

-A- DM GUIDE +⊕+ THE PLANES

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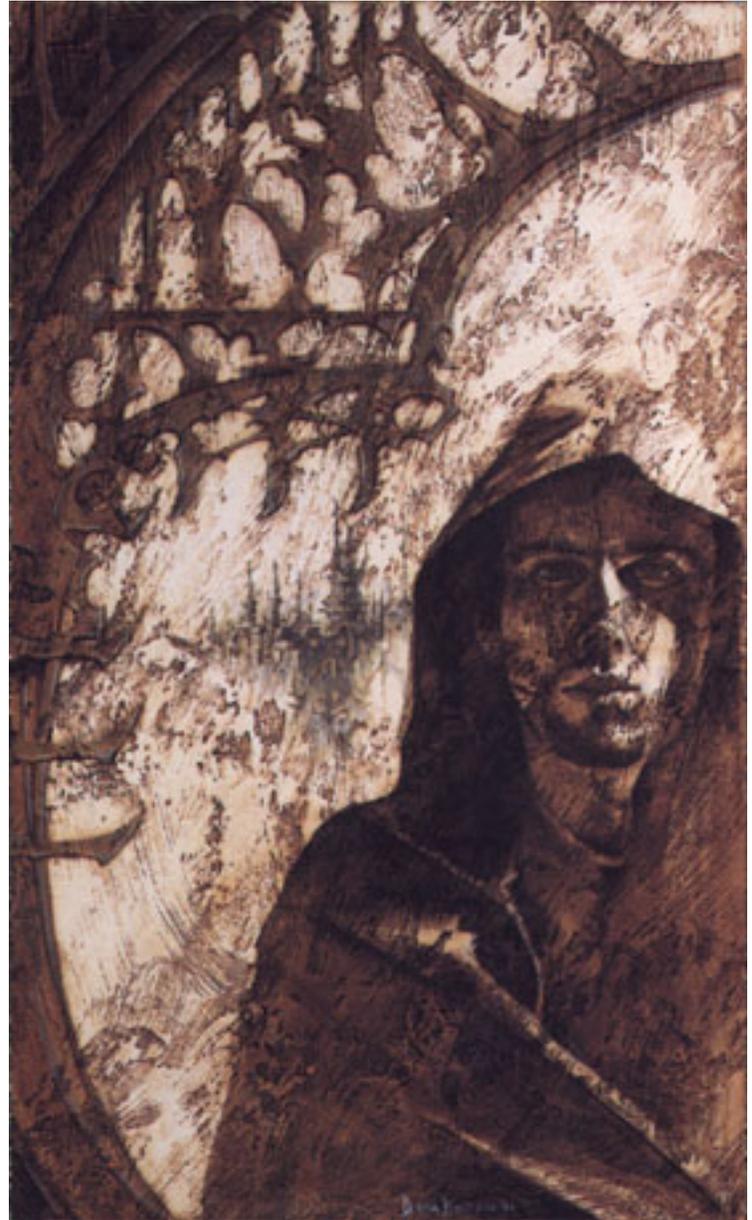
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INTRODUCTION

The multiverse is a big place and it don't play by the "normal rules", whatever they are, but learning the dark of them is the stuff of life. A being's got to become a blood to know all the different ways magic works out on the Great Ring, and no basher should ever be able to just lay his hands on a map of all the portals between the planes. There's things a sod wasn't meant to know and things he's just got to learn by experience. (A body can describe what it's like in the furnaces of Carceri, but it just ain't the same as going there.) Sure, some of the multiverse is so simple that even a bariaur basher'd understand, but there's some of it that's real dark, and it's meant to be that way. So folks with no business knowing these things should just keep their noses out of it - understand?

But there's always one cutter - that being the Dungeon Master (DM) - who's meant to be in the know, and what's in here is for him or her. So, for those who need to know all the secrets of the multiverse, read on.



Undoubtedly, some readers are wondering at this point, "Just what is this PLANESCAPE(TM) thing and what does a DM do with it?" Fair question. As a first step to getting that answer, those wanting to know should read *A Player's Guide to the Planes*, which includes a thumbnail sketch of the worlds and characters in the PLANESCAPE setting. Before starting a game, that book should be read by the players, too, so they become familiar with the strange and wonderful possibilities of the

planes.

This book contains the rules and background information the DM needs to start a working PLANESCAPE campaign. The planes themselves are described herein, one by one, but only in enough detail to give the DM a gist of each place. (The planes are so vast and intricate that they cannot be properly explored in a single product. Instead, upcoming campaign expansions will detail sets of related planes. For instance, TSR, Inc. will publish Planes of Chaos in late 1994. Other expansions will focus on the Lawful Planes, the Neutral Planes, the Elemental Planes, and the Demiplanes.) Details about magic alterations, priests and their gods, and traveling from plane to plane are also covered in this book.

Sigil and Beyond describes the dimensionally impossible city of Sigil and the Outlands, along with a couple quick-start adventures that use both locales. Sigil and the surrounding lands provide the DM with a base for a full-fledged campaign - a place where bold adventurers can mingle with beings not like themselves and rest between forays into the bizarre reaches of the Outer Planes.

In addition to the books, the PLANESCAPE campaign setting box contains four map sheets, a Monstrous Supplement, and a DM's screen. To fully use the PLANESCAPE setting the DM needs a copy of the Outer Planes appendix of the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM(R), which contains many of the creatures, both fiendish and helpful, found throughout the planes. Note that a lot of monsters will be mentioned just in passing in this book; complete descriptions appear in the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM, in the Monstrous Supplement included in this box, or in products to come, as needed. Those DMs who are interested in the powers - the deities of the planes - will want to read Monster Mythology (2128) and Legends & Lore (2108). 'Course, the DUNGEON MASTER Guide and the Player's Handbook are prerequisites to any AD&D® game, berk.

THE SCOPE OF PLANES

*Pike it, berk! I'm Thor's proxy,
and your laws don't apply to me.
- Last words of Franok Heiden, to a Mercykiller*

The multiverse is a big place, and logically it has to be because hypothetically it encompasses every AD&D campaign world ever created, whether these are made by TSR or by any of the thousands of DMs who play AD&D games. This is all theoretical, of course, since no one has recorded all the campaigns created for the AD&D game, yet theoretically they're all out there somewhere.

With all that space, it would be easy for a DM to be overwhelmed by the infinite spaces and possibilities for a PLANESCAPE campaign. To keep this from happening, the DM should plan to restrict the scope of "known territory", gradually introducing new areas to the player characters as the campaign grows. In fact, this is similar to the process of creating a standard campaign on a prime-material world. There, most DMs start with a single castle, village, or town and a suitable adventure site nearby: a ruined keep, an abandoned temple, or a dark forest. As the campaign grows and the DM's ambitions increase, more and more territories are added to the setting until a world emerges. Now apply that basic approach to a PLANESCAPE campaign: Starting from a small base, the DM expands the campaign. However, instead of adding new kingdoms or wildernesses, the DM gives the player characters more planar gates and portals to choose from. Each opening leads to a particular place within a plane, already selected and defined by the DM. In this way, controlling the growth of a planar campaign is no different than keeping a group of player characters from wandering in undesired directions in a normal prime-material wilderness setting.

In a PLANESCAPE campaign, the city of Sigil and the surrounding terrain of the Outlands provide that needed campaign base. Of all the planar worlds and possibilities, these areas are given the most detail in this boxed set. As mentioned, other planes in which players will adventure later are described in less detail, but much more will be said about them in future products. In the meantime, there's enough adventure hooks and kips to explore in this box to walk a party of bashers from the 1st to the 3rd level of experience - and then some! Midand high-level cutters won't have time to give it the yawn, either, if the DM is a blood.

This campaign set assumes that DMs will be running a planar campaign, one where Sigil is the origin of the player characters - their "home town", so to speak. This approach can be true even if the player characters are a mixture of prime and planar types, as primes are simply those characters who have found their way to Sigil and permanently set up shop there.

If desired, though, the DM can use the PLANESCAPE setting as a temporary adjunct to a prime-material campaign. Established characters can pass between Sigil and their prime-material campaign world by means of spells, magical items, and special portals. While this allows Sigil and the planes to be simply visited by characters from

a regular campaign, in the end the PLANESCAPE setting will lose some of its unique character and mystery with this campaign style. Player characters will no doubt become distracted by other concerns in their tiny prime-material worlds, and they'll never fully explore the wonders of this strange new setting. On the other hand, some players are true "primes" at heart, and they may prefer only an occasional sojourn into the planes.

Another option is to fully integrate the PLANESCAPE setting into an ongoing campaign. A temporary or permanent portal between the old campaign world and Sigil could exist at the DM's whim. Established characters could pass through Sigil en route to the planes and new, planar characters could be created as players desire. Instead of viewing Sigil and the planes as separate worlds, they would become another part of the DM's expanded campaign world.

The best way to view the PLANESCAPE campaign is as one would view any prime-material AD&D campaign. It has a central base for player characters (Sigil), a relatively settled area around it (the Outlands), a frontier (the gate towns at the borders of the other planes), and a wilderness (the planes themselves). Scattered throughout are traditional adventuring opportunities dungeons, ruins, castles, fortresses - but the planes are filled with their own, special wonders of all sorts.

One thing the PLANESCAPE setting is not: It's not just a set of rules for getting from here to there. Indeed, traveling from plane to plane is ridiculously easy, once a body knows how. It's merely a matter of casting the right spell, having the right magical item, or (most frequently) stepping through the right door. Traveling to another plane doesn't require a journey taking days or weeks; it happens almost instantaneously. Time isn't lost in getting there, and special preparations aren't necessary to make the journey - only to survive the destination.

Pure fact is, the PLANESCAPE game is far from traditional. That dungeon to be explored might be the skull of a dead god on the Astral Plane, and the fortress of an efreeti prince could be a fiery volcano, to name just two of the excellent and virtually limitless possibilities. The multiverse of the planes can be ordinary, horrifying, enchanting, surreal, or impossible. With the DM's imagination, there's literally no limit to what can be done!

THE TONE OF THE PLANES

*I ain't barmy!
Don't ever call me barmy or
I'll nick you - got it?
- a resident of Pandemonium*

Good campaigns have a flavor and feel all their own, something that sets them apart from all the other campaigns out there. Krynn of the DRAGONLANCE(R) Saga has its epic struggle, the dark gloom of the RAVENLOFT(R) setting is rich with brooding horror, Elminster's FORGOTTEN REALMS(R) homeland has the vast sprawl of ancient empires, and Athas of the DARK SUN(R) world reeks of gritty survival. The PLANESCAPE setting has its own style and tone, too - something to capture the imaginations of players as they explore this strange world. It speaks to them with a certain voice and sets the tone for the worlds.

The PLANESCAPE setting is about ideas and philosophies, about "the meaning of the multiverse". It's not the dry, academic lectures of musty old professors, quoting things that don't much matter to the real world. A planar lives in a world where the meaning of the multiverse isn't just a question, it's a way of life. A planar doesn't just ask the question, he lives the answer. Take another look at some of the factions detailed in A Player's Guide to the Planes to get an idea of how it all plays out. This is a campaign where ideas are backed by actions and vice versa - swords, fists, magic, and ideology as needed. Count on it: Planars are tough because living philosophy ain't for weaklings!

This campaign setting is a world where the living mingle with the dead. A body can see the final reward or punishment because he can tour the place where he'll be sent when he dies, and that knowledge affects his point of view. Planars know just what the rewards of mercy, goodness, terror, and treachery are. They're tough because they know what happens if they're weak.

The PLANESCAPE setting is a world where the abstract is real and potent. Priests don't just pray for spells from abstract gods, but from "real" powers that can possibly be seen or visited. Wizards inhale a multiverse of magic in a single breath, for they explore places that shouldn't - couldn't - exist by normal laws. Warriors can seek absolute perfection of their skills on planes where all things achieve perfection. Rogues have the chance to acquire treasures beyond imagining, for all things that can't be imagined exist here. Planars are tough because they live in a world where raw power lies within their grasps.

The PLANESCAPE setting is cosmopolitan, too. Here is the place that fiends, devas, githyanki, and slaad all claim as home. The "normal" lot - humans and their ilk - aren't very often the rulers around here. They're just more participants in the great game. Planars scoff at the provincial attitudes of primes, who are often surprised to find

tanar'ri generals or githzerai sages at the next table, minding their own business. A planar grows up with the idea that anyone and anything can become powerful and important. The consequences? Planars are tough because their enemies are tougher.

All of this breeds a cynical worldliness. Planars have seen it all and survived most of it. Planars don't expect much sympathy from others because everybody's got a hard row to hoe. Good folks'll band together and help each other, but crying over bad luck isn't likely to get a body anywhere.

When running a PLANESCAPE campaign, the DM should definitely keep tone in mind. It's as important to a PLANESCAPE adventure as maps, monsters, and treasure. Planars think, act, even sound different from primes, and DMs should make those differences come to life in play. Remember that planars believe in the philosophies of their factions. Let their actions be motivated by those philosophies and carried out with a jaded laissez faire to the actions of others. When roleplaying, give the planars a distinctive voice. Get a feel for the jargon that permeates the books in this box. Use the list of planar slang provided and create more (it's called the Cant - see Sigil and Beyond). At first it might seem unnatural, but the patois of the planes will quickly become quite natural for enthusiastic DMs and their players.

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[A DM Guide to the Planes](#)

MAGIC AND THE PLANES

Only a clueless prime or a leatherheaded wizard would ever believe his magic is always going to work the same on every plane. It just ain't so, berk - not when the multiverse has got planes whose very essences are living fire, absolute perfection, howling despair, complete decay, or things even worse. Some of it should be obvious - using a holy word against a pit fiend on its home plane just won't work, as many a sodding basher has learned too late. Some of it ain't so clear, either, like can a cutter summon a djinni to Ysgard?

