains the ability to smite a chaotic opponent with one normal melee attack. He adds his Charisma bonus (if any) to the attack roll and deals 1 extra point of damage per Dreadlord level.

For example, a 4th-level Dreadlord armed with a longsword would deal 1d8+4 points of damage, plus any additional bonuses from high strength or magical effects that otherwise apply. If he accidentally misses a creature that is not chaotic, the smite has no effect but it is still used up for that day. He can use this ability twice per day at 5th level and three times per day at 10th level.

**Notoriety:** The reputation of a chosen champion of the Morning Star precedes him wherever he goes. Stories of these champions run rampant through all levels of society, rousing fear and suspicions in enemy quarters, and hope amongst his allies. He gains a circumstance bonus to all Intimidate checks equal to one-half his Dreadlord level, rounded up, in recognition of his formidable notoriety.

For example, a 3rd level Dreadlord would gain a +2 bonus to his Intimidate checks atop other bonuses granted from synergies, magic items, and skill ranks.

**Prince's Dictum (Su):** Many challenge the Fiend Prince's vision, but they cannot be allowed to intercede their own beliefs. To this end, the Dreadlord is given the blessing to strike against the most direct threats to the church and his

faith. He can imbue his melee weapon with the *evil outsider-bane* special ability as a move action, but this ability does not function against devils or any lawful evil outsider (such as an Infernal warrior). This ability can be used once per day, and its effects last for a number of rounds equal to the Dreadlord's Wisdom modifier. If his weapon already has this special ability, it does not stack.

**Swordbreaker (Ex):** The champion of Eldanoth has many enemies, and requires protection against them. So anointed by the recognition of the god, the 3rd level Dreadlord has the power to turn aside weapons when they might otherwise strike. Activating this ability is an immediate action; it grants him an insight bonus to AC equal to his Charisma bonus (if any) for 1 round. He can use this ability a number of times per day equal to one half his Dreadlord level.

**Forged Spirit (Su):** Upon achieving 5th level, the Dreadlord undergoes an agonizing ritual during the first dark of the moon following his ascension to this rank. The ritual inflicts 6d6 points of damage on the Dreadlord but leaves him resistant to physical attacks. The weakness of his soul is beaten out and he gains DR 10/magic.

**Infernal Vision (Su):** Receiving a glorious vision of the future promised by Eldanoth offers unshakable resolve to the Dreadlord. He is immune to fear (magical or otherwise).

**Prince's Edict (Su):** Eldanoth graces the 6th-level Dreadlord with the means to combat the next immediate enemies against His divine cause. When the Dreadlord uses Prince's Dictum, his melee weapon additionally gains the *elemental-bane* special ability. He does not gain any additional

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uses or extended duration with this ability. If his weapon already has this special ability, it does not stack.

**Tempered Blade (Su):** At 8th level, any melee weapon that the Dreadlord wields is considered an unholy weapon for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction. Once per day per point of Charisma bonus (minimum once per day), the melee weapon he wields gains the *axiomatic* special ability and deals an additional 2d6 points of damage against chaotic targets. The use of this ability is an immediate action, and the effect lasts for one round. If his weapon is already axiomatic, he gains no further affect.

**Mantle of Terror (Su):** A Dreadlord can generate an aura of terror and awe around him that acts similarly to a black-knight's aura of despair. At the beginning of combat, any enemy within 10 feet of him suffers a -2 morale penalty on all attack and weapon damage rolls, and saves against fear and charm effects. The creature must be able to see or hear the Dreadlord to be affected by this aura. This is a mind-affecting fear effect, and creatures that are immune to fear or otherwise mindless are unaffected by it.

**Prince's Damnation (Su):** The 9th-level Dreadlord



*A dreadlord of Eldanoth makes a fearsome foe.*

reserves his greatest blow for the last of his god's implacable foes. When he uses Prince's Dictum, he gains both the benefits of Prince's Edict and his melee weapon further receives the *good outsider-bane* special ability. In effect, it has the good outsider, evil outsider, and elemental-bane special abilities. He does not gain any additional uses or extended duration with this ability. If his weapon already has this special ability, it does not stack.

**Infernal Transcendence (Su):** Upon reaching 10th level, the Dreadlord's unflinching service to the cause of the Fiend Prince grants its ultimate reward. The Dreadlord is forever transformed into one of Eldanoth's favoured servants. His type changes to outsider, and he gains the native subtype. If his alignment is lawful or evil, he also gains those subtypes. This apotheosis grants immunity to any spell or effect that does

not affect outsiders (for example, charm person will not affect him), and provides darkvision out to 60 feet if he does not already have it. The Dreadlord still needs to eat, sleep, breathe, and he can be raised or reincarnated normally.

## Holy Apostle

Deities of the Celindar, the pantheon of light, avoid overt acts of domination and control over others, declaring them anathema to the benevolent ideals they champion. While sinister agents of their enemies within the Veluakir subtly augment or openly corrupt mortal vessels to their fiendish impulse, the Celindar abstain from such behaviour. When the beleaguered Firandir'a ask again and again of their clerics how the gods can permit the existence of askavi or why no similar beings exist to serve the Heavens, the answers remain the same. Who dares determine the destiny of a babe in the womb? What right has any being to force a decision upon a child without regard for his desires?

Though positions differ within the separate faiths, disciples of the Celindar feel a terrible compassion towards the cursed askavi. Products of an unholy ritual, their souls are tainted by the Hells from the moment of conception and their bodies pressed into infernal service by cruel taskmasters. Askavi embody the very concepts the Celindari denounce, and so visibly evince in no uncertain terms the absolute necessity for free will and choice. No compassionate or benevolent being would place such a crushing burden on unwilling and unready shoulders, and demand a lifetime of sacrifice for a daunting cause.

Thus, the Celindari boast no celestially-infused children or prodigal bloodlines stretching through the centuries amongst their numbers. Divine gifts bestowed upon adherents are

rarely passed on as an inherited blessing. Each person born in the world may do as she will, living how she pleases but accepting the consequences for her actions. Even Tiriellites recognize the Radiant Prince's promise of redemption requires a willing heart free of coercion or compulsion. Commitment to allow spiritual and physical independence acts as a universal pillar of doctrine in the churches of the Celindar.

Disciples working to nurture and spread the compassionate, noble principles of the Celindar face resistance from all quarters in this imperfect world. Enemies challenge their resolve through violence and senseless cruelty while the indifference of the population erodes enthusiasm into jaded weariness. Hope trickles away through dozens of tiny wounds inflicted by callous remarks, atrocities, and unmitigated misery. With faith alone to serve as a shield deflecting the host of threats bombarding them, even the most pious adherents slowly diminish under these onslaughts. Thus, they require other forms of protection.

Celestial forces choosing to act through a mortal agent is cause for celebration rather than sorrow. Various measures from spells to sacred artifacts defend Celindari against mortal and supernatural threats. Rarest among them rewards a worshipper for her intense belief but places weighty responsibilities in her hands. It is known for servitors of the Heavens to manifest briefly on the material plane and even remain bound to a willing host for a time. Once in a great while this process works in reverse, permitting the slow transformation of a pure-hearted Celindari disciple from a

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mortal into a celestial being. With this change comes a multitude of blessings and gifts beyond imagination, a host of mystical abilities clearly marking her as chosen of the gods in this preternatural way.

Her newfound powers never come without a cost or a purpose, part and parcel of her obligation to her patron. When a Celindar deity offers to create an apostle from a worshipper, in truth that worshipper agrees to serve as a guiding force for the faith in the world. She gives up all hope of obscurity and a quiet life for sacred servitude that little short of death or unforgivable transgressions can remove. Divine guidance guarantees complete understanding of the magnitude of this undertaking, revealing immeasurable possibilities and clarifying any questions the petitioner may have. So enlightened, she may choose to accept or renounce the offer at her own discretion; the decision is never forced.