Some say experience is the best teacher, and a fool could learn a lot about the planes that way, but it'd be painful. A wise blood knows there's no reason to risk his own neck when he can learn from others. Why discover the hard way that fireball don't work the same on Limbo when a cutter can ask around in Sigil and learn? The moral of the story: *The DM shouldn't withhold the following information from the player characters as long as they're willing to look for it in the right places.*

EFFECTS ON SPELLS

*You figure a sword and
a bunch of spells make you tough?
It ain't what you got taht counts, bark
It's what you know.
- Fairven, a Cipher*

A lot of primes don't understand why magic changes so much from plane to plane. It doesn't happen to them on their worlds - they can travel from one end of the world to the other in places like Krynn, yet magic operates the same in every country they visit. Well, going to another plane's just a little bit more complicated than traveling cross-country. Sages have been arguing the causes and reasons for why each plane is magically different ever since they started thinking. 'Course, every faction's got its own answer, too. A Godsmen'll say it's because of the divine properties of each plane. A Guvner'll give a long analysis of how all the differences on each plane are interrelated into some grand order that follows certain logical laws they may or may not have yet to discern. A Xaositect just throws up his hands and says, "It's chaos, berk. What's the problem?"





In the end, why really doesn't matter - how does. Whatever the cause, each plane affects spells in a consistent way, and a body can count on that much at least. But for a wizard to make do on a plane, he or she's got to learn what those changes are.

Not surprisingly, there are three things a spellcaster's always got to keep in mind, no matter where his spell goes off: 1) the effect of magic on creatures in their home planes, 2) the relative position of other planes involved in the spell, and 3) the availability of extradimensional space. These points are fairly easy to pick up on and remember. It's the changes that affect individual wizard spell schools on specific planes that can put a sod in the dead-book before he's got them all straight in his head. Fortunately, it usually takes just one or two unpleasant surprises before most mages wise up and start making notes.

NATIVE SONS

Certain rules hold true no matter what plane a being's on, be it the Prime Material, the Astral, an Inner, or an Outer Plane. The most universal of these deals with a being's home plane. Everybody's got a home plane, and it's not necessarily the place they haunt now. A prime living in Sigil still calls the Prime Material Plane his home plane. It's not where a being lives that matters; it's where he was born, hatched, or sprouted. Home planes matter because a lot of spells work only on creatures either inside or outside their home planes.

The spells most affected by a being's home plane are abjurations and summonings.

Most abjurations protect against creatures from another plane, and a few (like holy word) can drive a creature back to its home plane. In either case, an abjuration can't affect a creature on its home plane. For example, some primes might try to use protection from evil to protect themselves from efreet while they're in the City of Brass. They figure the spell works at home, so it should work on the plane of Fire, too, but it doesn't. The City of Brass is on the efreet's home plane, so the genies aren't an extraplanar there and the protection spell won't work. If anybody was summoned, it was the fool prime.

The home plane has the reverse effect on summoning spells. Specifically, unless it's a spell that summons creatures from another plane (such as conjure elemental or gate), a summoning's got to draw on something close at hand. A monster summoning I can only summon up monsters from the same plane. For instance, casting a monster summoning won't cause a succubus to appear on Ysgard; it's not the fiend's home plane, and not even a plane where it can normally be found.

CONNECTED PLANES

When a prime wizard casts conjure elemental, he usually doesn't think about where the elemental comes from. The creature appears and that's that. Spells make for a lot more planar traveling than most folks suspect,

though. Take that conjure elemental spell: It (obviously) has to reach the Elemental Planes in order to work. Cut off that connection and the spell can't function. Now, primes tend not to notice any of this because the Prime Material Plane's connected to all the other planes, either through the Ethereal or Astral. The same just ain't true for the Inner and Outer Planes. The Inner Planes are cut off from the Astral Plane (and thus the Outer Planes) while the Outer Planes are cut off from the Ethereal (and thus the Inner Planes).

So what's this mean? It means that on the Inner Planes a spellcaster or a priest can't normally use things like the astral spell or raise dead. And on the Outer Planes, the same person would have troubles with conjure elemental and aerial servant, since these call upon things found on the Inner Planes. In some cases, a spell reaches through either the Ethereal or the Astral Plane, depending on who or what the caster is after. For example, contact higher plane passes through the Astral Plane to reach the powers on the Outer Planes and through the Ethereal Plane to reach the elemental lords, but a spell slinger can't reach Arborea from the Ethereal and he can't call the plane of Air from the Astral - get it?

A complete list of spells that have planar pathways (spells that must access any specific plane or group of planes) is given in Table I at left. Although priest spells aren't affected by planar pathways, those that cross dimensions are listed in Table I because magical items that perform priest spell-like effects are impacted by planar boundaries.

TABLE I: SPELLS WITH PLANAR PATHWAYS

Astral

Astral spell*
 Astral window*
 Divination*
 Duo-dimension
 Find familiar**
 Identify
 Join with astral traveler*
 Raise dead*
 Reincarnation
 Resurrection*
 Speak with astral traveler*
 Speak with dead*

Ethereal

Aerial servant*
 Chariot of Sustarre*
 Conjure earth elemental*
 Conjure elemental
 Conjure fire elemental*
 Demishadow magic
 Demishadow monsters
 Distance distortion
 Elemental swarm*
 Energy drain
 Estate transference
 Etherwalk*

Dual

Augury*
 Commune*
 Contact other plane
 Dismissal
 Divine inspiration*
 Drawmij's instant summons
 Draw upon holy might*
 Ensnarement
 Hornung's random dispatcher
 Sanctify*
 Vision

Extradimensional

Deep pockets
 Extradimensional detection*
 Extradimensional manipulation*
 Extradimensional pocket*
 Leomund's secret chest
 Maze
 Mordenkainen's
 Magnificent mansion
 Rope trick
 Seclusion*
 Transformation*

Invisible stalker
Khazid's procurement
Leomund's secret chest
Lorloveim's creeping shadow
Lorloveim's shadowy transformation
Major creation
Minor creation
Negative plane protection*
Reflecting pool*
Restoration*
Shades
Shadowcat
Shadow engines*
Shadow magic
Shadow monsters
Shadow walk
Summon shadow
Vanish

* May or may not cross planar pathways, depending upon the creature called.

** Priestly magic with planar pathways - affected only if used through a scroll or other magical item.

EXTRA DIMENSIONS

A handful of spells and magical items create weird little pockets known as extradimensional spaces. Using these spells isn't normally a problem - unless a body's on the Astral Plane, where there aren't any extra dimensions. Try to use a rope trick there and nothing's going to happen. Now, the reason to mention this is that the planes aren't perfectly mapped out, especially all those little the demiplanes in the Ethereal. There's a chance any one of those might be like the Astral - completely cut off from the extradimensional world. If that's the case, it'll be noted in the description of that particular place, so keep an eye peeled for it.

CATEGORICAL ALTERATIONS

Aside from the above considerations, most spell changes are grouped by school. All spells of a given school of magic are affected the same way. The possible effects on a school are themselves divided into enhanced (+), altered (#), diminished (>), and null (0). See Table II for a list of spell schools and their status on each of the planes.

Enhanced (+) indicates that spells of the noted schools have their power increased on the given plane. The effect is probably due to the similarity of the magic to the properties of the plane itself. Enhanced spells function at one level higher than normal. Thus, a fireball spell cast by an 8th-level wizard on the Elemental Plane of Fire actually inflicts 9 dice of damage. Saving throws against enhanced spells that cause damage are made with a -1 adjustment, while saving throws against enhanced spells that confer protection are made with a +1 bonus.

Altered (#) spell schools are the most common, making for different spell results based on either a philosophical or physical property of the plane. The exact result of the alteration varies from spell to spell

within the school, but the same general principle is applied to all spells of its type. Thus, fire-based spells on the Paraelemental Plane of Ice produce scalding explosions of steam rather than fire.

Diminished (>) spell schools have their effects reduced, due to some opposition between the school and the nature of the plane. Diminished spells function at one level lower than normal. For instance, an air-based spell used on the plane of Water is automatically diminished by the nature of that plane's element. Furthermore, diminished indicates that the casting of highlevel spells is impossible. Because the power of this magic is more than can be tolerated by the forces of the plane, spells higher than 4th level can't be cast.

Null (&) indicates that spells of the noted schools are simply unavailable while the wizard is on that plane. The magic of the spell is too opposed to the nature of the plane, so spells of that school don't function within the plane. Cast that spell and it's gone, berk.

TABLE II: SCHOOL ALTERATIONS BY PLANE

Plane	Con		Enc	Ill	Inv	Elemental							
	Abj	Alt				Sum	Div	Cha	Pha	Evo	Nec	Wil	Air
Astral	-	#	>	-	-	#	-	-	+	#	#	#	#
Ethereal	>	-	#	&	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	#	#
Elemental: Air	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	+	>	>	>
Elemental: Earth	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	>	+	>
Elemental: Fire	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	+	>	&
Elemental: Water	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	&	>	+
PE: Ice	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	-	>	>	-
PE: Magma	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	-	-	>
PE: Ooze	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	>	-	-
PE: Smoke	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	-	-	>	>
QE: Lightning	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	+	-	>	#
QE: Mineral	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	>	>	+	#
QE: Steam	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	-	+	-	>
QE: Radiance	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	+
Positive Energy	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	#	+	-	+	#	#
Negative Energy	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	#	>	>	>	#	#
QE: Ash	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	#	&	-	#
QE: Dust	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	#	-	-	>
QE: Vacuum	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	&	&	-	-
QE: Salt	-	-	#	-	-	-	#	-	-	-	-	-	&
Abyss	-	#	#	#	-	+	-	#	+	#	#	#	#
Acheron	-	-	#	#	-	-	-	#	>	#	#	#	#
Arborea	-	-	#	#	#	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#
Arcadia	-	-	#	#	#	#	-	#	>	#	#	#	#
Baator	-	-	#	#	-	-	-	#	>	#	#	#	#
Beastlands	-	#	#	#	#	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#
Bytopia	-	-	#	#	-	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#
Carceri	-	#	#	#	-	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#

Elysium	-	-	#	#	-	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#
Gehenna	-	-	#	#	>	-	+	#	-	#	#	#	#
Gray Waste	-	-	#	#	#	-	-	#	-	#	#	#	#
Limbo	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Mechanus	-	-	#	#	-	&	-	#	&	#	#	#	#
Mount Celestia	-	-	#	#	-	-	-	#	>	#	#	#	#
Outlands	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Pandemonium	-	#	#	#	-	-	-	#	+	#	#	#	#
Ysgard	-	#	#	#	-	-	-	#	+	#	#	#	#
Plane	Abj	Alt	Sum Con	Div	Cha Enc	Pha Ill	Evo Inv	Nec	Wil	Air	Fire	Earth Elemental	Water

- No alteration to school
- # Alterations to school occurs; see plane description for details
- > School is diminished on plane
- + School is enchanced on plane
- & School is null on plane

Abbreviations: *A* Air; *Abj* Abjuration; *Alt* Alteration; *Con/Sum* Conjunction/Summoning; *Div* Divitation; *E* Earth; *Enc/Cha* Enchantment/Charm; *F* Fire; *Ill/Pha* Illusion/Phantasm; *Inv/Evo* Invocation/Evocation; *Nec* Necromantic; *PE* Paraelemental Plane; *QE* Quasielemental Plane; *W* Water; *Wil* Wild Magic.

SPELL KEYS

*Spell keys are like scars -
you never lose them.
- Meg o' the Maze*

With all these alterations and restrictions, a spellcaster's life on the planes could be nigh impossible. Imagine some poor sod of an elemental wizard out there on Gehenna, cut off from the Ethereal and unable to cast the most powerful of his spells. Kind of makes a wizard just want to stay home, eh?

Good thing, then, that there's a way around it: For each plane, there are secret spell keys that attune a wizard to the magical vibrations of that plane. Once the spellcaster's in harmony with the plane's essence, some or all of his spells may behave normally again. It's really not much of a dark, since most planar mages know the keys exist, even if they don't know the keys for every plane. It's the spellcasters from the Prime Material who tend to be most clueless about such things, much to the general amusement of their planar counterparts.

Most keys, regardless of what they are, add 1 to the initiative or casting time of the spell.

Spell keys take on lots of forms, which are never the same from plane to plane. On Ysgard spell keys are almost always runes - traced out, spoken, thrown, or whatever - invoked as the spell is cast. On Mechanus keys take the form of equations - mathematical formulae that alter, just slightly, the nature of the universe. On Limbo, the heart of Chaos, the keys are constantly changing, so a sodding spellcaster is never quite sure what's going to work right next.

Different keys have different ranges of power. The most common is the general key. In this case, a single key affects all spells of the same type. For instance, a general key might restore the spells of an altered school or

reactivate all fire-based magic. Other keys are not so generous and are known as specific keys. These empower a single, particular spell. On Mount Celestia, a cutter needs a special key to make fear work properly.

Another specific key allows a wizard to cast conjure elemental spells on the Outer Planes, but it should be pointed out that the thing which shows up is made of elements that exist on the plane where the spell is cast, and the spirit of the creature is drawn from the essence of that same plane, too. Those elementals ain't the same as "true" elementals, and the summoning sod who doesn't take that into consideration is in for a long day. (See "Magic on the Outer Planes" for details.)

It doesn't take a club to point out that keys have limits, and only a leatherheaded wizard's going to think they'll solve everything. Some schools and spells simply have no keys - most times that's because the nature of the plane is too incompatible to the spell's magic. No matter what's done, a fireball won't work on the plane of Water, and wild magic will never function in the rigorously ordered universe of Mechanus.

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PRIESTS AND THEIR GODS

All these changes of spell effects aren't just for wizards - magic changes for priests, too. Priests have got their own considerations that affect spellcasting, and it's all tied to their high-up men, their deities. The biggest deal with priests is that they don't get their power from science and study, but from their deities. Now, since nearly



all the powers (except for a few elemental types) live on the Outer Planes, some sages would postulate that

most priests on the Inner Planes are out of luck. After all, by the logic already explained, the Inner Planes are cut off magic-wise from the Outer Planes. Well, those wouldbe sages are wrong. That's what happens when a berk tries to follow logic out here.

Here's the dark of it: If the powers couldn't reach their followers everywhere in the multiverse, they wouldn't be very fearsome, would they? Think about it. Powers are unfathomable, mysterious, and magnificent. How they overcome the logic problem that binds the rest of the magic-using multiverse isn't found in the mortal world. 'Course, the factols debate it: Godsmen say mortals haven't achieved internal understanding, and the Athar use it as evidence that there's a greater universe beyond this one. Are they right? Are they wrong? What's it matter what the poor sods think? The fact is simple: Priests pray and get their spells.