If she welcomes the chance, her patron deity infuses her with pure holy energy as a catalyst to ignite her soul's awakening. Her permanent anchor to the highest planes permits her to draw upon the same wellspring of power other divine spellcasters fuel their prayers with and certain creatures manifest naturally. That contact shall forever change her body as much as it reinforces her faith.

Holy apostles serve a greater cause than their own, accepting difficult quests and challenges to further the strength of their god and their church. They do not remain cloistered in quiet abbeys, but instead walk through the populace with divine inspiration burning in their breasts. The nature of a holy apostle's focus may change over time, but



once the celestial light touches her, she acts in the Celindar's best interests without reservations.

Any reverent disciple of the Celindar can potentially become a holy apostle, although she must already possess a sacred bond to her god. Clerics and paladins usually fulfill this role easily because they answered the Calling. The Celindar open their arms to all without prejudice, however, and just as many warriors as wizards receive the offer and the blessing. But the path of the holy apostle is not for the faint of heart: once you walk it, you can never look back.

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### prerequisites

**Alignment:** Any non-evil

**Feats:** Blessing of Piety

**Patron Deity:** Aellerian, Cyhiraeth, Damara, Gilthonas, Gwyneth or Tiriel

**Race:** Any non-outsider (cannot already be a Blessed or celinseir)

**Skills:** Diplomacy 2 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 8 ranks

**Spells:** Able to cast *detect evil* as a spell or spell-like ability

### Table 1-2: the Holy Apostle

	Base				
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Embrace of the Blessed
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Smite Evil, Verdant Aura
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Silvered Mien
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Blessed Touch, Nimbus of Light
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Pearly Aegis
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Azure Psalm
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Divine Health, Golden Elegy
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Opalescent Aria
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Diamond Aegis, Windborne
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Ascension

**Hit Dice:** d8

**Abbreviation:** HAP

**Class Skills (2 + Int Modifier):** Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge (Religion/Planes), Ride, and Sense Motive.

### class features

All of the following are class features of the Holy Apostle prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The Holy Apostle gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

**Embrace of the Blessed (Ex):** At 1st level, the Celindar bestow their first gift upon the Holy Apostle and provide him with a mark of their favour. His flesh gleams with a shimmering radiance where light finds it, taking on a faint cast determined by his patron deity's favoured colours. His natural armor improves by 1, and this stacks with any natural armor bonus he has.

**Smite Evil (Su):** Once per day, the 2nd-level Holy Apostle may attempt to smite evil with one normal melee attack. He adds his Charisma bonus (if any) to his attack roll and deals 1 extra point of damage per Holy Apostle level. If she accidentally smites a creature that is not evil, the smite has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day.

A Holy Apostle may add the level of any class that grants smite evil to his Holy Apostle level when determining uses per day and damage. For example, a paladin 10/Holy Apostle 3 can smite good four times per day and does 13 points additional damage.

**Verdant Aura (Ex):** A luster of vitality enhances the Holy Apostle's appearance, reflecting his inner vigor and energy. He gains a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against poison.

**Silvered Mien (Ex):** After attaining 3rd level, the Holy Apostle's eyes become silvery like Telessen to match his glowing, dewy skin. He has resistance to acid 10.

**Blessed Touch (Sp):** Beginning at 4th level, a Holy Apostle may miraculously heal injuries to himself or others by speaking a prayer to the Celindar. This spell-like ability is

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equivalent to a *cure serious wounds* spell usable once per day. His caster level is equal to his hit dice.

**Nimbus of Light (Sp):** Now a creature of the Heavens, the Holy Apostle can emanate that radiance whenever he so chooses. He can cast *daylight* as a spell-like ability at will. His caster level is equal to his hit dice.

**Pearly Aegis (Ex):** At 5th level, a Holy Apostle's entire body takes on a slightly pearly finish, reflecting light like moonlight playing on the sea. This blessing provides him with damage reduction/5. He can ignore 5 points of damage from non-magical weapons or natural attacks.

**Azure Psalm (Sp):** A 6th-level Holy Apostle may charge his hand with a glowing sapphire aura of positive energy from the Heavenly planes. Once per day, he can cast *holy smite* as a spell-like ability. His caster level is equal to his hit dice.

**Divine Health (Ex):** Depredations and weaknesses caused by mortality loosen their hold upon a Holy Apostle, held at bay by divine mandate. He gains immunity to all diseases, both magical and supernatural.

**Golden Elegy (Ex):** Beginning at 7th level, he receives resistance to electricity 10.

**Opalescent Aria (Sp):** Aellerian unlocks the knowledge within a Holy Apostle's mind to invoke the manifestation of goodness incarnate in creation with a single, resonant note of unsurpassed beauty. By 8th level, he may use *holy word* once per day as a spell-like ability. his caster level is equal to his hit dice.

**Diamond Aegis (Ex):** Damara fortifies the existing defense within him, improving the Holy Apostle's damage reduction to 10/magic.

**Windborne (Ex):** With virtue comes reward, a sign of favour that no one can overlook. Cyhiraeth bestows feathered wings upon the Holy Apostle at 9th level, allowing him to fly with good maneuverability. His fly speed equals his normal land speed.

**Ascension (Su):** At 10th level at the zenith of his path, the Holy Apostle undergoes his final apotheosis. He takes on the outsider type with the native subtype, and spells targeting humanoids such as *charm person* shall never affect him again. As his physical condition improves, he can fly at twice his base land speed.

### EX-HOLY APOSTLES

A holy apostle who ceases to be good or neutrally aligned, who changes her divine patron to a deity outside the Celindar, or who willfully commits an evil act loses all spells, spell-like abilities, and abilities (not weapon, armor, and shield proficiencies) granted by this prestige class. She may not regain her class abilities or progress any farther in levels as a holy apostle. She regains her abilities and advancement potential if she atones for her violations (see the [atonement](#) spell description), as appropriate.

Paladins may advance as a paladin after taking the holy apostle prestige class.

## Luminous Mystic

Journeys to enlightenment begin with the first step upon a long, often arduous quest. Fanfare rarely accompanies these momentous occasions and sometimes they occur without any notice at all. Their origins often stretch back to a crucial, seemingly innocuous decision or event that sends ripples out across someone's life, culminating in great waves of change farther in the future. Something so simple as a few words spoken in passing or the choice to spend the night at a bed and breakfast rather than pushing on for home can about great transformations. So the life of a humble merchant from Thes'phan permanently altered course in the subtlest of fashions.

### **founder of the luminous mystics**

Tyresias val'Eiden was better known in his own time as a struggling businessman in Port Ceillece than a religious visionary. His only faith lay in the power of coin and the well-timed arrival of ships with their holds full of rich visitors into the harbour. He, like many Thes'phanians, was more interested in living comfortably than fretting about the condition of his spiritual health and the state of people around him. When he returned from his biweekly trip inland to visit his ailing brother who managed his estate, Tyresias thought nothing of stopping at a small bed and breakfast catering to decently moneyed travelers such as himself rather than pick up the pace to reach Port Ceillece after nightfall. He

joined the other patrons in the gardens for a cup of heavily spiced herbal tea, a popular custom of the upper class mimicked by any self-respecting merchant or would-be social sophisticate.

By his own account, the conversation bored him nearly to tears until one guest silent up until that point broke into the rather dreary discussion about choosing a new crop of aldermen in Port Ceillece. While the other jaded city-dwellers pointed out flaws in economic policy, scandals that socially weakened others, or the potential gains a candidate might bring to their status and business personally, the visitor questioned the whole business of basing decisions on trivial matters instead of who could do the best job. The Thes'phanians were mildly amused and hardly changed their minds, but went on illustrating the best possible candidate for the job as someone socially beneficial to their own place in society, in favour of their own business interests, and willing to maintain the status quo. In short, a businessman ruled by his purse rather than his head and utterly unconcerned about anything beyond the financial elite in town.