Contacting their gods to learn spells isn't the problem for priests - wandering into enemy territory is. Here's the chant: The planes - Inner, Outer, and even some of the Demiplanes are territory specifically beholden to one group of powers or another, powers that don't look kindly on interlopers, especially not provocateurs from some other plane. Some powers, especially those down on the Lower Planes, have enough trouble holding to a truce with rivals on their own plane, let alone with gods from planes that differ both morally and physically. All the sodding priests out to impress their high-ups could make the Outer Planes a very bloody place. Still, putting every enemy priest in the deadbook's only going to make trouble for a deity, and since it's not possible to lock all the doors to a plane, the powers find other ways to suppress the meddling agents of their rivals.

The end of it all is that there's a two-part understanding that keeps the multiverse from going to war. First off, gods just don't go sending legions of their faithful into each other's home planes. It's bad form and bad business, even for tanar'ri and baatezu, who have their hands full with each other as it is. *Second, and most importantly, when a priest character is on an Outer Plane other than where his deity resides, he functions as if he were one experience level lower for every plane between himself and his deity's home plane.*

For example, Nayla the Righteous is a 10th-level priest leading a band of faithful warriors into the heart of Pandemonium. The home plane of Nayla's deity is Bytopia. Moving around the outside of the Great Ring (see the poster map of the planes), Elysium, the Beastlands, Arborea, Ysgard, and Limbo all lie between Bytopia and Pandemonium. Therefore, while on Pandemonium Nayla is effectively a 5th-level priest, and all those spells that higher-level clerics wield are lost to her until she gets a little closer to home.

Spell loss is instantaneous and temporary, taking place the moment a plane is entered. If the character currently has memorized more spells and spell levels than are allowed, the extras (of the player's choice) are instantly wiped from his mind. Upon crossing a boundary that brings him closer to his deity's home plane, the priest's spell levels are instantly restored. However, knowledge of lost spells doesn't instantly return; the character must rest and pray for spells as usual.

Note that Nayla's "power conduit" doesn't trace the shortest route to her home plane, like magical items do (see below). Why? Because the gods don't want it to work that way! It stands to reason that a priest from Bytopia should have a tougher time casting spells on Pandemonium than on Limbo - not everything powers do is unfathomable, berk. On the other hand, if a priest's deity resides on one of the Inner Planes, he's going to lose three effective levels on any Outer Plane, as the Astral, Prime, and Ethereal lie between him and his power source. The same limitation applies to those clerics of the Outer Planes who visit the Inner Planes, so in this case priest magic does work like magical items. (Is the logic circular? Remember the Unity of Rings principle?) At any rate, the moral of the story is: If you can't take all your spells with you, take lots of scrolls they're not affected by any of this rival-power/plane stuff.

POWER KEYS

*We're marooned in Battor,
You've lost the gate key,
a dozen pit fiends are headed this way,
the paladin is down and might be dead,
and your power key's a fake - so what?
- Hortaz of the Bleak Cabal*

A priest, because a plane's home to his high-up man, can also discover power keys. A power key doesn't just restore a spell to normal (like a spell key does), it makes the spell work even better than before. For instance, a cleric who has the right key can cast cure light wounds and get the maximum effect every time. Power keys are rare, very rare, and the priest who knows one should count himself a lucky soul. Whereas general and specific keys are just part of the planar landscape, power keys (as their name says) are created by the powers themselves.

A power key can change anytime the deity wills it, so there's no promise that a priest can use the same key forever. Odin might teach one of his priests a rune that's a power key to improve all divinations. If that priest should foolishly go out and teach this to all his disciples, Odin might get offended and change the power key so the priest's rune no longer works.

The gods use power keys to reward faithful servants or as extra muscle on a particularly dangerous quest, and they only pass them out to those who deserve them. A priest can't request a power key or even find one in a treasure trove. The best guess as to why power keys are so carefully guarded is that each costs the deity a tiny portion of its might. Not many deities relish the idea of weakening themselves, so power keys are pretty rare.

There's one risk in using power keys that should be mentioned, particularly to priests on the Lower Planes. More than a few of the evil powers enjoy making false power keys. It amuses them no end to let out the chant that standing on one foot while casting a spell or plucking the feathers from a chicken will work as the power key to a whole group of spells. If a priest's lucky, this humor won't cause anything worse than not having a key at all. More likely, the false power key's going to alter the spell in ways the priest surely won't want. In other words, when a berk gets a key, he'd better make sure it's from his deity and not some rival.

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MAGICAL ITEMS

Most magical items are bound by the same rules and limitations as wizard spells when it comes to functioning on the planes. Take a wand of fire to the plane of Water and all it's really good for is making harmless bubbles of steam. A wand of wonder, which uses wild magic, is a useless stick on orderly Mechanus. And unlike spells, there are no keys to make magical items work properly. Table III in the next column lists magical items and the spell school equivalents they fall into. Refer to Table II for specific alteration effects on magical items.

TABLE III: SPELL SCHOOL EQUIVALENTS OF MAGICAL ITEMS*

Potions and Oils generally fall in the alteration school, changing the user in some fashion.

Philters are usually enchantment/charms.

Protection Scrolls are abjurations.

Rings fall into several categories, depending on function. Most are either alteration (ring of blinking, ring of fire resistance) or enchantment/charm (ring of human influence, ring of mammal control). Rings that project

energy (ring of the ram) are invocation/evocation. Those that call on beings are conjuration/summoning. A ring of protection or a ring of spell-turning uses abjuration magic. Rings with several uses abide by the effects of the "spell" being cast at the moment.

Wands are generally of the invocation/evocation school.

Staves are affected according to the spell being cast. Weaponlike functions use alteration magic.

Rods either go by the spell-like power used at the moment or use alteration magic for weaponlike abilities. Several rods (the rod of rulership, rod of beguiling, rod of splendor, and the rod of terror) use enchantment/charm magic.

Miscellaneous Magical Items can use the full range of magic schools. The best approach is to compare the item's effects to existing spells. Bracers of brachiation are alteration magic, Bucknard's everfull purse is conjuration/summoning, and a libram of gainful conjuration is necromantic (since it adds life energy in the form of a new level).

Artifacts are unaffected by the planes. Unless specifically noted otherwise, an artifact functions normally on all planes, although even the effects of an artifact are subject to the natural laws of the plane. Thus, an artifact that creates a massive fireball cannot overcome the problems facing fireballs within the solid ocean of the plane of Water.

* When determining the planar effect on a special magical item, compare it to existing spells - a potion of healing would be classified as being in the same school as a cure light wounds spell, and a ring of flying would be from the same school as a fly spell. When there is no clear match for a magical item, the type of item can be used to determine any alteration, as determined in Table III. called.

MAGICAL WEAPONS AND ARMOR

When magical weapons and armor are made, they become attuned to the energies of the specific plane on which they are crafted. Move such an item away from that plane and its connection to those magical energies weakens. The further it moves from its home plane, the weaker the item becomes, instantly losing one plus for every plane's distance from its home. For instance, take a sword +2 made on the Prime Material to the Astral or Ethereal Plane and it becomes a sword +1. Carry it further still, to the Outer or Inner Planes, and it becomes just a sword +0, with no magical bonuses at all. Magical armor suffers the same fate. Despite being inert, these items still detect as magical to a detect magic spell or other divination device. Magical items reduced to 0 pluses are effectively inert (until they're moved closer to their home planes). At that point, extra abilities - speech, spell-like powers, and so on - can't be used. (Weapons with multiple pluses, such as a sword +1, +4 vs. lycanthropes, are not rendered inert until the entire +4 bonus is lost.) Note that a sword +2 three times removed from its home plane doesn't become a sword -1. The absolute bottom is 0.

To keep track of this change during a game, affected weapons can be noted in adventure keys by placing the modified bonus to hit in parentheses - for example: sword +2 (+1). An inert blade would be noted as a sword +2 (0). An inert item isn't completely useless, for it can still be used against creatures that can only be hit by any magical weapon. If a +1 or greater enchantment is specified, however, the sword must retain at least that many bonuses to be effective.

Those bloods who figure cursed weapons are affected in the same way will have to pike it when they exercise the theory. *A cursed blade interacts directly with its wielder no matter where he stands, and all the plane hopping in the multiverse won't change that.*

When calculating the distance between the current plane and the home plane, the DM should remember that the Astral Plane connects to every Outer Plane and that the Ethereal connects to every Inner Plane. So, if a character on Pandemonium uses a magical sword forged on Gehenna, the sword loses 2 from its pluses because the shortest route traces through the Astral (or the Outlands) to Pandemonium. If the sword's home plane were Limbo, it would only lose 1 plus, since Limbo and Pandemonium are directly adjacent (see the map of the planes). The same pattern applies to the Inner Planes, where the Ethereal serves as the link. The greatest number of planes that can separate two points is four. If an Inner Plane is a weapon's home, the longest path would be Ethereal to Prime Material to Astral to Outer.

When calculating distance, the demiplanes, extradimensional spaces, conduits, color pools, vortices, and everything else have no effect. A demiplane in the Ethereal doesn't count as a separate plane; likewise, a conduit from the Prime Material to an Outer Plane doesn't reduce the number of planes separating the two.

Fortunately, the variety of planar sources isn't that broad, since most weapons and armor the characters are likely to get come from only a few sources. With the exception of those few deities devoted to the forge, the powers discourage folks on their turf from creating magical items willy-nilly. It doesn't do for even their agents to be making themselves powerful without permission, especially not in the eyes of some fiend-princes of the Lower Planes. Petitioners as a rule don't manufacture magical goods, since this doesn't very often bring them to the great reward they're striving for.

Forge work's not barred everywhere, of course, or there'd be no magic at all on the planes. Aside from the odd bit of godly crafting - something no sod is ever likely to stumble over Sigil's well known for its magical paraphernalia. The Great Bazaar (see Sigil and Beyond) in particular is lined with stalls where a forgemaster wizard'll take an order for a bit of custom work. 'Course, it'll cost a cutter a lot of jink to pay for the job, but there's enough money on the planes to keep a dozen wizards in steady work.

The main reason Sigil's got more of this work than anywhere else is because the gods can't interfere with the business there - not at the center of the Outlands, and not on the Lady of Pain's turf. With nothing to prevent their hand, emigrant dwarves, cunning tieflings, and practical humans have all set up shop in relative safety. Relative safety, mind, because there's always the threat of some offended god sending a proxy to put a body in the dead-book. Plus, there's always thieves practicing the cross-trade on lucrative targets.

There's another reason Sigil's weaponry is in demand, a practical one that keeps the business coming. Weapons made in Sigil lose only a single plus on the Great Ring, as the Outlands are adjacent to all the Outer Planes. It's the best place for a planar to make a weapon, short of the Astral, and that plane's too full of dangers.

Another common source of weapons is the Prime Material Plane, as so many primes have been making, trading, and getting themselves killed over magical weapons for eons. 'Course, prime-based weapons suffer the loss of 2 pluses on both the Inner and Outer Planes. This means most prime-material gear is a patch weaker than what a planar might make. All told, the best that can be said of prime weapons is that they're equally disadvantaged on the Inner and Outer Planes.

Because of its importance to a PLANESCAPE campaign, DMs and players should keep track of the home plane of magical weapons - but this doesn't need to be a difficult and secretive process. The source of most weapons made on the planes is easy to tell; a sword made on the Abyss just doesn't look the same as a sword from Mount Celestia. If a basher can't identify the source, there are experts in places like Sigil who will gladly do so (for a fee, of course).

When a magical weapon is discovered, the DM can choose one of three options for its origin. First, it can be given a particular home plane, carefully chosen for some specific adventure purpose. This choice is best

reserved for those really rare items made by proxies. Getting and using one of these items is usually a highlight touch to a grand adventure: Braving the 50th layer of the Abyss, the player characters discover the armor and sword of the late Imperious the Faithful, who had been specially outfitted and sent on the same quest the characters are now trying to complete. That'll give the players pause.

Second, the weapon's home plane can be the same as the current plane. This is quick and convenient at the time the weapon's found, but can lead to confusing bookkeeping, especially if the characters travel to several planes and acquire gear on the way. Also, what seems like reasonably good magic when first found can prove weak and nearly useless as the group travels farther away.

The third and easiest solution is to assume the weapon comes from Sigil. This way, most weapon adjustments in the entire party are consistent throughout the majority of the Outer Planes, simplifying bookkeeping for players and DMs. This choice should be used as the default unless stated otherwise. That way it serves as a protection, should the DM forget, the players lose their notes, or some similar calamity occur.

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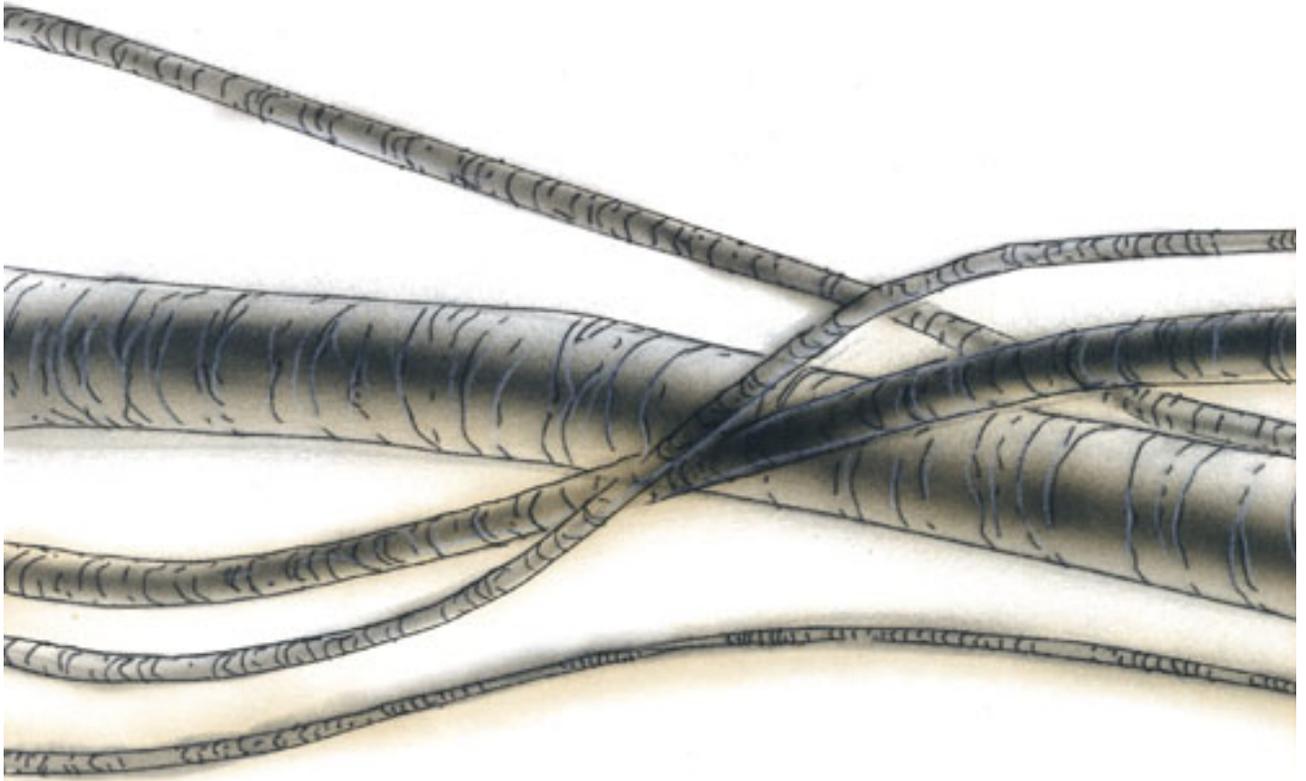
[A DM Guide to the Planes](#)

TRAVELING THE PLANES

For a cutter to make it on the planes, he's got to know how to get around quickly. It won't do if a sod's got to wander through Gehenna and the Gray Waste because he doesn't know the quickest way to Carceri. It's pure fact: No planar wants to rely on spellcasters just to cross the Ethereal. For a blood to survive on the planes, he's got to learn the dark of portals, doors, conduits, vortices, and other planar pathways. Only then can he really safely adventure on the planes. 'Course, nobody starts off knowing all this stuff - it's something most bashers learn as they go along.

KEEPING CONTROL

A practical problem for every PLANESCAPE campaign is that of how characters will travel through the vast expanse of the planes. Normal wilderness movement from one infinite universe to the next is impossible. Except on the ring of the



Outer Planes, a body can't ride, sail, or fly from plane to plane - it just don't work that way. Furthermore, a character doesn't just walk from the Prime Material to the Astral Plane, and sailing a boat across the fiery seas of the plane of Fire is going to take a pretty special boat! Even on a plane where characters can travel overland, like Arcadia, the distances between realms can be so vast as to be impossible to negotiate.

But in many ways, these problems are all similar to those faced by a DM running a prime-material wilderness adventure: Unless given limitations and guidance, player characters can travel anywhere in such a wilderness, far and wide of the DM's carefully laid plans. Also, while the multiverse offers endless possibilities for adventure, players can be quickly overwhelmed by the options. DMs in either case are faced with the impossible need to be prepared for every prospect. Few are instantly ready when the players decide their characters want to go *there* instead of *here*.

Therefore, spells, magical items, portals, pools, conduits, and vortices are just the tools to help the DM keep the planes manageable. Over most of these the DM has absolute control. The characters can't independently open a new portal in Sigil or direct the flow of a vortex; these things the DM decides. Likewise, the DM chooses what magical items are discovered and where color pools will lead. With these, the DM can prevent the player characters from reaching certain planes.

But blocking the characters from taking unauthorized tangents is only half the solution. If the players don't want their characters to explore the DM's latest creation, then blocking off all other choices only leads to frustration. Interested players certainly don't need to have their characters pushed, and they'll probably talk about where they want to go long before they know how to get there. Good DMs watch for those cues and use them.

TO AND FROM THE PRIME

Although most planars won't admit it, a prime's claim that his home world is the hub for the multiverse makes a lot of sense. It's the only plane where both the Astral and Ethereal Planes intersect, so it is something of a crossroads of the multiverse.

Yet for some reason, the Prime Material Plane isn't very open to planar travel. Folks from the Outer Planes are always amazed at the effort it takes for a group of primes to shift from one plane to another. This is mainly because primes lack the natural ability to pass between planes, a power most planars take for granted. Planar travel to and from the Prime Material usually requires special spells or magical items to make the journey. Oh, there are a few vortices and conduits, but not many and they're little known. In addition, a few of Sigil's portals open onto worlds of the Prime Material Plane.

Nevertheless, the astral spell and plane shift spells are by far the most common methods for traveling off the Prime Material. The first carries the caster (and those traveling with her) to the Astral Plane only. A plane shift is a quicker method for reaching a distant plane, since it allows the caster to skip the tedious business of traveling through any intervening planes. It does have more risk, though, since the caster is there "body and soul," as it were, and if the caster is killed, she's as dead as if she'd been killed on the Prime Material Plane. The astral spell, on the other hand, creates a new body for the caster, and this allows her to take more risks on the Outer Planes. When an astral body is killed, the caster's spirit immediately returns to her body on the Prime Material Plane. (It's said the worst this causes is a bad case of nerves and a nasty headache.)

Curiously, although the Prime Material Plane is a nexus point to the Ethereal, wizards and priests have yet to come up with an ethereal version of the astral spell. The best-guess reason for this is that without the silver cord - something unique to the Astral Plane it's impossible to make a version of this spell work on the Ethereal Plane. Sure enough, wizards haven't been able to create any spell that specifically gives them a door to the Ethereal Plane, even though this isn't a problem for magical items.

The items listed below provide other common ways for primes to reach the planes. These have the advantage that the DM can control what he or she chooses to give the players (and when).

- Amulet of the planes
- Cubic gate
- Mirror of mental prowess
- Oil of etherealness
- Plate mail of etherealness
- Robe of stars
- Rod of passage

- Staff of the magi
- Trimia's catalogue of Outer Plane artifacts
- Well of many worlds

It should be said that there are several problems in relying on magical items for getting bashes around. For one, several of these items do more than just open a path, to the planes. Giving a cutter a staff of the magi means giving him a good deal of firepower, maybe more than the DM desires. Second, a number of these items can be used only by wizards. This means everyone in the group may have to rely on a single character - another potential problem and conflict. Third, other items such as oil of etherealness have limited uses, so some characters may find themselves stranded on a plane without a way to get home. Finally, there's the matter of just giving magical items away. If at all possible, adventurers should have to earn their magical items, not just conveniently receive them.

What most primes don't know is that there are ways that anybody can use to get around the multiverse, if they know the dark of them. These are a few means to move the player characters around the planes that don't rely on spells or magical items. They are the gatelike passages known as elemental vortices, astral conduits, and portals. Color pools are accessible, but only through the Astral Plane.

ELEMENTAL VORTICES

Vortices are direct openings between one of the four basic Elemental Planes (Earth, Air, Fire, and Water) and the Prime Material Plane. They aren't the easiest things to use, since vortices are found only at the heart of great concentrations of elemental stuff on the Prime Material Plane. This means most vortices gape at the heart of things like volcanic caldera, oceanic trenches, soaring mountain peaks, or the deepest mines. Vortices are, however, very stable - such large concentrations of matter seldom shift much over the course of a human lifetime.

There also may be vortices that lead to the Quasiand Paraelemental Planes. None have yet been mapped, and if they exist they're probably only temporary things, brought into being by sudden passing events. A vortex to the Quasielemental Plane of Lightning might be found at the very center of a raging thunderstorm, and another to Radiance might be



located in the curling arm of a solar flame.

A vortex looks like a shimmering pool or wall of elemental stuff - fire swirls and bends with flaming magma, water ripples with deep cerulean colors, air shimmers like heat waves, and earth grinds and shifts like earthquake-trembled rock. When a basher knows what to look for, they aren't too hard to find.

There aren't any known vortices to the Energy Planes. Although both are basic life (or death) forces, wise bloods don't classify them as Elemental Planes.

ASTRAL CONDUITS

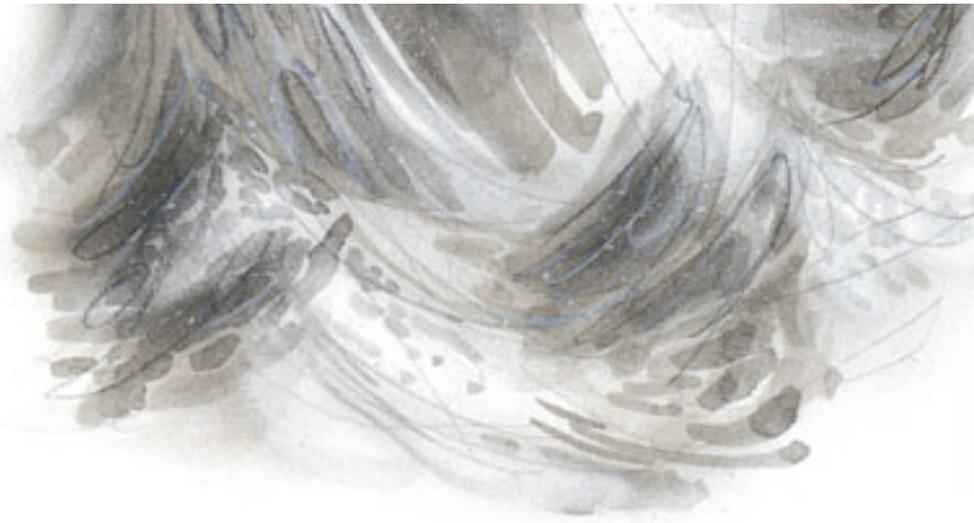
Conduits are shafts that go directly, from the Prime Material Plane to one of the Outer Planes. Conduits pass right through the Astral Plane and look like giant silver arteries there. They snake all the way through that plane in their journey from the Prime Material to one of the Outer Planes. Although it seems that conduits don't move, the chant from astral travelers is that these conduits are constantly twisting, writhing, and wriggling around on that plane. Luckily, though, the ends remain largely stable, most always dropping a berk off in pretty much the same place each time he passes through one.

In wizard talk, conduits are either young or mature. A young conduit goes only one way, so it's possible for a poor sod to step off a conduit into Baator and not have a way back. Mature conduits let a cutter step through in either direction, which can be useful until that pursuing fiend steps through, too. Whether young or mature, conduits can only take a being to the uppermost level of any plane, though there are other conduits that can go from one level of a plane to another. A berk can't go from the Prime Material Plane straight to the seventh layer of Mount Celestia or right down to the iciest layer of Baator through any astral conduit (though why a berk'd ever want to do the latter is beyond reasoning).

A fellow can't pick out where he's going to land, either. The first time through a conduit is blind chance. All a basher knows is that it'll be somewhere on some plane. In fact, most conduits tend to drop a sod somewhere in the middle of nowhere. This ain't necessarily as bad as it sounds, though, since a fiend's not too likely to be generous toward unannounced visitors in its malignant home.

The maw of a conduit is invisible to normal sight. Under a spell like true seeing, it looks like a reflective haze - a cloudy mirror is another way to describe it. The haze is opaque, and certainly nothing can be seen of where the conduit leads or what might be on the other side. Conduits have the great advantage of being quick. They pop a body right through the Astral Plane in a nod and a wink, so a cutter doesn't have to waste any precious travel time. However, since they're often two-way, there's just as much chance of something unpleasant stepping off the Outer Planes as there is of a prime zipping to the Outer Planes for a quick adventure.

As conduits are pretty well anchored, there's a brisk trade in maps of their openings and endings. It pays to be real careful in buying these, however, because there's more than a few cony-catchers out there with



cunningly made forgeries, ready to work the cross-trade on some gully pri- me.

PORTALS

Portals are the doorways to and from Sigil, and they have a lot of advantages over vortices and conduits! First, a portal can connect to any layer of any plane at any point - it's just that one end is always anchored in Sigil. Step through an archway in Sigil and a sod might find himself on the 447th layer of the Abyss or the sixth level of Mount Celestia. Second, portals don't pass through any other planes. It's not like a conduit, where the traveler still has to go through the Astral Plane (although in just seconds). Portals directly link two places. Third, portals aren't as hostile as vortices. A cutter doesn't have to figure out how to reach the center of a volcano or the bottom of an ocean in order to use a portal. Most of them are easy to reach and pass through - provided a body knows where to look.

A portal may be easy to reach, but to do that a sod's got to find it, and that's another matter entirely. Portals generally don't advertise themselves. They don't glow with strange colors, and a being can't look through one and see the destination on the other side. They don't detect as magical, but their presence can be discovered with a true seeing spell, though even this won't reveal where they go. A basher can walk through a portal and have nothing at all happen, too, because each one takes a special gate key.

This key isn't like the one used for a normal lock and it isn't a spell or power key, either. This key's something particular to that portal - a word, an action, or an object carried across the threshold, for instance. Only when the key's used will the portal come to life. Then, the portal flashes with a brief flare of light golden, ruddy, hellish, or whatever - and an electrical crackle sounds as the traveler steps through. Those watching might see a brief glimpse of the destination, if they're quick to watch before the brilliance fades away.

Some portals are stable, some are temporary, and others seem to shift around in random patterns. Portals always ground their ends in some kind of arch. In Sigil, this is mostly doorways and gates. Out on the planes it might be anything - a palace door, a cave mouth, the curve of a bridge, even a canopy of tree branches. Because of this, portals are rarer on Limbo or the Ethereal and Astral Planes, where archlike shapes are harder to find. Portals to the Ethereal lead mostly to demiplanes of solid matter. Portals to the Astral have an unpleasant habit of grounding themselves in githyanki fortresses. On Limbo, portals constantly shift and move as new arches rise and old ones collapse in the turmoil of that pla- ne.

Sages aren't sure what the portals are and why they always have one end in Sigil. Theories abound, and it's something of a sport to try to propose an answer. It's a mystery that makes Guvners crazy - they can come up with the rules for what the portals do, but not those for why. Answers run from complicated calculations about Sigil as the nexus point of the multiverse to the incredible-sounding but perhaps accurate suggestion that the portals are living things which feed off the energies of Sigil and its travelers.

Who knows the real truth? It doesn't really matter - the portals work.