A businessman himself, Tyresias could not find much to disagree with except who precisely embodied the hypothetical bureaucratic paragon. The visitor excused himself as the hour grew late, shaking his head, leaving a simple statement as a parting remark: "Even so, there is goodness in everyone and all it needs is the right circumstances to shine forth."

How provincial it sounded to the smug merchants and hopelessly naive. Everyone knew the world cared not a whit

for how "good" someone was; business savvy, ambition and efficiency were the only things that mattered. Tyresias himself held beliefs along similar lines and he returned to Port Ceillece to conduct his business as he had before, forgetting about the stopover entirely as weeks wore on and the tourism season boomed along with the influx of foreign trade and goods.

Fortunes were made and lost, Tyresias finding himself a bit more successful that season than the last. However, the neatly stacked trade notes and letters of promise failed to bring the joy they should have. Staring at the balance of his ledger books offered only limited satisfaction. Appalled by his evident apathy, he threw himself into the indulgences afforded by modest wealth and social standing, from lavish dinner parties to whoring and hunts, but nothing satiated the dull pangs of disenchantment and indifference holding him captive. Fully horrified at the prospect, he consulted everyone he dared without endangering his reputation or his business and they offered different solutions that all failed in the end. Courtship of a wealthy heiress gave no thrill and investing in a risky perfume exporter sounded boring in his ears. Almost driven out of his mind, he tried a solution offered in jest, an isolated pilgrimage to a shrine in western Thes'phan that would shake the complacency for the easy life right out of him.

### **origins of the mystic tradition**

Against the recommendations of his relatives and friends, Tyresias ventured out on foot with a sun-browned guide and

five other "pilgrims". Three were like himself, seeking a novelty, while the two others performed an act of quiet religious devotion. Much as he mocked their simple ways, the first week in the merchant came to envy their serenity and clear-eyed contentment. When he speculated on the secret, their answers were one and the same: devotion sustained them and making the trek, although difficult and without creature comfort, brought a different sort of satisfaction. For a man that never climbed a mountain or swam in the sea simply for its own sake, he could not begin to understand.

Tyresias discovered something else, though, off the major coastal road and outside the small resorts catering to wealthy visitors. He saw a land shaped by the wind, the sun and the ocean, and large families subsiding on tiny plots of land cleared painstakingly from the rainforest. He wondered at how mean and barren their houses were, how grubby their children seemed, and yet how happy they appeared. As the pilgrims ascended deeper into the mountains, he bore witness with his own eyes to the rough survival hacked out from raw wilderness and the tenacious struggle to cling to the edges of the beautiful, savage, hedonistic island. These disparities granted him a broader perspective and curious questions on the happiness of the very people he pitied and how his own acquaintances seemed greatly disaffected.

No one could answer them among his traveling party, but the wizened, patient devotee up at the Shrine of the Rising Dawn offered insight like the traveler so long ago. All have the capacity for good within themselves, but clothed in layers

of deception, greed and other vice, it cannot shine through as easily. People lose sight of that brightness, but it never goes entirely away. Pull back the curtain of ignorance, wipe away the impurities and it blazes through strong as before.

### Journey of enlightenment

The notion pricked at Tyresias' mind and he doubted the full truth of the statement, feeling its optimism unsuited for the real world. But that philosophy would not shake free. His lifestyle changed slowly and he gravitated away from his old social set upon his return. Finally, the grind of business no longer appealed at all, so he took his assets and decided to explore the world in search of its happiness and his goodness. He never set out to change lives or minds, but the stories he told piqued enough interest that others followed in his path or accompanied him for a time. And they too discovered something of that inner brightness within.

The Thes'phanian merchant claimed he never started living until his fourth decade, and he never truly settled until well into his eighties. For forty years, he invited others to share his path for a while and walk alongside him, swapping stories and insights. Though without coin many times along the way, others warmly received him and offered the comfort of a bed, a good meal and their companionship. He stopped from time to time to assist others

less fortunate than he, especially with young men and women ostracized for their behaviour or restlessness. Many of his fellow "explorers" came from those cast-offs of society that discovered inner contentment and joy.

More importantly, they helped to spread some of the philosophies he fervently believed in; the most significant believed in helping others simply for the sake of doing good.



### Luminous mystics in the world

Tyresias himself followed the path of Tiriel, but his exemplary lifestyle appealed to the compassion of Damarans, the benevolence of Gilthonians, and the unquenched faith in humanity of the Aelleriads. In the years that followed after Tyresias' death, the many documents he and his supporters wrote were codified into several standard books of meditation and poetry. However, they expanded beyond the original framework and embraced their commitment to the common people seeing the inner light of the soul within themselves with a strong moral example supporting them. The first Luminous Mystics took that creed to heart, forming a loose order of sorts based upon their basic principles of enlightenment, benevolence, and seeking the state of "spiritual clarity" that would allow their celestially-touched soul to reach their full potential.

Luminous mystics are an enlightened adherent to one of several Celindari faiths arranged into a loose order based at the shrine of the Rising Dawn in Thes'phan, although their considerable popularity has spread as far afield as Sinomae, Firandir and Vananore. They practice an ascetic lifestyle that emphasizes self-discovery, virtue, and moral values through benevolent actions assisting others. Luminous mystics are not, by their nature, violent but they learn to channel their virtuousness into material form, in essence bringing to bear their increased capacity for inner light and goodness.

Members of the order act as agents of good in the world, performing tasks assigned as the highest priority by their respective churches or simply traveling the world doing great deeds. They believe all people, regardless of present situation, possess a spark of innate goodness in them. Even the most repugnant individual forsaken by others can realize the light within himself, given encouragement and reason to want it. Leading by example, she presents himself as exemplary proof that the Celindari and their tenets are present everywhere. All one has to do is reach out, and act.

### prerequisites

**Alignment:** Lawful good, neutral good or lawful neutral

**Base Will Save:** +4

**Feats:** Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist

**Patron Deity:** Aellerian, Damara, Gilthonas, or Tiriel

**Skills:** Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks

**Special:** Must be a member of the Luminous Mystics and must atone for any evil deeds committed before entering the order.

### class features

All of the following are class features of the Luminous Mystic prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The Luminous Mystic gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

**Radiant Heart (Sp):** At 1st level, the Luminous Mystic embarks on a path to self-enlightenment, beginning with discovery of the latent goodness in everyone, including himself. He can fold himself in a glowing aura equivalent in effect to a *daylight* spell, targeted on himself. This ability lasts one minute per Luminous Mystic level and his caster level is equal to his class level.

**Incandescent Glory (Sp):** By meditating briefly, he can manifest his faith in a stunning burst of celestial glory. He projects a brilliant beam of light from his hand, equivalent in effect to a *searing light* spell. His caster level is equal to his Luminous Mystic level. He gains an additional use of this ability at 4th level and every second level thereafter.

**Lucent Gaze (Ex):** The light of a Luminous Mystic's inner spirit shines through his eyes and finds hope even in the darkest places. He gains low-light vision if he does not already have it.

**Starfire Touch (Sp):** Fires of faith stoked within the heart of the Luminous Mystic enable him to tap into a depthless wellspring of pure, eldritch radiance. Ether flows out from his body and limns his hands if he wishes it. As a swift action, he can channel the starfire that grants any unarmed attack he makes the *flaming* special ability.

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The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to his Wisdom modifier (minimum one).

Upon reaching 6th level, the Luminous Mystic has reached sufficient enlightenment to harness greater power of the stars with no harm to himself. He can tap the stars twice per day, and his unarmed attacks gain the effect of the *flaming burst* special ability.