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THE GREAT ROAD

*You ever traveled the great road
and seen the madness out there, leatherhead?
Try it, and then tell me it all means something.*

... ain't really a road and it ain't all that great, but that's what folks call it: the Great Road, the Ring. Fact is, it's an idea more than a thing. There's actually a road on some planes, but mostly it's the thought of the Ring, the grand union of all the Outer Planes, that poets sing about. What it really is is a string of portals, permanent and unchanging, that link each Outer Plane to its adjacent fellows. Now, if a berk had the years and the compliance of the fiends in his path, he just might be able to walk the whole thing in sixteen lifetimes, but, then, who'd want to?

Each portal on the Great Road exists as an arch, like the portals of Sigil. However, looking through one of the arches of the Ring, a being can see his destination on the other side. Passing through doesn't require a key, either. All a being's got to do is step through the arch.

Towns, forts, encampments, even barricades spring up around the Great Road's portals. On the Upper Planes, they're usually used for trade and commerce, but on the Lower Planes these towns are staging points for the endless Blood War. These are dangerous places to pass through - a stranger here could get himself gutted as a spy or dragooned into the fiends' ranks. Most folks don't go there without a powerful reason.

Each Outer Plane has a permanent portal that leads to the Outlands, too. Towns sprout up around the Outlander end, like Plague-Mort, Ribcage, Glorium, and Automata. But even though these burgs sit on the Outlands, their character is very much that of the plane they watch. Ribcage, which lies at the portal to Baator, is thick with pestilence and horror, and Glorium, near Ysgard, is filled with noble virtue, and so on. These are places where low-level adventurers can get a taste of the planes with a little less risk involved. See Sigil arid Beyond for ideas and further information.

THE ETHEREAL PLANE

The cocoon of the Inner Planes, the Ethereal Plane is, in Marinj the Poet's words, "The grand and misty shore." For a body that's seen it, the description makes sense, because the Ethereal's like a great fog-bound realm with mists of green, red, silver, blue, and whatnot in between. In this a cutter can sometimes see shapes: windows to other planes or drifting globs of protomatter, the stuff of future demiplanes.

The Ethereal's more like an ocean than Marinj knew, as it has its shores and its deeps. When a berk first crosses the boundary into this plane, he's in the shallow end, called the Border Ethereal. While traveling in this region, a basher's not really here or there - he's not in the Ethereal or on his starting plane; in the Border, he's in both. He can see into adjacent planes, but he's invisible to most folks there. The boundary between the Border Ethereal and the Deep Ethereal is easy to spot. It's a big, shimmery wall of color, like the "northern lights" some primes talk about. The Deep Ethereal's like the ocean, vast and bottomless.

The ethereal mist isn't completely empty, though. Shapes rise and fall out of this void like strangers in the fog. Pure fact is, there's plenty living here, things friendly and dangerous both. There's creatures that live on the Ethereal but hunt on the Prime Material. There's others that prey on ethereal travelers, waiting to snare them in the mist....

Then there's the demiplanes. They're islands of matter out in the deeps of the Ethereal. Demiplanes are like regular planes, only they're smaller and have definite borders. Sages figure that, in some millennia hence, these demiplanes might become full-fledged planes themselves, but this is only theory since it's never happened (that the sages know about, anyway). No basher knows how many demiplanes exist. Prime-material wizards keep making new ones all the time, it seems. Some of them are well mapped, but others are barely known. Of the two best known, the Demiplane of Shadow is the largest, and it's powerful

enough to extend its essence into other planes. There, it feeds such creatures as the slow shadow and the shadow dragon. It's possible that the Demiplane of Shadow is near to becoming a full-fledged Inner Plane.

Another of the demiplanes is one of mystery, known only as the "Demiplane of Dread," which is forever lost in the deepest mists. Those unlucky planehoppers who find it mostly don't come back, and the few who do tell tales of horror that do well to caution others. Those sods talk of lands of darkness and despair, where evil plays with mortals like a little boy plays with toys.

Special Physical Conditions. In the Border Ethereal, a person can see the shadowy outlines of whatever plane he's adjacent to. The ground beneath his feet is the shadowy ground of that plane. The traveler can't touch, move, or speak to anything on the other plane. Actions and verbal communication are impossible without spells or magical items. In his ethereal form, a traveler can walk right through any solid object on the other plane that's not sheathed in dense metals or magic. Ethereal travelers are invisible to folks on the other plane unless they use a detect invisibility or a specially researched detect ethereal spell.

In the Deep Ethereal the ground vanishes, but travelers still move as if they were walking, riding, flying, or whatever. They're not doing any of that, though. Instead, they unconsciously move by power of thought. Distances have no meaning. It only takes "some time" to reach one's goal. The clearer the thought and desire, the less time needed to reach the intended destination.

Special Magic Conditions. Most spells function normally on this plane. (Course, those spells that access the Astral and Outer Planes are restricted.) Solid matter created here can be moved easily, since it's virtually weightless. Illusion/phantasms created here last without concentration, then gradually fade into nothingness. There's a 5% chance of any illusion taking on a life and reality of its own, beyond the caster's control.

Natives and Hazards. Chronolily, foo creature, gingwatzim, gk'lok-lok, phase spider, terithran, and thought eater occupy the Ethereal. Many other creatures hunt in or can see into this plane. Those able to see into the Ethereal Plane can affect beings there with spells and gaze attacks. In addition, there's the risk (at the DM's whim) of an ether cyclone snatching up travelers and hurling them into random planes touched by the Ethereal.

THE ASTRAL PLANE

To some it's the most dreadful of nothings, an unrelieved expanse of silver, worse than the fog of the Ethereal Plane. For others the Silver Void (as it's also called) is a place of subtle wonder, with patterns in the shades that hint at greater things. The Astral Plane looks empty, but there's a lot drifting in it.

The most common things a basher's going to see there are the color pools - gateways to the Outer Planes. These hang in the



void, shimmering in prismatic colors like the surface of a pond. A few primes have let out the chant that the pools are color-coded, letting a body know which plane they lead to, but as usual they're wrong. One smart thing to know, though, is that a sod can use a color pool like a window, to see where he's going, if he looks through the colorful side and concentrates on what's beyond. It's sad the number of leatherheads who don't know that trick.



Color pools are one-sided, and a being can hit one from its

backside without seeing it. Passing through a color pool - from either side - spits a traveler out onto the uppermost level of that pool's plane. Moving through a color pool's been described as kind of like pushing through warm molasses - the pool kind of surrounds a body when he presses against it.

Astral conduits to the Outer Planes are another feature of this plane. These look like whirling funnels, except they've got no ends. No matter how far a sod travels, these conduits seem to go further. Conduits are dangerous, too, because they tend to thrash around and can suck up a traveler and spit him out someplace he don't want to be (at the DM's whim).

More dangerous than the conduits are the githyanki, who'd just as soon put a sod in the dead-book as talk to him. Their homes are built on great islands of matter sucked out of other planes by the creation of a new conduit. Larger githyanki settlements are sometimes made on the drifting corpses of long-forgotten powers. Weakened beyond awareness, these powers have been cast out of the planes to drift helplessly in the silver void. Not dead yet not alive, these so-called "god-isles" are slowly crumbling in an undying decay. Occasionally a dim glimmer of awareness stirs the power, and sometimes its thoughts and dreams overwhelm the squatters upon it. There's also the githyanki ships - bizarre vessels powered by thought alone, used to hunt the astral whales and dreadnoughts of this universe.

Numerous little things are also found on the Astral Plane, like arrows soaring in endless flight, enemies banished to the drift in the void, and even dangerous magic that's been cast out here for the safety of all.

Special Physical Conditions. Visitors, whether on a silver cord or not, assume a solid (though translucent and pale) version of themselves. Bodies and objects are weightless, but can be propelled normally. The world has no up, down, north, or south. Creatures don't breathe, and they eat and drink sparingly. They move by pushing off things or by thought. For the latter method, the character simply thinks about his goal and moves. For player characters, Intelligence score x 30 equals the number of feet traveled per round. In that weightless environment, Intelligence determines the bonus to hit and damage as if it were Strength, while Wisdom has the same effect on Armor Class and missile fire as Dexterity does. All missile ranges (not magic ranges) are doubled, though non-native creatures suffer a -2 attack penalty.

Special Magic Conditions. The Astral has no link to the Ethereal and no extradimensional spaces.

Everything radiates magic on this plane, so detect magic is useless.

Natives and Hazards. Astral dreadnought, astral wind, foo creature, and githyanki reside here. Astral winds can sweep a traveler to distant reaches of the plane without a moment's notice.

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A DM Guide to the Planes

THE INNER PLANES

The Inner Planes are the realms of the elements. They're places of narrow-minded extremes, places whose very existence is devoted to a single substance. Of all the planes in the multiverse, perhaps none are more hostile to mortal life than these.

Ask a clueless prime to number the Elemental Planes and he'll probably say four - Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. In truth, there's more than four. The Inner Planes include a whole range of elemental possibilities - not just the foundation planes of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, but the Paraelemental Planes that spring from the blending of these (Ooze, Magma, Ice, and Smoke), the Energy Planes (both Positive and Negative), and the Quasielemental Planes that link the basic elements to the energy poles (Vacuum, Salt, Ash, Dust, Lightning, Steam, Radiance, and Mineral). Eighteen, not four, is the correct number of Inner Planes to be found. These are the building blocks of all matter.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

The beauty of a spell key is that it's a secret of the multiverse that fits in yer pocket.
- Pargette the Apprentice

Although each of the Inner Planes is singular by its own nature, they all have certain features in common. These are presented below.

Physical Conditions. Except for the planes of Air, Lightning, and Steam, mortals can't safely breathe on the Elemental Planes. On the plane of Fire, air is superheated beyond all tolerance and filled with poisonous gases. The planes of Earth and Water have no air to breathe at all; the Paraelemental Plane of Smoke chokes what air there is with thick fumes; and the Energy Planes simply have no atmosphere to speak of. On virtually every plane, travelers had better make special provisions for food and drink as well. The Inner Planes have no inns, farms, plants, or game suitable to any but their own elemental denizens. Sure, a xorn'll insist food abounds on the plane of Earth, but that's true only for those who eat rocks and gems; any other poor sod had better pack his own lunch. At least on the plane of Water a body can get something to drink....

Magic Conditions. The Inner Planes have no connection to the Astral Plane, so wizard spells needing outer-planar contact don't function without a spell key. Elemental spells - airy water, water breathing, transmute rock to mud, and so on - can be modified by a spellcaster for use on each plane. For instance, airy water can be researched and modified to airy earth, while water breathing changes to fire breathing, and transmute rock to mud becomes transmute fire to smoke (the paraplane equivalent). For most, the intended effect of the spell remains the same. Research on the modified spell takes 1d6 weeks and costs 1d6 x 100 gp. The new version counts against a wizard's total spells known.

Directions. The Inner Planes have no north, south, east, or west, and some and don't even have an up or

down. "Up" is whatever direction a being decides. With this condition, normal compasses are useless, so a cutter needs an elemental compass instead. Without one of these magical devices or - and don't even hope for this - a good landmark to sight on, a basher's quickly lost. The best way to get around on any of the Inner Planes is to get a guide, because natives to the Inner Planes never get lost on their home turf. Even the simplest harginn knows which direction the City of Brass lies in. A sage blood knows to hire himself a native guide straight off, and he never bobs him in the end either.

Pockets. None of the Inner Planes is purely all one element. Over the history of all time, little bits of elements have drifted loose and crossed the boundaries between the planes, until by now there are pockets of most element types to be found on all the others. Boulderlike islands of Earth drift through the plane of Air, pools of Water are held geode-like on the plane of Earth, lavalike patches of Earth float on the seas of the plane of Fire, and even globes of Electricity briefly surge through the plane of Water. Pockets can be useful to travelers, providing a place to stand, air to breathe, and water to drink - all the basic needs. Their sizes and durations vary greatly, but pockets have been known to hold large cities from time to time.

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THE PLANE OF AIR

Imagine being tens of thousands of feet up in the air so high up the ground's out of sight. That's what the plane of Air's like: nothing but air. It's a world of brilliant blue, like the sky viewed from the highest mountaintop. It's not featureless, though. Creatures fly through the great vault of endless sky, and other things - chunks of matter from other planes mostly - drift aimlessly about. Winds rise from gentle breezes to raging gales in mere seconds, and then die down as quickly as they came. Most fearsome of all are the storms blown in from other planes - fearsome lightning, giant hail, scorching heat, choking dust, and whirling maelstroms that are ringlike tornados, eating their own tails.

Beings on the plane of Air divide into two classes. There are the natives - djinn and air elementals of all types - who stay to the sky, seldom or never setting foot on the pockets of other stuff that drift by. Then, because the plane's not hostile (and is even beautiful to some), there's a fair number of extraplanar sods here, too, visiting or setting up outposts. Those who ain't natural flyers or elementals from other planes tend to cling to stony, floating islands in the endless sky. Djinn sometimes build palaces and cities on these, too. The greatest of these is the Citadel of Ice and Steel. Not far from it is a vortex called the Waterspout, which leads to the plane of Water. Other places of note include Borealis and Taifun, the Palace of Tempests.

Special Physical Conditions. North, south, east, and west are meaningless here, so Smoke, Void, Storm, and Ice are given as directions. Move in the direction of those planes and the air gradually changes to match, becoming warmer, thinner, windier, or colder. 'Course, without a local guide, a basher's got no chance of figuring just which way is which. Up and down are just as funny - the plane tends to orient itself to things within it. Groups agree that "down" is the same direction and things around them behave accordingly. Rain "falls" according to their down. A cutter standing on a rock knows that down is beneath his feet and a roc in the sky knows that down is beneath it. The only real problem is that believing there's a down means a berk can fall. If a poor sod tumbles out of his hippogriff's saddle, he's going to fall endlessly (unless, of course, he hits a passing rock). Natives of the plane don't have this problem - up and down are disposable ideas to them. Those beings move through the plane either by

flying or by riding something that can. There are also flying ships, ponderous gas-bags built by non-natives to sail between the different settlements of the plane.

On the side, even an addle-cove should realize that inanimate things don't think about up and down, so they aren't affected by it. Arrows never fall, but travel in a straight line, going slower and slower till they stop in midair. Pockets on the plane tend to form into spheres - jewel-like orbs of water, cooling lumps of magma, giant balls of ice, even crystalline masses of salt that drift like seeds on the wind.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells can only draw creatures from the planes of Air, Smoke, Ice, Lightning, and Vacuum. In addition to the standard air elementals, this generally includes sylphs, aerial servants, mephits, shockers, and tempests. Note that beings native to the plane of Air aren't automatically bound by the summoning. The caster has to use another way to force them to his or her will, like employing a ring of elemental control.

Natives and Hazards. Aerial servant, air elemental, air mephit, djinni, ildriss, invisible stalker, skriaxit, sylph, tempest, and wind walker are all present on this plane. The plane is also home to a number of powers, including Akadi (the elemental queen) and Caliph Husam al-Balil ben Hafhat al-Yugayyim (the Master of the Clouds and Son of the Breezes, Commander of the Four Winds, Ruler of All Djinn, Defender of the Heavens, Prince of Birds, Storm of the Righteous, and so on). The greatest natural hazards are the maelstroms. All within 100 yards of one of these must successfully save vs. paralyzation or be caught, thereupon suffering 1d10 points of damage per round. Escape is possible only with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll or through outside aid. Spellcasting is impossible while trapped in a maelstrom.

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THE PLANE OF EARTH

Press against a solid stone wall - that's what the plane of Earth is like. Solid and unyielding, this plane is one of the Inner Planes that's least open to travelers. A cutter can't fly through it like the plane of Air, swim through it like the plane of Water, or sail on it like the plane of Fire. It's a universe of unbreached rock.

Still, there's reasons for going there. Armorers and swordsmiths will pay a fine price for iron dredged from the heart of the plane, and jewelers cherish the stones pried from it. But there's a lot of danger on it, too. A being can get lost without even trying, as there's no landmarks or clear expanses to guide him on his way. Plus, wander away from the heart of the plane and Earth becomes Dust, Magma, or Ooze - all almost as difficult and just as deadly.

There are a few places to go in this plane. The Great Dismal Delve is an immense series of caverns where the khan of the dao resides in the Sevenfold Mazework. Visiting that place isn't recommended, though, since the dao are notorious slavers. Travelers here can find the Pale River and the Iron Crucible, vortices to the planes of Water and Fire. There are also the hidden fortresses of wizards and trading outposts, magically tucked into pockets deep in the core of the plane. The plane of Earth's a popular place for emperors to banish their enemies, wizards to store their treasures, and even for paladins to hide evil artifacts.

Then there are the denizens of the plane. Perhaps they've absorbed too much of their surroundings,

because their natures are slow, dour, and stubborn. More bizarre than most planars, the elementals of Earth share little in appearance or sympathies with any save perhaps the most obsessed dwarves. Earth and digging are all these denizens seem to care for.

Special Physical Conditions. Getting around is the biggest problem facing any traveler to this plane, the whole of it being solid earth, broken only occasionally by pockets and tunnels. Travelers need a means to penetrate the rock, such as passwall and stone shape spells or a wand of corridors. A particularly determined fellow could try mining his way through the plane, but only at a rate of about 1 foot per turn. Doing so requires constant detours around impenetrable seams of pure elemental stone. Any kind of tunnel eventually "heals" in 1d6 days, as the ground closes the wound, so mining out a passageway seems twice as futile.

Even with a means to get around, a traveler must have a guide or an elemental compass. Even the latter is useless without some understanding of where the goal lies. Unlike some other Elemental Planes, there are no landmarks a body can sight on. There are no directions, and up and down are determined by the traveler - feet point down, heads look up. It's perfectly possible for two travelers to meet and each be standing on a different wall. This usually lasts only for a moment, though, since one or the other will fall to match the other's "down" (higher Wisdom prevails, with Intelligence settling any ties). 'Course, things that make their home on this plane have no such difficulty with the matter at all.

Besides getting around, breathing, drinking, and eating are all problems. The interior of the plane has no natural air supply, so a sod's either got to bring one or find a way to make one. The same holds true of food and water. Pockets of elemental Air and Water can be found, along with a few mushroom-filled caverns, but only a leatherhead relies on these to survive. Airy earth makes the soil breathable and create food and water can fulfill other needs.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells can only draw upon creatures found on the planes of Earth, Ooze, Mineral, Magma, and Dust.

Natives and Hazards. Chaggrin, dao, earth elemental, earth mephit, galeb duhr, khargha, lava mephit, pech, sandling, xaren, and xorn are all native. Very few powers make their homes here - the most notable are Kabril Ali al-Sara al Zalazil (Great Khan of the Dao, the Fountain of Wealth, the Perfect Compass, Atamen of the Mountain's Roots, and so on) and Grumbar (an elemental lord). Earthquakes are always a risk, lasting 1d10 rounds and inflicting 6d6 points of damage each round (no saving throw). Another risk is in all the pockets of other elements hidden here. Miners have fried in gushing flows of lava, drowned in floods of water, and choked to death on clouds of ash, all in their eager search for gems.

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THE PLANE OF FIRE

Of all the Inner Planes, it's the plane of Fire that inspires true fear in all the but the most addle-coved traveler. Sure, there are other planes that're worse, like life-sucking Negative Energy



Plane or the impassable plane of Earth, but these just don't have the sheer theatrical horror and evil feel of the plane of Fire. With its leaping flames, scorching heat, and choking brimstone smoke, it's no surprise that gullible primes often mistake this plane for one of the layers of Baator or Carceri. Still, few doubt the plane of Fire is the most evil of all the Elemental Planes, though that's purely a judgment call. Fire's probably the most powerful of the Elemental Planes, for it attacks and consumes its enemies, just because they're there.

The efreet are lords of this domain, ruling from the City of Brass, which floats in a sea of fire. Here one finds realms called the Charcoal Palace, the Obsidian Fields, the Furnace, and Slag. Like the dao, the efreet keep many slaves. Revolt and escape are impossible, since only the magic of the efreet protects slaves from the fiery element (who'd want to flee into the Fire?). Eighty miles from the City of Brass is Jabal Turab, the Mount of Dust. From its top rises a plume of smoke, a vortex to the plane of Air. Elsewhere throughout the plane are other efreet outposts, smaller palaces that float on the fiery seas.

Special Physical Conditions. The plane of Fire looks like a normal landscape with one major difference: Everything is cloaked in flame. The majority of the plane is a flaming ocean, but occasionally pockets of solid "land" float upon this. All things burn and scorch mercilessly. The air, too, will scorch and kill those without protection. Efreet are able to grant anyone they desire - mostly their slaves - temporary immunity to the land; otherwise, a traveler must use spells or magical devices to protect himself. Without such aid, a being must successfully save vs. breath weapon or die immediately. Those who do save still suffer 5d10 points of damage each round.

This plane has a definite "up" and "down," logically because flames leap upward, so movement on this plane is relatively normal. Food and water must both be imported and protected - the heat is so intense that it destroys these in mere moments. A create food and water cast without preparations does nothing more than conjure up a flash of steam and an inedible lump of charcoal and ash. Potions will boil in their vials and burst. A traveler's got to plan carefully before venturing about in this element.



Pockets of most other elements are rare, since the intensity of the plane destroys them almost as quickly as they're formed. Most common are pools of Magma, once pockets of Earth. Ash and Smoke pockets swirl though the air. When Water pockets appear, almost immediately disappear in an explosion of steam. True Water pockets are rare beyond imagining, and Ice pockets have the proverbial "snowball's chance in hell" of existing.

Special Magic Conditions. The plane of Fire has more effects on magic than most, and many that can't be overcome by keys. Many magical effects can't withstand the plane's scorching heat. Water and ice instantly boil away, metal melts, even earth shudders and eventually falls into magma. Conjunction/summonings can only reach the planes of Fire, Magma, Smoke, Radiance, and Ash, and even then some beings summoned won't be able to survive this furnace. **Natives and Hazards.** Azer, efreeti, fire elemental, fire mephit, fire minion, fire snake, firetail, flame spirit, harginn, hell hound, phantom stalker, salamander, and tshala all call this plane home. The plane of Fire has more dangerous creatures than any of the other Elemental Planes. Perhaps it's because there are fewer high-up men to interfere. Only two powers live here: Kossuth (the tyrant-king of all elementals) and Sultan Marrake al-Sidan al-Hariq ben Lazan (the Lord of the Flame, the Potentate Incandescent, the Tempering and Eternal Flame of Truth, the Smoldering Dictator, and so on). Both are greater powers. The elemental king has his palace at the hottest point of the plane - so hot that even fire creatures suffer 1d2 points of damage each turn while there. The efreet lord lives in the Charcoal Palace. Nonliving dangers include sudden fountains of flame (3d10 points of damage, save vs. breath weapon for half), cinder rain (2d6 points of damage per round to all exposed), and volcanic eruptions that can suddenly block the path.

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THE PLANE OF WATER

Sea-green and soothing, the plane of Water would be heaven if a basher'd just find a way to breathe there. After the infernal violence of Fire, the crushing closeness of Earth, and the endless chasms of Air, this plane gently embraces a body and drifts him safely through all perils. Sure - unless a sod is suddenly washed into a current of bubbling steam, sucked into a whirlpool, shocked by a lightning pocket, captured by tritons, or attacked by water weirds. The endless blue-green, the water's soft embrace - it's all deceptive. Fact is, the plane of Water is no safer for a leatherheaded wanderer than any of the other Elemental Planes.

The plane of Water is just that: water as far as the eye can see. There's no surface and no bottom. Occasionally, coral reefs stretch up from the depths, supported by slender branches that extend endlessly into the immeasurable depths. In these immense caverns are the palaces of noble marids. The greatest of these is the Citadel of Ten Thousand Pearls, naturally shaped from a gleaming coral reef. It's a place of brilliant fish, flawless pearls, swaying coral fans, and exotic flavors borne here by distant currents. Not far from this is a vortex to the plane of Air, known as the Bubble Net.

Elsewhere the plane changes, gradually becoming cold and icy in one direction (Ice), boiling and steaming in another (Steam), thick and slimy in a third (Ooze), and bitter in the last (Salt). Little else is found here, because the denizens of this plane have scant interest in the doings or offerings of outsiders.

Special Physical Conditions. This plane is truly without form, for there's no up, down, top, or bottom. A being can drift in any direction, at any angle, without feeling any disorientation. While nothing demands

it, the polite custom is that creatures face each other squarely. For example, the halls of the marid court are built with an obvious top and bottom so that no one accidentally embarrasses themselves. Navigation by extraplanars is impossible, and to get anywhere a guide is absolutely necessary.

There's more than just water out here, too. There's elemental pockets, though few hold their form long. Chunks of Earth hover in the stream, bubbles of Air drift aimlessly, Ooze worms through the endless ocean, Magma hardens to stone, and bitter brine marks a pocket of Salt. Only pockets of Fire are truly rare, most of them suffocating the instant they appear.

To survive here, a cutter's got to breathe. Airy water and water breathing are effective. Marids also can bestow the ability to breathe water for periods of a day or more. Most useful of all is a ring of water breathing, since its power will never expire.

Unless a basher's got a ring of free action or something like it, fighting on this plane has all the limitations of fighting underwater.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells only reach the planes of Water, Ooze, Steam, Ice, and Salt. Water is second only to Fire in the difficulty of using spells, and like Fire many of the problems are related to the nature of the element. These cannot be overcome by keys. A fireball cast here is useless unless it's released inside a bubble. An ice storm will simply drift in the ocean, neither rising nor falling, inflicting no damage. A lightning bolt makes an electrical globe, an underwater fireball as it were, that inflicts damage but grounds out after touching any object.

Natives and Hazards. Ice mephit, marid, nereid, triton, varrdig, water elemental, water mephit, and water weird all reside here. There are two greater powers here as well. The first is Istishia, the queen of the water elementals. She is immense, spanning a sea or more, and has no court. The second is Kalbari al-Durrat al-Amwaj ibn Jari (Padishah of the Marids, the Pearl of the Sea, the Mother of Foam, Mistress of the Rivers, Savior of Fish, Patron of Waterspouts, and so on). Nonliving threats include unexpected steam currents (4d6 points of damage) and tidal bores that can suck a swimmer to vastly different regions of the plane.

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THE PARAELEMENTAL PLANE OF SMOKE

Little traveled and less known, the paraplane of Smoke lies between the planes of Air and Fire. It is groundless like Air and hot like Fire, though it doesn't scorch. The air is filled with roiling clouds of choking smoke, foul with brimstone and gases, so it's impossible to breath safely without aid. Toward the plane of Air the poisons clear a little (a successful saving throw vs. poison every round results in only 1d10 points of damage; failure indicates immediate suffocation).

Special Physical Conditions. Directions and movement on the paraplane of Smoke have the same limitations as those for the plane of Air. Up orients itself to groups of people, and beings must fly to get from place to place. The elemental pockets found here are bubbles of pure air or slithering rivers of elemental Fire. Earth pockets are extremely rare, so there's little to build on save an occasional oversize cinder from the Paraelemental Plane of Ash. Without landmarks, a lone traveler finds himself lost.

Unlike being on the plane of Air, where a cutter can breath without trouble, a fellow on this paraplane

will quickly choke. It's best to have a modified smoke breathing if a berk wants to live; without a proper breathing apparatus, the length of time a basher will live depends on how long he can hold his breath smoke inhalation is immediately deadly. At the closest edges to the plane of Fire, temperatures become more than a body can stand. Without actually crossing the boundary between the two planes, a being still suffers 1d10 points of damage each turn (no saving throw).

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summonings are limited to the planes of Smoke, Air, Fire, Radiance, Lightning, Vacuum, and Ash.

Natives and Hazards. Little lives on this inhospitable plane, save a few beings of smoke and fumes (primarily the smoke mephit). The most notable feature is the Choking Palace, which is the court of Ehkakh, the Smoldering Duke. He's a paraelemental lord and the self-proclaimed ruler of the smoke mephits of his land. The other creatures most likely to be found are djinn and efreet, who use this plane as a battlefield.

THE PARAELEMENTAL PLANE OF MAGMA

Bordering the two inhospitable planes of Earth and Fire, it shouldn't be a surprise to any traveler that Magma's an unpleasant place. It's easiest to imagine it as spewing out from the plane of Fire, whose leaping flames die down to a hellish glow and then spread in an evercooling mass to the plane of Earth. The surface constantly churns and shifts as the scabrous, hardening chunks are churned back into the molten flow. Near the plane of Fire, this churning landscape bursts with occasional geysers of cryoplastic flow, lava that splatters nearby. Closer to the plane of Earth float pillars of solid rock, borne away by the searing tide.