Finally, at 9th level, his physical purity matches his spiritual perfection to such a degree that he is the perfect conduit for raw starlight. When he uses this ability, he can choose to manifest raw starfire instead of starlight. He can choose to apply the *brilliant weapon* special ability to his unarmed attacks rather than the *flaming burst* special ability.

Furthermore, he can use starfire touch three times per day. These abilities do not stack with one another.

**Ethereal Wind (Su):** The 5th level Luminous Mystic learns to harness the invisible threads of positive energy saturating the world. Once per day, he can briefly travel through this shimmering plane in a way equivalent in effect to a *dimension door* spell. This is a spell-like ability. His caster level is equal to his Luminous Mystic level.

**Radiant Spirit (Sp):** Holy light suffuses the being of a Luminous Mystic, and when he calls upon it, it protects him from grievous harm. Once per day, he can manifest a protective, shimmering barrier around him equivalent in effect to a *fire shield* spell (warm version) as a spell-like ability. The ethereal flames of the effect glow the hue of his patron deity's holy colours. His caster level is equal to his Luminous Mystic level.

**Table 1-3: the Luminous Mystic**

Level	Base				Special
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Radiant Heart
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Incandescent Glory 1/day, Lucent Gaze
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Starfire Touch 1/day
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Incandescent Glory 2/day
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Ethereal Wind
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Incandescent Glory 3/day, Starfire Touch 2/day
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Radiant Spirit
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Incandescent Glory 4/day, Soulglow
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Starfire Touch 3/day
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Legacy of the Heavens, Radiant Virtue

**Hit Dice:** d8

**Abbreviation:** LuM

**Class Skills (4 + Int Modifier):** Balance, Climb, Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Heal, Hide, Knowledge (Religion), Jump, Listen, Perform, Sense Motive, Spot, and Tumble.

**Soulglow (Su):** At 8th level, the Luminous Mystic's spiritual resolve guides him through every act he does. He gains a morale bonus equal to his Charisma bonus (if any) and may apply this to one saving throw (Will, Reflex or Fortitude).

**Legacy of the Heavens (Sp):** Reaching the cusp of enlightenment, a Luminous Mystic rarely resorts to violence except as a last resort, but the Celindar offer a formidable deterrent to any who do him harm. He may deliver a searing

blast of phosphorescent heavenfire, equivalent in effect to a *sunbeam* spell. His caster level is equivalent to his Luminous Mystic level plus any levels he has in paladin, druid or cleric.

**Radiant Virtue (Su):** The 10th level Luminous Mystic is so profound in his virtue, he can strike against deceivers and criminals. Once per day, he may attempt to smite evil with a single melee attack. He adds his Wisdom bonus to the attack roll and adds his Luminous Mystic level to the weapon damage roll. If he strikes a non-evil target, the ability fails and is used up for the day.

### **EX-LUMINOUS MYSTICS**

A luminous mystic who ceases to have one of the acceptable alignments of the Order of Luminous Mystics, changes her divine patron to a non-sponsored deity, or who willfully commits an evil act loses all spells, spell-like abilities, and abilities (not weapon, armor, and shield proficiencies) granted by this prestige class. The Order supports the common people and frowns heavily upon taking actions harming the wellbeing of the community.

She may not regain her abilities or progress any farther in levels as a luminous mystic until she atones for her actions (see the **atonement** spell description), as appropriate.

Paladins may advance as a paladin after taking the luminous mystic prestige class.

## **Xo'qail**

*Most glorious are the Xo'qui-l Vhak'han, the Akk'han's holy-scythe spirit riders! Behold how they storm down upon our enemies like the brothers of Charger of the Sun! They are the living thunder rolling over the fields and crushing the chaff before the lightning hooves of the turjenkhans. Clouds rise over the earth as they shout their battle cries. Take heart, warrior. Enter the fray with pride in your heart! The Akk'han is good! All hail the Akk'han!*

*Rhaevok son of Vreh'l, shaman of Father-Storm*

Orcan Hold is a militaristic culture, reinforced by generations of young men and women being told, "You will be the best, or everyone else will destroy you, and with you, the world." Orcs are raised under the mindset that they are superior beings, but this comes only from holding at bay the vengeful spirits that are jealous of their greatness; the greedy, weak peoples who would overthrow them and cause the totems to unleash untold fury upon the land; and the Stonelords, their mortal enemies who turned their backs upon the spirits and provoked such wrath amongst the totems that only the First Band could propitiate the elemental powers properly. The orcs' allies have proven time and time again that they cannot be trusted, and the only aid an orc can ever expect is from another orc or a hobgoblin. So, when they claim they are the best, it is not a statement of pride, it is a simple fact proven by living in the Hold, and one rooted in their fundamental belief in the world.

The rest of the world recognizes, grudgingly or not, the awe an armed orc inspires. Though many military powers exist in the world, Cray's navy and the duality of Istalindar and Astalanya in the Arbormists coming to mind, each of these formidable forces still are occluded by the proven legend and banner of the Orcan Hold legions. Their superiority has been reinforced by generations of conquest against barbarians, subjugated peoples, fierce monsters, and dwarven holds in some of the most brutal terrain in the known world. With unshakable loyalty to their culture and race and a childhood spent honing their fighting skills, orcs enjoy a position of martial dominance over nearly everything else around them, excepting dragons. Of Orcan Hold, the armies of the Akk'han of Orcan Hold receive the greatest respect and fear, and in other lands when someone thinks of a warrior, soldier, or great battle hero, the first thing likely to come to mind for all but the dwarves is an orc.

Amongst the orcs, degrees of distinction in status can quickly be resolved and acknowledged in the most orcan of pursuits: war. A skilled warrior can boast a rising honour price, and if he demonstrates unearthly prowess in battle, clearly he bears the blessings of the totems. If he can survive by his loyalties and strength, he may capture more than simply honour for his feats and accolades for his tribe. His glories, when recounted by shamans and his descendants, set an example for future generations and a standard to live by. Father-Storm rewards the brave, courageous and bold with a lasting record for the Akk'han's people and elevation into the Star-Tribes themselves. Not all champions of the people

achieve great heights, however; acclaim often brings jealousy and a desire amongst others to test the champion's mettle and prove themselves superior.

In war there can only be two outcomes, life or death, a philosophy the hordes of the north are living proof and testament to. Behind this image of invincibility lies an even more specific ideal revered by the *Xo'qui-l Vhak'han*. Their full name means the "Akk'han's holy-scythe (vhakhra) spirit riders" and it reveals the full importance these near mythical warriors bear in the northlands. To all else, they are simply the *Xo'quil*, a fearsome troupe of cavaliers that carry the favour of the totems and of the Akk'han, to whom they owe their solitary allegiance. Mounted upon the turjenkhan, great black chargers of the wildlands whose own legend aficionados of equestrian riding and mounted battle venerate in awe, the *Xo'quil* are the product of a martial society and the culmination of a rigorous regiment of training that develops or destroys without middle ground. Their scars, borne with great pride, mark each battle in the flesh and their tattoos proclaim their high status amongst all orcs. To boast a *Xo'quil* is to boldly display the banner of the Akk'han's service and favour, for all the dangers and benefits that may bring. Tribes eagerly claim the *Xo'quil*, but cannot hold them, for each rider answers to the Akk'han and the khans of select tribes alone.

### **xo'quil in the world**

The *Xo'quil* distinguish themselves from other mounted contingents in Orcan Hold in three ways. They prefer above

all else to employ the vhakhra, an orcan polearm used with devastating expertise whether on foot or in the saddle. Said by some to be the only weapon they wield, they level the judgment of the Hold upon its razor-honed edge and suffer little else to pass into their hands. Called the "hands of the khans", the vhakhra are adorned with powerful sigils of protection and universally become consecrated to Father-Storm. Stealing such a weapon may possess a Xo'quill to hunt down every last member of the offending tribe, if only to purge the sin done against the totem and the People.

The turjenkhan, the great obsidian horses of the Hold, are the second standard of the Xo'quill. Few of the horses tolerate riders, and every would be Rider of the Akk'han must prove his worth and honour by claiming one. Such quests are the subjects of great oral epics and shorter, equally popular tales throughout Orcan Hold and even into the Dominions and the dwarven holds. By claiming a turjenkhan, the rider affirms his worth; later, as his relationship to his horse surpasses the mundane and becomes something that lends credence to the very title bestowed upon him -- spirit rider. For only by uniting and impressing the high, fiery spirit of the wild beasts can he ever hope to ascend to the exalted ranks.

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Finally, the Xo'quill act in the name of the Akk'han and his khans themselves. Only a khan can accept the loyalties of a rider, and only the Akk'han can grant a khan the right of acceptance, this keeps the numbers of the highly prestigious warriors low; some may spend much of the time in their prime of life in search of a willing liege. The very potency of a Xo'quill's appearance upon the battlefield the Akk'han intimately understands, as those who came before him understood: He is the symbol of the might of the khans, a physical manifestation of the terrible, great quest laid upon the shoulders of the First Band and now carried by all the People. He is the hope and the promise of support, the victory within reach. The Xo'quill can hearten warriors on his own side and disquiet enemies with the misfortune to see his statuesque profile on the battlefield because, more than any, he is the indomitable spirit, the unshakable courage, and the unflagging might of the lords of the north.

### **prerequisites**

**Base Attack Bonus:** 5+

**Feats:** Spirited Charge, Trample

**Language:** Orcan

**Patron Deity:** Any totem

**Skills:** Handle Animal 6 ranks, Intimidate 5 ranks, Ride 8 ranks

**Weapon Proficiency:** Vhakhra

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**Special:** Must have an excellent honour price, in good standing with a tribe, and accepted by the khan of a tribe sponsoring the Xo'quail.

**Table 1-4: the xo'quail**

	Base				
	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Khan's Honour, Ride Bonus
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Deadly Charge 1/day, Loyal Tribesman
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Burst of Speed
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Deadly Charge 2/day, Tactics
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Full Mounted Attack
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Deadly Charge 3/day
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Tactics
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Deadly Charge 4/day, Khan's Chosen
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Cull the Field
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Deadly Charge 5/day, Tactics

**Hit Dice:** d8

**Abbreviation:** Xoq

**Class Skills (2 + Int Modifier):** Craft, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Knowledge (R-Orcan Hold/War), Jump, Ride..

### EX-XO'QUAIL

Removal from the service to the Akk'han grants such a social stigma that many seek death on the battlefield or an assignment on an impossible quest rather than suffer the loss of status for themselves and their tribes. Others may hunt down a discharged Xo'quail to redeem lost honour or expunge the taint left on his tribe if the circumstances for the retirement were anything less than honourable. If a Xo'quail is discharged from service honourably, such as for suffering a

devastating wound or other socially acceptable reason, he receives full acknowledgment of his honour price and enjoys exalted status within society. Skalds sing his glories and virtues long after his death; future generations look back upon their ancestor with esteem.

Dishonourable discharge is tantamount to a complete, total loss of face and most tribal warriors in the Hold will make it a point of increasing their own prestige and status by destroying the ex-Xo'quail, if the khan or his ex-brothers and sisters do not take liberty of doing so themselves. The Xo'quail so disbarred from service can never again advance in this prestige class without extraordinary circumstances prevailing, such as embarking upon a spirit quest under a respected shaman to recover his honour. Such quests usually, but not always, end fatally. Finally, the khans do not tolerate their most valuable warriors forsaking the path and glory laid before them. A Xo'quail who chooses to advance in another prestige class or a base class cannot advance farther within this class and rescinds his status, essentially receiving a dishonourable discharge from the service.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Xo'quail prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The Xo'quail gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

**Ride Bonus (Ex):** Honed riding skills may be sufficient for riding with the cavalry, but a Xo'quail learns to ride broadback

on the fiercest equines in the world before she ever catches sight of a battlefield. She gains a circumstance bonus to all Ride checks equal to one-half her Xo'quail level, rounded up, in recognition of her elite background.

For example, a 5th level Xo'quail would gain a +3 bonus to her Ride checks atop other bonuses granted from synergies, magic items, and skill ranks.

**Khan's Honour (Ex):** The presence of a Xo'quail strikes deep disquiet in any enemy of the khans. When she first enters into melee combat, any enemy within 30 feet of her must make a Will save (DC 10 + her Xo'quail level + her Charisma modifier) or suffer a -2 morale penalty to all attack and weapon damage rolls for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the Xo'quail's Charisma modifier (minimum 1). A successful Will save causes no effect. The effects are not cumulative and do not stack with other abilities, like the Scourge of the Wastes tactic. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

**Deadly Charge (Ex):** At 2nd level and every two levels thereafter, the mounted Xo'quail can put her weight and her mount's strength into a devastating charge attack. She declares a deadly charge before making her attack roll (thus, a failed attack ruins the attempt). If she successfully hits, she deals triple damage with a melee weapon (quadruple damage with a lance). This ability does not stack with the benefit of the Spirited Charge feat.

**Burst of Speed (Ex):** From 3rd level on, a Xo'quail can spur her mount to move at double its normal speed for 1 round. During this round, the turjenkhan charges at double the new speed and runs at quadruple the new speed. This ability is

usable once per day without danger to the mount. If the Xo'quail attempts to use the ability a second time in the same day, her mount must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 20) or take 1d6 points of damage. Each additional time she uses the ability in the same day, her mount must make a new Fortitude save at the same DC, and the damage increases by 1d6 points over that from the previous attempt. Thus, the third use of this ability in one day deals 2d6 points of damage, the fourth use deals 3d6 points, and so on.

**Tactics (Ex):** Mastery of horsemanship is the mark of a Xo'quail born. She can perform an array of stunts and tricks that even other riders marvel at. Starting at 4th level and every three levels thereafter, the Xo'quail chooses one tactic from the table below. Her level plus Intelligence modifier determines the highest level tactic she can choose. Once chosen, she cannot change the ability. She cannot choose the same tactic twice.

*Son-sky's Messenger (Ex):* Turjenkhans can comfortably cover vast distances other horses would drop dead from running. The Xo'quail can push her mount even further at a quicker pace. Her mount moves at 150% of its normal overland speed when traveling overland but this ability does not affect its speed in combat.

*Companion's Boon (Ex):* Xo'quail are trained to extend personal defense to their mount. As a move action, she can attempt to share her shield bonus with her turjenkhan. She must succeed on a Ride check (DC 20) to grant this bonus. Shield bonuses accrued through spells or magic items cannot be shared in this way.

**Table 1-5: xo'quail tactics**

Level + Int modifier	Tactic	Effect
1	<b>Son-sky's Messenger</b>	Mount moves overland 150% faster.
2	<b>Companion's Boon</b>	Grant shield bonus to mount
3	<b>Scourge of the Wastes</b>	Demoralize opponent in a charge.
4	<b>Snowcat Plunge</b>	Mount deals extra trample damage.
5	<b>Harrier Swoop</b>	Make free bull rush attempt after charging.
6	<b>Lightning's Triumph</b>	Mount gets second hoof attack on trample.
7	<b>Wolverine's Abandon</b>	Overrun more than one enemy.
8	<b>Race the River</b>	Use Ride check for a Reflex save.
9	<b>Stormfather's Lash</b>	Substitute Ride check for any other check.
10	<b>Charger's Kin</b>	Use Ride check to resist mind-affecting effects.