Few extraplanars can survive this hostile land, so there are few places of note to visit. The most significant of these is Caldera, the stronghold of Chilimba, First General of the Cauldron and Master of All Mephits. This elemental lord claims dominance over the entire paraplane, and there are few to challenge his rule. The only visitors are the fiery efreet and the stolid dao, who meet on this neutral ground to trade.

Special Physical Conditions. To survive on this plane, a blood's got to have the same protections as on the planes of Fire and Smoke. The intense heat will toast anyone and anything to a cinder, if foul gases released by the lava don't choke them first. Like the plane of Fire, Magma has a definite surface with an up and down. A protected being can walk on this, though it constantly roils and shifts under his feet.

Special Magic Conditions. The limitations on spells here are the same as those on the plane of Fire. Magical effects must be able to withstand the intense heat. The planes of Fire, Earth, Mineral, Radiance, Dust, and Ash can be reached from this plane.

Natives and Hazards. Dao, efreet, fire mephit, and magma mephit reside here. Sudden bursts of lava scatter molten stone in a 10-foot radius (successfully save vs. breath weapon or suffer 3d10 points of damage). Footing is treacherous on this plane, and crust often splits to swallow the unwary. If a save vs. paralyzation is failed, the unfortunate plunges in and dies instantly.

THE PARAELEMENTAL PLANE OF OOZE

It's all mud and slime, a quivering ocher ocean of muck - hardly the place a cutter cares to go. It's a place

of torturous death and exile, too. With a wave of the hand, evil wizard-tyrants send their enemies here to drown, choking on lungfuls of stagnant silt. Kinder souls merely imprison their foes here, sealing them inside bubbles of pure air. Oh, sometimes they forget the other niceties of food and water, leaving their prisoners to slow starvation, but at least they kept them from immediate death. Even those fully provided for face unhappy fates, for there's little or nothing to stave off the madness that boredom brings. Small wonder the plane is also known as the House of Chambered Madness.

Little relieves the unending ocean of muck. Toward the plane of Earth, the mud grows drier, filled with abrasive grit, and toward Water it thins into rippling silt that a cutter can easily swim through. Drifting through it all are blocks of stone and puddles of clear water. All in all, it ain't a popular rest stop.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on this plane is like that on the plane of Water. There's no clear up or down, and creatures must be able to swim to get around. Breathing can be accomplished by any device that allows breathing on the plane of Water (but spells must be researched and modified). Combat on the plane suffers from all the restrictions of underwater combat, and visibility is reduced to mere feet.

Special Magic Conditions. The moist closeness of Ooze affects spellcasting almost as severely as it does on the plane of Water. The restrictions of that plane apply here generally. However, because water is less freeflowing on this plane, fire-based spells have limited function, causing half or no damage instead of not functioning at all.

Natives and Hazards. Ooze is virtually uninhabited by intelligent creatures, except for ooze mephits. Hunting marids sometimes mistake travelers here for game, and dao come here to bathe. It is said there is a baron of the plane, Bwimb, but what it is baron of is a mystery.

THE PARAELEMENTAL PLANE OF ICE

Some think hell is fire, but others are convinced it's ice. If the latter's true, then this plane is their hell. Glistening white ice, cracked and scored, lies in a sheet as far as the eyes can see. It's an endless arctic plane, where only frozen crags of ice-locked mounts shatter the smooth sheet and give features to the terrain. Closer to the plane of Water, small patches of open water appear, and the ice eventually breaks into enormous floes and bergs. At the plane of Air, the sheet tapers into fingered bridges and icicles that fade into nothingness.

Dig and there's no limit to how deep the ice extends. And during that dig a basher might get lucky and find caverns filled with the purest air, or unlucky and hit a boulder bigger than a mountain. If he's real unlucky, a berk might open a crack in the ice and find something extremely unpleasant slithering in it...

The paraplane of Ice is empty, but it's not deserted. At its coldest heart is the Chiseled Estate of Lord Cyronax, the most powerful of the ice elementals. Most ambitious of all the paraelementals, he hopes to supplant all other Elemental Planes and become the major force of the Inner Planes.

Special Physical Conditions. Travelers can move about the surface normally and the atmosphere here is breathable. However, it's bitterly cold, and unless the air is heated (by spell or device), a traveler suffers 1d6 points of frostbite damage each round. Those not dressed for the cold suffer an additional 1d6 points of damage. A basher can also burrow through the ice as if moving through the plane of Earth.

Special Magic Conditions. Cold-based spells are completely useless on this plane, and fire-based ones inflict only half damage due to the intense cold. Conjuration/summoning spells only reach the planes of

Air, Water, Negative, Lightning, Steam, Salt, and Vacuum. Other limitations are the same as those on the plane of Air.

Natives and Hazards. Only the ice mephit inhabits this plane. Marids, however, often scour the plane in their great hunts. Raging blizzards, which inhibit movement for 1d10 turns or more, are the greatest of the nonliving hazards the plane has to offer.

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THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF LIGHTNING

This is called the plane of Storms, the Vengeful Land, or the Great Illumination - it all depends on who gets asked. A traveler knows when he's entered the plane, though, because the sky is filled with black clouds that flash with internal fires, the air tingles with ozone, and the touch of electricity prickles his hairs. Bolts leap from cloud to cloud and the sky rings with the laughter of lightning elementals. It's a scary place to fly through - a cutter can dodge a jagged bolt only to steer himself into the path of a tumbling ball of lightning. Then there's the glow, St. Elmo's fire, that dances over everybody that comes into the plane. People and things glow with an unnerving, electrical brilliance.

The storms are lighter close to the plane of Air. Near the Positive Energy Plane, clouds and storms give way to a solid sheet of rippling energy. At the very gateway to the Positive Energy Plane stands the Tower of Storms, a mysterious bridge into the Positive.

Special Physical Conditions. Moving through this plane is no different than doing so on the plane of Air, and the atmosphere is quite breathable. Lightning is the most dangerous of all the quasiplanes, however. Any metal that's dagger-sized or larger automatically attracts electrical bolts each turn; otherwise, there's a 10% chance per turn of being randomly struck by lightning. Bolts inflict 1d8 x 10 points of damage (save vs. rod for half), but a protection from lightning spell negates their effect. With each bolt, a second successful save vs. rod must be made to avoid deafness (2d4 hour duration).

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summonings reach the planes of Lightning, Air, Ice, Smoke, Steam, Radiance, and the Positive Energy. Invisibility is useless, since St. Elmo's fire outlines all things.

Natives and Hazards. Lightning mephit and shocker only are found here, though djinn sometimes hunt on this plane.

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF RADIANCE

Burning and featureless, this is the most barren of all planes - that's likely to be most folks' impression of Radiance. It ain't necessarily true though. Travelers who've been there will tell a body it's a place of aching beauty. Every color ever imagined glows and burns with painful splendor. They'll tell a soul about the curtains of color crashing over each other like waves on a beach, and as they talk, tears'll form in their dead, blind eyes.

That's the way it is. It's a joy and beauty that'll burn a berk right out, that'll show him the most beautiful glories he'll ever see and the last he's likely to ever see. What's the point of seeing more, after a body's seen the greatest lights of all?

A few bloods, though, have the skill to go there and come back with their eyes. There are reasons to go,

too. Steel forged in the light of Radiance takes on properties that can't be created anywhere else. Blades burn with the light of the sun, mirrors reflect more than is seen, and other wonders a berk can't imagine are made. Then there's the Heart of Light, a tower of blue light that stands at the border of the Positive Energy Plane. Great healings are supposed to be possible there.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on the plane of Radiance is similar to that on Air. However, Radiance is as fiery hot as the plane of Fire, and travelers will suffer the same damage unless protected from the heat. Furthermore, travelers must shield themselves either with continual darkness (which only creates weak shade here) or thick lenses of smoked glass. Otherwise, immediate blindness occurs.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summonings reach the planes of Radiance, Fire, Smoke, Magma, Lightning, Mineral, and the Positive Energy. No other special conditions apply.

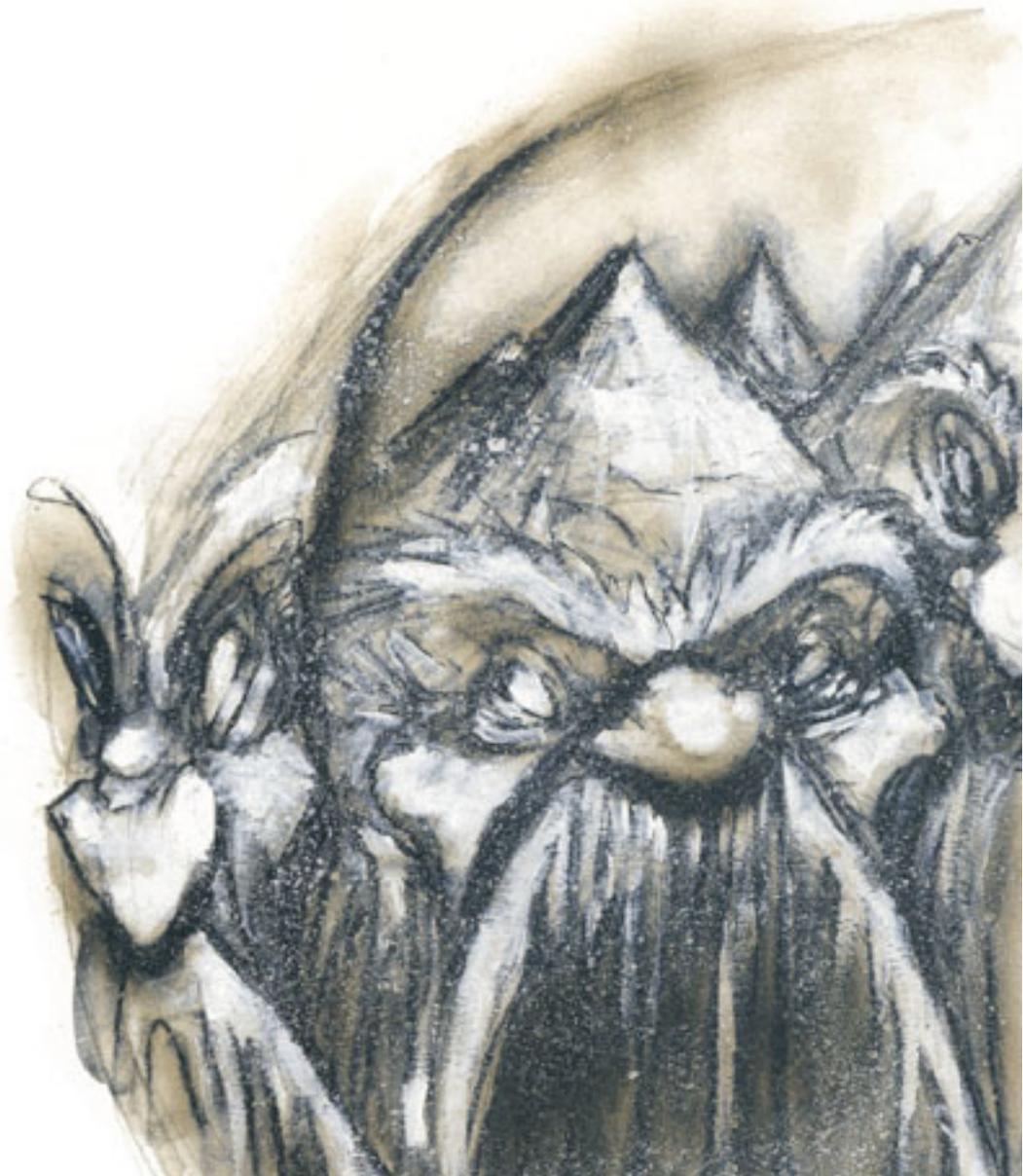
Natives and Hazards. There are no records of creatures on this plane, except radiant mephits.

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF MINERAL

This is it, cutter. This is the treasure trove of the multiverse, the goal of every dwarf who ever learned how to cross the planes. It's the plane of Mineral. There's iron, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, silver, gold, and more, all pressed up in veins that wrap around each other. All a blood's got to do is go get it.

Don't be a leatherheaded berk! If it was that easy, the plane would've been mined out long ago. Getting there's only the start of the problem. Then a sod's got to find a way to move through this crystal world, a world filled with razor edges sharper than a vorpal blade. Even after that, there's things out there that don't want a cross-trading rogue to make off with their kip.

There's more on the plane than just riches, too. At the very edge of the Positive Energy Plane stands the Tower of Lead. Here, it's said, is the greatest forge in all the multiverse. Mostly the place



is empty, but sometimes a master craftsman risks all to do his work here.

Special Physical Conditions. This plane uses the same rules for movement, direction, and survival as the plane of Earth. However, it's even more dangerous because all the passages are lined by sharp crystals. These inflict 1d4 points of damage in every round spent moving. Each point of magical AC protection reduces the damage per round by 1 (1d3, 1d2, and 1 [minimum]).

Conjuration/summoning spells reach the planes of Earth, Ooze, Magma, Radiance, Steam, and the Positive Energy. Otherwise, magic is affected as on the plane of Earth.

Natives and Hazards. Dao, mineral mephit, pech, xaren, and xorn call this plane home. These creatures all consider themselves guardians of the treasures here. Fossilization is the greatest risk - once per day travelers must successfully save vs. petrification or be turned to stone (or possibly precious gems).

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF STEAM

Some folks like a sauna, a place to go and sweat off the day's troubles. Well, they'd be disappointed by the plane of Steam. It's not quite like its name says. The plane of Steam is surprisingly cool. Mist is a better name - clammy, thick, cloying mist that seeps into everything. The danger here isn't boiling, but drowning in lungfuls of water.