*Scourge of the Wastes (Ex):* No image strikes more fear in the hearts of Sinomaese conscripts than a Xo'quail seated astride her hulking black mount, her vhakhra in one hand and the Akk'han's snapping banner in the other. When she thunders down the hillside, stomachs turn to water and resolve flees in the face of uncontrolled panic. She can

attempt to demoralize her opponents through use of the Intimidate skill combined with her mounted charge. Her target of the demoralize attempt is the target of her charge. The Xo'quail uses her turjenkhan's size category when calculating her Intimidate check. This ability does not stack with Khan's Honour and its effects are not cumulative.

*Snowcat Plunge (Ex):* This difficult maneuver demands agility and plunging straight into the fray. When a mounted Xo'quail charges a foe at least one size category smaller than her turjenkhan, she can make a Ride check at the end of the movement to inflict additional damage. She decides whether to inflict 2 extra points of damage (DC 10) or 4 extra points of damage (DC 20). If she succeeds, she proceeds with the attack as normal and adds on the additional damage after all modifiers. If she fails the Ride check, she misses her target and makes no attack roll. Failure by five or more results in her missing her target and falling from her mount into an adjacent square.

*Harrier Swoop (Ex):* Like a falcon stooping through the sky, the mounted Xo'quail descends upon her enemy mercilessly. If her charge attack succeeds, she can make a free bull rush attempt. Should it succeed, her opponent is moved normally but his mount (if any) is unaffected.

*Lightning's Triumph (Ex):* When a turjenkhan knocks down its opponent on an overrun, its rider can coax it to strike out again at the downed victim. As a move action as part of a trample, she can attempt a Ride check (DC 30). If she succeeds, her mount takes a -2 penalty to all its attack rolls for that round in order to gain a second hoof attack against

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the tripped opponent.

*Wolverine's Abandon (Ex)*: This tactic allows a mounted Xo'quil to smash through her opponents as her horse lashes out at each. She can make her mounted overrun attempts against more than one enemy. Each attempt is resolved normally, and her mount can make one attack against each overrun opponent. This ability cannot be combined with any other tactics, such as Lightning's Triumph.

*Race the River (Ex)*: When a mounted Xo'quil or her turjenkhan must make a Reflex save, she can attempt to substitute a Ride check instead. She must declare the use of this ability before making the roll. The Ride check must beat the effect's DC with an additional +2 added. If she succeeds, her Ride check substitutes for her or her mount's Reflex save and determines their success or failure. This ability can be used once per day.

*Storm-father's Lash (Ex)*: Once per day while mounted, the Xo'quil can substitute a Ride check in place of any one attack roll, saving throw, or skill check. She uses her total Ride modifier but gains no modifiers from other sources (such as a weapon's enhancement bonus, a cloak of resistance improving her saving throws, or the Skill Focus feat that increases her skill bonus).

*Charger's Kin (Ex)*: Kindred spirits and devotion unite a rider with her mount. The turjenkhan's absolute bond with the Xo'quil resists even magical influence. Whenever her mount must make a Will save to overcome a mind-influencing effect, the Xo'quil can attempt a Ride check (DC 10 + spell or effect's DC) to overcome it. If she succeeds, her

roll substitutes for her mount's Will save in determining whether the turjenkhan fails or passes. This ability can only be used once per round.

**Full Mounted Attack (Ex)**: The Xo'quil at 5th level can make a full attack while mounted as long as her turjenkhan moves more than 5 feet but no farther than a single move action would carry it. She cannot combine this attack with a charge.

**Khan's Chosen (Ex)**: This heroic legend upon the battlefield represents not only his tribe, but his entire nation in the struggle against corruptive spirits and dauntless foes. This confidence and responsibility grants her a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting spells and spell-effects. Her morale bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls from the Loyal Tribesman ability increases to +4.

**Cull the Field (Ex)**: The vision of a Tribal warrior on horseback, holding a vhakhra in both hands as her mount charges straight into the armies of the enemy, leveling that terrible blade through the crowd, both tantalizes and terrorizes the mind of many a general and khan in the Hold. This signature attack of the Xo'quil is indeed reckless, but the effects are devastating. The mounted Xo'quil can perform a full mounted attack at any point of her mount's move, rather than only at the end of it. Her mount must move at least five feet, but no further than a single move action. This ability cannot be combined with a charge.

## Template Acquisition

A template is an assortment of abilities and powers available in a standardized package that adjusts the base statistics of a given monster or race, altering physical dimensions, adding spellcasting ability, and sometimes even introducing new weaknesses. Templates in the d20 system fall into either of two categories determining its origins: inherited and acquired. Inherited templates pass down from one creature to its offspring and may be caused by genetic quirks, unique heritage, or environment; as a rule, they occur more frequently within monsters but rarely within mortal races. The acquired category contains options occurring as a result of drastic changes to a creature, such as a permanent magical effect, supernatural disease or proximity to an altering force, and they comprise the majority of templates available to players on the game.

Players purchase templates outside of character generation by investing their experience points to cover the cost. All templates, regardless of their origins, are assigned a level adjustment (also known as LA). Level adjustment provides a quantifiable scale comparing a template's abilities to character class levels in order to assess a purchase cost; generally, the more powerful a template is, the more character class levels it is worth. When you take a template, you must first pay the level adjustment before gaining any benefits.

If you are approved for a template, you pay its level adjustment when you level up in CharGen. Instead of

leveling in a class as normal, you instead take a number of levels equal to the template's level adjustment in "TMP" (Template), which grants you no changes in base attack bonuses, skill points, hit points, saves, caster level or other class level dependent abilities. The TMP class is just a placeholder until you pay for your template. While these levels do not contribute to your multiclassing penalty, they do count against the 20th level cap. So, if you have a LA +2 template, you cannot have more than eighteen class levels. The TMP class does not violate multiclassing restrictions for classes like paladins and black-knights; they are free to advance normally.

You cannot apply for a template until after your character reaches level five. You must fully purchase your Template (TMP) levels before you receive any benefits or abilities from your template. In addition, you are responsible for completing any roleplaying requirements along with your system prerequisites.

### template process

Templates cannot be selected immediately after CharGen, even if your character satisfies level and RP requirements. Obtaining a template is a momentous event for a character and the effects of any new development deserve to be woven into the game with good storytelling. Templates with LA adjustments count towards the game's starting level policy. You can't submit an application until you have been on the game for 90 days; or after gaining one level after starting, if past the 90 day limit.

### **step one: submit your request**

You must e-mail a brief application covering what template you want, how you intend to obtain it, and any personal and game impacts to the administration.

### **step two: approval**

Administrators review the template request in a timely manner and any comments or changes will be directed through e-mail. Changes are resubmitted and reviewed for pending approval. Should there be a major conceptual problem or unreasonable request (IE: template is undead), you cannot reapply for that template, but you are free to try for others.

### **step three: earning the template**

When your template request is approved, you are free to purchase the "Template" levels in CharGen in the process described above. Once your "Template" level equals the template's level adjustment (LA), you receive all the benefits of your template.

### **request guidelines**

Requirements for all template applications are listed below.

- 1) Read your template's description and any associated theme files to help you with understanding Ennersea's world. Major events, organizations, and viewpoints may likely influence your character, and you need to be aware of them.
- 2) Write up a short background covering important

elements. You should expect to cover a bit about your character's recent activities and background, what led to the manifestation or acquisition of your new abilities, and how this change may affect your character and her life. Please describe any specific selections required by your template (for example, a shiftling's clan).

- 3) Explain any unusual circumstances about your template. For example, a particularly unreligious character proposing to acquire the Blessed template will probably need a description why.
- 4) Any template with LA 3 or higher have an added requirement to remain active on the game for at least ten hours per week actively roleplaying and promoting RP. If you cannot manage this, do not apply.
- 5) Check your application for spelling and grammar.

### **template restrictions**

Once you take a template, your character cannot gain others nor can a template be improved, such as a wyld-blooded becoming a wyld. Even though you are purchasing levels to cover the cost of your template, you do not receive any class benefits, like base attack bonus. However, the level adjustment changes your character's challenge rating because you are more powerful than another character of the same level without the template. Finally, we ask that you restrict templates to one of your characters. Only so many templates are approved at a given time.

## **Shiffling: Skinchangers**

Nature holds many secrets from the jaded eyes of townsfolk and farmers in their snug communities. In a time when people roamed freely through unspoiled wilderness and their survival relied on the mercy of the elements, stories circulated around the campfires and summer meetings of wild adventurers that freely roamed among the far hills, quiet groves and open plains, giving up all ties of kinship and clan to embrace unchallenged freedom. The boldest among them fought with ferocity of wolverines to match the intensity of their brief, wild lives, while some retreated into alpine aeries in search of solitude and a communion unmarred by human concerns. Legends today still tell of the wonders of these folk able to shed their natural forms and adopt those of a beast, infamous for their heady, unrestrained emotions. Many names score the folklore and early history in sweeping tales chronicling their daring courage and disastrous fates, like Seraphos' *Rhenna Cycle* and the *Green Book of Ald' Anathe* compiled by early Craeian bards.

Proud families today claim descent from among the most well-known of these wild heroes; some of the Ten Houses of Seraphos boast of ancestors featured heavily in the *Rhenna Cycle* who transformed into goshawks and falcons at will. Naturally, everyone would like to say they share this rare heritage; where others speak only hollow boasts, however, a true shiffling demonstrates his lineage with shapeshifting, magical talents and inhuman gifts. Few can claim they possess the changing gift of the shifflings and prove it, even

in distant times when respect for the environment was stronger and people less settled.

Never numerous, the shifflings derive the source of their power from the trinity of nature deities or, in the frozen wastelands of the north, the totems. Divine intervention alone can permanently augment a mortal creature in such a permanent way, although only the mighty protagonists of bardic songcraft felt the direct touch of a god upon their souls. Lesser beings received their change at the feet of druids, at holy sites, or through mystical means ranging from swallowing a charmed salmon to sacrifices offered to the east wind. Regardless, a definite connection with the supernatural infuses a shiffling to the very core and sets him apart from others.

Shifflings hold a nebulous place within the structure of the world, with one foot squarely in civilized realms and the other planted in an ancient age of legends and wonders. Only the Sapphire Circle claim to understand their role in vision of nature, and even then, that comprehension slips a little whenever a feather-cloaked maiden suddenly takes to the sky in the shape of a swan or a handsome young man slips beneath the sea and a seal bobs through the waves moments later.

### **shiffling personality**

For all their apparent dissimilarities, nearly all shifflings share some traits in common. Contact with the spirit of nature awakening latent gifts within their blood profoundly and subtly altered them into something else. Something truly

eldritch, if tales be believed; a wildness exists within the eyes of the skin-changers that never lingered there before. The call of their element and environment tugs stronger than any prior bond, and sad stories resonate up and down the Ennersea of forlorn wives waiting for their husbands to return padding out from the woods or lovers ever watching the sea with melancholy, sorrowed eyes.

All the same, a shiftling rarely dwells upon melancholy and sorrow. His feet eagerly seek new paths and he whirls through life like a tempest, drawing others into the maelstrom of delight and passion he whips up. A shiftling lives hard and for the moment, focused upon today that is rather than a tomorrow that may never come. He looks forward, not back, and savors every experience to the fullest. The animal side of him never lingers far from the surface, for those who know what to look for. A shiftling loathes deception and nothing raises his ire faster than a fool, a liar or an enemy. His ferocious temper is every bit as fearful as storytellers claim, and a shiftling never hesitates to act upon his raging emotions.

The ancestral gift of shapechanging passes through families and bloodlines erratically, skipping generations and reappearing after centuries. No one understands what process causes someone to slough off their skin and race through the forest on four legs or dive beneath the waves with the protection of an otter's fur. The mastery of forms is a true mark of a shiftling's heritage, one that separates him into one of the six loose families based upon his animal side. They fall into what are generally described as clans, a recognition

of common kinship and shape. With it comes a devotion towards the wilderness and the wild, unspoiled lands that exist. While shiftlings can co-exist with their families and in civilization, they often find it difficult; the call of the sea or the seductive plaint of the breeze too often pricks their supernaturally attuned senses. At his heart, a shiftling is happiest seizing the day and forging a path through life in tune to his own wild spirit.

### **The six clans**

All shiftlings belong to one of six loosely formed families, called clans, that signify more than a common background. Membership in a clan depends strictly on what kind of beast a shiftling becomes through his innate mastery of forms. He cannot belong to more than a single clan and his legacy allows applies to one creature.

In addition to defining the shapes a shiftling can take on, clans describe typical environments these ancestral shapeshifters hail from and the characteristics of their temperament. Though not absolute, general personality traits usually apply to members within a family. A Grasswhisper shiftling is defined by her loyalty, while a Mistmantle looks down on excessive artifice.

**Deepstar:** Communities all around the Ennersea's shores possess a common body of folklore telling about sea-dwelling men and women coming onto land for a brief time, living amongst their topside neighbours and mysteriously vanishing back into the waves. Confusion with the merfolk

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and sirines often blends protagonists together into a single race, but the Deepstar family carries one of the oldest, enduring legacies of all. No Deepstar was ever born to the sea, but sloughed off her skin to dance beneath the waves in a sleeker form after she heard its seductive call. Enigmatic to others, she hides her deep emotions under layers of introspective and often introverted behaviour. The old axiom “still waters run deep” applies only too well to the fey, unpredictable nature commonly found in these aquatic skinchangers.

Deepstar shiftlings adopt amammalian aquatic forms for a marine environment, including seals, sea lions, and otters.

**Grasswhisper:** Fierce warriors come from the Grasswhisper clan, and an equally strong sense of loyalty. They hold the strongest bonds of kinship to family, and once adopted, nothing save the greatest betrayals or dishonour breaks their trust. A member of this clan directs his passion into a cause and chases it wholeheartedly, putting himself body, mind and soul into its fulfillment. Bands of such dedicated warriors awed ancient people and terrorized their enemies, for



*Shiftlings share a common bond with other animals.*

courage is the hallmark of a Grasswhisper born. Dauntless and unyielding in the face of adversity, he joyfully flings himself into the task and expects others to follow at his heels. Those who do not face tough questions afterwards; though not without a sense of preservation and fairness, he hates nothing more than someone who puts individual wellbeing ahead of the group's.

Grasswhisper shiftlings shapeshift into canine animals from the plains, predominantly coyotes, foxes, and jackals.

**Greydawn:** The Hidden Clan's members dwell happily beneath mountain peaks and under hillsides, far from the sun. By far the least numerous of all the shapechanging families, their numbers

dwindle year by year, under constant threat from natural enemies. A Greydawn shiftling gains the advantage of a large natural family; he delights in companionship rather than remaining alone. He ventures places that few others see and hoards the precious experience to his breast to savor at

another time. In particular, these shiftlings utilize senses other than sight and rely heavily on their intuition or gut feeling. They tend not to accept appearances for what they are, and so their curiosity in all matters is legendary.

Greydawn shiftlings prefer shapes suited to their native underground settings, like bats, lizards, and rats.

**Mistmantle:** Known for their fierce independence, shiftlings of Mistmantle lineage range far and wide in their great adventures. The oldest tales feature these shiftlings prominently, most frequently in the form of beautiful swan-maidens with long cloaks of feathers and intense disdain for civilization's trappings. Something ethereal radiates from their proud bearing in either their mortal or animal form, though their condescension shines through their eyes whenever they look down from the sky to the earth. They wander freely according to their whims and fancies, and woe betide any that try to bind them against their will. A Mistmantle's wrath descends harsher than a gale and tears across her foe with implacable, otherworldly force.

Mistmantle shiftlings can take on the form of a bird, such as a swan, eagle, hawk or raven.

**Moonchaser:** The least known of all the families was once said to be numerous, heroes chosen to stalk through the night hunting evil predators while their brethren slumbered. They declined precipitously after some catastrophe shrouded in the mists of history and never regained their former glory. Named the Lost Clan, Moonchaser shiftlings act aloof in their

liquid grace, as though some hint of their mythical duty told in stories really touches them. They maintain their own peculiar sense of obligations and ties, making great effort to see outstanding debts fulfilled in a meaningful fashion. Passion smolders in the blood and the gaze of a Moonchaser, bursting free to colour her actions in every way. No shiftling is temperate, but she fully indulges her fancies and grudges alike with abandon. Revelry and celebration set the family apart; they partake of festivities as frequently as they do the hunt.

Moonchaser shiftlings transform into semi-nocturnal felines, including lynxes, bobcats and ocelots.

**Wildrunner:** Sylvan hollows weave their spell over the sovereign hearts of the beastkin in this large family. Dappled shadows and brooks meandering through loamy soil bring peace to a Wildrunner shiftling. He yearns for satisfaction found in quiet places where he can find closeness to the raw essence of nature. Polluted places drive him off and he hates feeling confined in any way, be it physical walls or social expectations. All members of this family react skittishly to being cornered or confined, but they never hesitate to lower their heads and hold their ground when protecting something they believe in. Like Grasswhisper, the Wildrunner clan puts great stock in maintaining close relationships, reflecting their social nature.

Wildrunner shiftlings choose shapes from four-legged herbivores native to wooded areas, such as deer, antelope and horses.

## Shiffling Template

“Shiffling” is a template that can be added to any humanoid, fey or giant (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The template can be inherited or acquired, although the inherited form is more commonplace.

**Size and Type:** The base creature's type does not change, but he gains the shapechanger subtype. Do not recalculate base attack bonus, saves or skill points. Size is unchanged, except when the base creature shifts into his animal form.

**Hit Dice:** As the base creature.

**Armor Class:** Same as the base creature.

**Special Attacks:** Same as the base creature.

**Special Qualities:** A shiffling retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following qualities.

**Alternate Form (Su):** A shiffling can assume the form and the physical qualities of a particular animal of his clan. He can shift once per day per five character levels (maximum four times per day) and remain in that form indefinitely. He does not regain hit points for changing form, but the ability is otherwise similar to the **alternate form** special ability (see the *Monster Manual*) except as noted here. His gear does not merge with him at the time of assuming this alternate form, and it will not resize to him unless magically crafted to do so. He can only assume the form of his chosen heritage.

A shiffling in his animal form retains his own Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma scores but uses the Strength, Dexterity and Constitution scores of the animal form. Any

adjustments from ability scores are applied normally to his saving throw modifiers and total attack bonus, but the shiffling keeps the hit points of his original form. He retains any spell-like and supernatural abilities of his original form, as well as his spellcasting ability. He retains all other game statistics of his original form, such as base attack and save bonuses.

He obtains all extraordinary special attacks of the animal form, but not its extraordinary special abilities, or any supernatural or spell-like abilities. He loses all the natural weapons, natural armor, and movement modes of his original form, as well as any extraordinary special attacks of his original form not derived from class levels.

Shifflings cannot assume any sort of hybrid form. They can only adopt their natural shape or their animal form.

Finally, a shiffling's alternate form cannot be an animal with a CR greater than 1. The animal must be appropriate to one of the six clans noted above. Once chosen upon gaining the template, he cannot adjust this form without a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

**Low-light Vision (Ex):** He gains low-light vision if he does not already have it.

**Spellcasting:** While in his alternate form, a shiffling cannot properly cast spells with verbal and somatic components unless he has the **natural spell** feat.

**Vulnerability (Ex):** A shiffling has a specific weakness to a metal or mineral, depending upon his clan. When in contact with an item made predominantly of this compound, he cannot use his alternate form ability.

**Table 1-6: shiftling vulnerabilities**

Shiftling Clan	Vulnerability
Deepstar	Chert
Grasswhisper	Cold Iron
Greydawn	Alchemical Silver
Moonchaser	Obsidian
Mistmantle	Bluesteel
Wildrunner	Cold Iron

**Wildborn:** Shiftlings receive a +2 racial bonus to saving throws against Enchantment spells and effects because the streak of wildness and violent force of their emotions are difficult for magic to overcome.

**Wyldtongue (Su):** He can communicate with creatures of his kind while in his animal form. Therefore, a Deepstar shiftling with a seal form can communicate with other seals, otters, sea lions and so forth.

He cannot use this ability with animals significantly different from his own shape, like a Wildrunner shiftling with a horse form talking to a deer. His communication is still restricted by the intelligence of the animals he speaks to, and they may not necessarily be more friendly or cooperative than normal without the appropriate skill check.

**Abilities:** The shiftling takes a -2 to Intelligence and a +2 to one ability score depending upon his clan.

Shiftling Clan	Ability Score
Deepstar	Constitution
Grasswhisper	Constitution
Greydawn	Strength
Moonchaser	Dexterity
Mistmantle	Dexterity
Wildrunner	Strength

**Skills:** A shiftling gains a +4 racial bonus on Jump and Survival checks. Otherwise same as the base creature.

**Level Adjustment:** +2

### sample shiftling

<b>TIR'ANA</b>	<b>CR 7</b>
Female orc shiftling (Grasswhisper) ranger 5 LE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)	
<b>Init</b> +3; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; <b>Listen</b> +7, <b>Spot</b> +7	
<b>Languages</b> Orcan	
<b>AC</b> 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; <b>Dodge</b> , <b>Mobility</b> (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +6 armor)	
<b>hp</b> 39 (5 HD); <b>DR</b> N/A	
<b>Immune</b> N/A	
<b>Resist</b> -10 to temperature effect DCs; <b>SR</b> N/A	
<b>Fort</b> +7, <b>Ref</b> +4, <b>Will</b> +3 (+5 vs enchantment)	
<b>Weakness</b> Cold Iron	
<b>Spd</b> 30 ft. (6 squares)	
<b>Melee</b> +1 vhakhra +10 (1d10+6/20) or	

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**Ranged MW Composite** +4 Longbow +9 (1d8+4/x3)  
**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.  
**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +9  
**Atk Options** Favoured Enemy +4 (Goblinoids), +2 (Humans)  
**Special Actions** *Alternate Form* (Wolf), *Wyldtongue* (Wolves)  
**Combat Gear** +1 *vhakra*, MW Composite +4 Longbow, 40 arrows, +2 chain shirt, three potions of *cure light wounds*  
**Spells/Day 1**; **Ranger Spells Known (CL 1)**:  
1st - *Entangle* (DC 13)

---

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8  
**SQ** Orc Traits, Chosen Terrain (Plains), Terrain Endurance, Weather Tolerance, Wild Empathy  
**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack<sup>B</sup>, Track<sup>B</sup>  
**Skills** Climb +7, Handle Animal +2, Hide +11, Jump +7, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +7, Survival +10, Swim +6  
**Possessions** +1 *vhakra*, MW Composite +4 Longbow, 40 arrows, +2 chain shirt, three potions of *cure light wounds*, gems worth 600gp  
**Totem** Moonwolf  
**Region** Orcan Hold

The orcan huntress Tir'ana stalks the Broken Plains, searching for dwarven war parties and striking out against enemies to the Q'clo'at tribe. She quickly established a reputation for swift, efficient ambushes and brilliant group tactics. She favours diverting her prey with the bait, usually a lone tracker or hunter, while the rest of her hunting party hides under cover and closes the trap.

Few within the Q'clo'at tribe realize much of Tir'ana's fearsome abilities come innately to her, except the khan and the leading shamans. She does not hesitate to take wolf form to bring her enemies down, wearing the sign of Moonwolf's approval as a badge of pride.



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