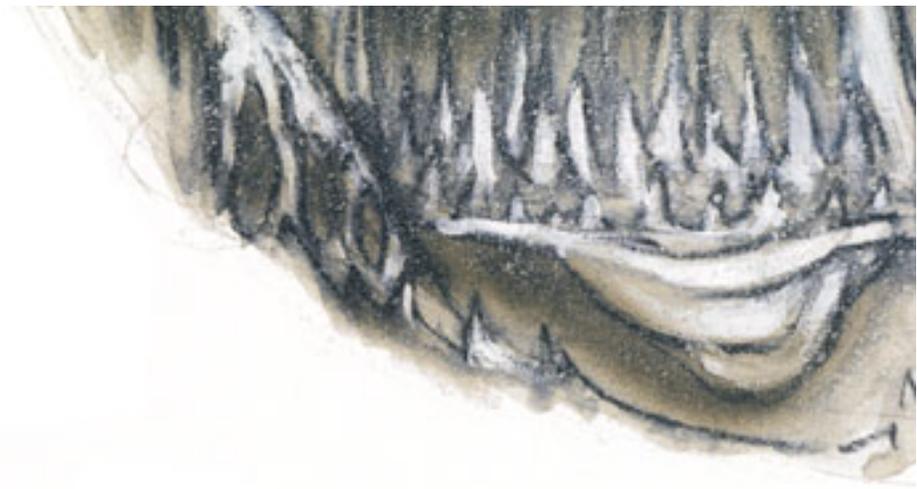
Near the edge of the plane of Water, the mist is more like an ocean filled with bubbles. As a swimmer from Water's great ocean slowly finds the world spreading on him, the bubbles join and the water forms freefloating droplets. These gradually become finer and finer, and they glow with energy stolen from the Positive Energy Plane.

Just at the border to the Positive Energy Plane stands the glowing Tower of Ice, a glittering spire that lances upward almost as far as can be seen. Who or what built this tower is unknown, but alchemists sometimes come here to complete essential steps in potion brewing.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on the plane of Steam is like that on the plane of Air, although closer to the plane of Water this is more akin to swimming. Breathing is possible, but all movement is slowed (as the spell) by the suffocating mist. A water breathing spell removes this difficulty. Visibility is limited to 1d10 yards at any given time.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjuration/summoning spells reach the planes of Water, Ice, Ooze, Mineral, Lightning, and the Positive Energy. Due to the high moisture of the plane, spells function as on the plane of Water. However, firebased spells effectively cause half or no damage here, rather than not function at all.

Natives and Hazards. Marid, mist mephit, and steam mephit inhabit this plane. No powers are known to



reside here.

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THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF VACUUM

This plane is the prelude to ultimate death, a glimpse at the fate of the failed petitioner, because this is the plane of Nothing. Leaving the banks of Air, the atmosphere here becomes less and less until there's nothing - no breath, no light, no sound, no warmth.

For certain mystics - the ascetics of the Doomguard and the dancers of the Dustmen - the plane of Vacuum is the ultimate goal. It's the last door of the mystery, the kiss awaited by all. Such sages spend their lives mapping the doors of Sigil until they find the path to Vacuum and then they pass through, never noting for others what they've found. It is Vacuum, it is right.

Who can find the border between nothing and death? Well, the Doomguard has, and there between Vacuum and the Negative Energy they built Citadel Exhalus, Portal of the Last Breath. It drifts by a thread in the void of the Negative Plane, barely anchored to the reality of nothing.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement through this plane is done through sheer will, for there's nothing to swim, fly, or walk through. A cutter thinks his goal, and if his mind's clear enough, he gets there. Breathing's harder, since spells that transform, like water breathing, won't work here. There's nothing to transform. Air and warmth must both be provided.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells reach the planes of Air, Ice, Salt, Ash, Smoke, and the Negative Energy. Most creatures summoned will quickly die here. Gases, fogs, and the like instantly fail, dissipating too quickly to be useful. Fire-based spells last only a fraction of a moment. A fireball is still effective, but a wall of fire doesn't last. In short, any magic that requires a space in which to work is diminished or negated.

Natives and Hazards. Sages say creatures might live here, but without bodies, form, or even cohesive energy. Perhaps they're beings of pure thought. Perhaps they've returned to Sigil, their thoughts becoming the thoughts of a traveler to this plane. Who knows?

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF ASH

Ash. Miles upon miles of choking ash - that's what a berk's going to find here. It starts at the edge of the plane of Fire; the flames flicker and die, and from them cooling ashes rise. A little farther on and the air grows thicker, and farther still the burnt earth beneath gives way. At first, the ash swirls in tendrils 'round a being. Then, before he knows it, a berk's swimming in an ocean of ash. The red glow of distant fire fades, warmth turns to chill, and the air is choked with charcoal soot.

The plane isn't utterly empty, though. Here the Doomguard once had Citadel Cavitius, a massive skull fortress that sat on the edge of the Negative Energy Plane. Eons ago it was taken from them by the lich Vecna, and now it's that demigod's prison and stronghold. The Doomguard have since built anew, fashioning the Crumbling Citadel as their new home.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on the plane of Ash varies between normal movement, closer to the plane of Fire, and swimming once the depth of Ash is too great. There's no air, so breathing must be

maintained by spell, transforming the ash into something that can be inhaled. Furthermore, the cooling cinders steal all warmth from the body, so unless a basher's protected by spell or device, he'll suffer 2d6 points of cold damage per turn.

Special Magic Conditions. Similar to the plane of Vacuum, this plane sucks all heat from magical effects. The flash of a fireball still causes damage, but longterm spells such as wall of fire or heat metal are ineffective. Conjunction/summoning spells reach the planes of Fire, Magma, Dust, Vacuum, Smoke, and the Negative Energy. The utter cold of this plane causes fire- and magma-based creatures to suffer 1 HD of damage per round of exposure. Other limitations are the same as those on the plane of Earth.

Natives and Hazards. The ash mephit is the only known inhabitant of this plane. Citadel Cavitiis holds prisoners of Lord Vecna, many of whom are now undead. Another danger lies in the pockets of the Negative Energy Plane, which inflict damage as does that plane.

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF DUST

That's the goal of the universe, the clearest picture of entropy there is - so a Doomguard would say if he could show anyone the eternal sea that is Dust. It's the end as they figure it was meant to be. Perhaps it's their vision of paradise.

At the border of the plane of Earth, this plane starts as a dusty expanse, broken free of the endless caverns. A traveler's pretty happy to escape the closeness and step into the dark, open world. Farther on, the dust reaches up to his knees. It's thick and it pulls against him. Close to the Negative Energy it becomes an abrasive sea that chafes as a traveler swims through the grit.

But a cutter's not alone here. Things swim through the sand ocean, and at least one tower, Citadel Alluvius, lies in a ramshackle sprawl on the Negative Energy Plane's border. This is one of the four citadels of the Doomguard, and the most favored of them all.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement and breathing on this plane are handled the same as on the plane of Ash. The cold here isn't as intense, though, so there's no need for magical protection from it. Nevertheless, each day spent on this plane causes 2d6 points of damage, as the traveler's body begins to break up. This damage cannot be healed while on the plane. Should a traveler lose all hit points, his body dissipates into nothingness.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells reach to the planes of Earth, Magma, Ooze, Salt, Ash, and the Negative Energy. Solid objects created on this plane don't last, crumbling to dust in 1d4 turns unless protected by a wall of force spell, to bind the material in place (as is the case for Citadel Alluvius). Other limitations are the same as those on the plane of Earth.

Natives and Hazards. Dune stalker, dust mephit, sandling, and sandman all abide here. The plane of Dust is one of the most populated of the darker Quasielemental Planes. These creatures take no delight in their existence, however, and many hunger for solid forms. This hunger can make them especially deadly. As with all the darker quasiplanes, random pockets of Negative Energy are always a danger to any normal traveler.

THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF SALT

Of all the Quasielemental Planes, this one might be the worst, or at least that's so in the imaginations of

travelers. What crueler fate is there than slowly having the very lifeblood within one's self parched away? The skin shrivels, the lips crack, the throat fills with dry choking, and the eyes - well, the eyes are the most horrible. Welcome to the plane of Salt.

At its safest edge, it still seems to be only water bitter and unpalatable, but still water. Travel deeper into the plane and the water grows more laden with minerals. Crystals form, solidifying on even the smallest mote of a seed. Travelers who venture farther are in peril of becoming completely encrusted, the salts leaching all moisture out of their cells. Finally, all water is gone and there is only a solid mass of crystalline salts, hard and deadly, to block all progress.

It's at this extreme that the Doomguard has carved the last of its fortresses from a hollow pocket in the plane. Citadel Sealt rests on the border to the Negative Energy Plane, carved from the very minerals them- selves.

Special Physical Conditions. Moving through this plane varies. It can be like the planes of Water, Ooze, or Earth, depending on how deeply the plane is entered. Breathing can be accomplished by spell, but a traveler must find ways to avoid dehydration or suffer 4d6 points of damage per day. This damage cannot be healed until the being leaves this plane.

Special Magic Conditions. Salt is linked to the planes of Water, Ooze, Dust, Vacuum, Ice, and the Negative Energy for the purposes of conjuration/summoning. Water and ice created here last only 1d3 rounds before evaporating. Water is immediately undrinkable upon contact with any material of the plane. Waterbased creatures lose 1 HD per round while on this plane.

Natives and Hazards. There are no known creatures on this plane except the salt mephits. Pockets of Negative Plane material and dehydration are the greatest risks to travelers.

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THE POSITIVE ENERGY PLANE

Being the plane of all life, a body'd figure this to be the gentlest of planes, that it would bathe a sod in soothing and revitalizing energy, but it doesn't. The Positive Energy Plane is deadly because too much energy is just as dangerous as too little.

There's nothing to see here beyond an endless burn of brilliant white, even more intense than that of the plane of Radiance, and a cutter needs to cover his eyes with a solid blindfold if he ever plans to use them again. That doesn't matter much, since there's nothing to see here anyway. Besides, it's not the glare that's the problem. It's the sheer intensity of the plane's energy that makes it dangerous. Any leatherhead who comes here without protection is going to quickly flame out like a Roman candle from the sheer abundance of power. Traveling the Positive Energy Plane is a bit like swimming in an ocean of pure electricity.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on the plane of life is accomplished by the power of thought. There's not much point to it, though, since every place on the plane is the same. Furthermore, just being on the plane fills a being with life-energy. Each round a traveler gains 2d6 hit points, first healing wounds and then adding to his total. If the total reaches twice the traveler's original, he bursts into incandescent flames as the overabundance destroys him from within. If the traveler leaves the plane

before reaching the combustion point, the extra hit points remain for 2d10 turns. A positive plane protection shields the traveler from this effect. Finally, spells that transform the elements into breathable material don't work here, since the plane contains only energy - air must be provided by device.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summoning spells reach the planes of Radiance, Steam, Lightning, and Mineral. Matter created here is destroyed in a round, exploding in a burst of harmless light. Spells that inflict damage cause the minimum amount possible while on this plane.

Natives and Hazards. The xag-ya is the only known being on this plane. By far, the greatest hazard is simply surviving the forces of this plane.

NEGATIVE ENERGY PLANE

*'Course I know how to talk to a zombie!
But I just got in from the Neg' Energy Plane,
And I'm just plain sick of talking to cold folks, okay?
- Rahm, a bariaur Anarchist,
peeling his way through the Mortuary.*

The plane of Death, the Black Barrier, the Great Void, the Cold Land - none of these names do justice to the utter desolation that is the Negative Energy Plane. Unlike the plane of Vacuum, this isn't a barren nothingness. There's something here, something that sucks the life out of the marrow and drains the spirit from a being. It devours the very soul.

Where the Positive Energy Plane is all burning light, the Negative Energy is blackness greater than can be imagined or conjured. There's at least one citadel here, the Fortress of the Soul, maintained with great effort by the Dustmen. If there are other towers and features here, who can see them in the darkness that consumes all? There are creatures here, too, more so than on the plane of Positive Energy. Undead lurk here, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to escape to more fertile planes, where they can spread the darkness that fills them.

Special Physical Conditions. Movement on this plane is accomplished by thought, as it is on the Positive Energy Plane. Again the question is, "Where would one go in this void, especially since survival is so difficult?" Breathing suffers as on the Positive Energy. The absence of energy on this plane sucks all life from creatures, inflicting 2d6 points of damage each round. When a being's hit points reach 0, he withers and dies. His spirit is lost forever to resurrection by any means, and what little remains of his husk becomes an undead creature, eager to feed on the living world. A negative plane protection spell prevents this loss of hit points.

Special Magic Conditions. Conjunction/summonings reach the planes of Ash, Dust, Vacuum, and Salt. Spells that cause damage inflict the maximum possible amount, while healing spells do the absolute minimum. Matter created here crumbles to nothingness in a single round.

Natives and Hazards. Slow shadow, spectre, wight, wraith, and xeg-yi hover on this plane. There may be other forms of undead lurking on this plane, including even lichs.

THE ⊕ U+ER PLANES

Let's face it, the Ethereal and Astral Planes are little more than highways. Sure, there's places and beings out there, but a cutter's not likely to make his name and fortune on what he finds in these planes. The Inner Planes are all well and good, too. There's certainly things to see and places to go, but to a true planar the Inner Planes are, well, provincial. As planes go, they're too singleminded, fixated on their one-element mentalities. Any basher knows there's too many possibilities in life to be stuck on a single idea.

For a true planar, the planes means the Outer Planes, the Great Ring. No other place has the same richness or the same tingle of power as any one of the Outer Planes. A true planar instinctively knows when he's on an Outer Plane the smell of it is in his blood.

Primes have different names for the planes, which comes from their own peculiar understanding of the multiverse - names like the Twin Paradises, the Nine Hells, the Seven Heavens, Tarterus, Olympus, Asgard, Hades, and Nirvana. Don't be thrown by them. Also, try not to laugh at the sods when they use these tags; it's almost certain they would've gotten the names right if they'd bothered to ask folks who know better.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND FEATURES

After experiencing the mystery of the Astral Plane, the misty boredom of the Ethereal, and the deadly embrace of the Inner Planes, the Outer Planes might seem like a lark to most travelers. Generally, the air doesn't poison a sod and the ground doesn't burn.



On the Outer Planes, it's not the landscape that's dangerous - it's the sodding locals that'll get a berk. The Outer Planes are the home to powers, proxies, and petitioners, who can all put a fellow's name in the dead-book.



While it seems that the seventeen Outer Planes have little in common, that's only because most planars take for granted what they do have in common. First, a cutter can walk and breathe on most of the Outer Planes without spells, magical devices, or other protections that's a big change from the Inner Planes. Second, most all places have a clear up and down: Down's the earth under a basher's feet and up's the sky overhead. Third, most planes got a north and south. It ain't the same from plane to plane, or even from layer to layer, but it's still useful for getting around.

A prime shouldn't kid himself, though - the Outer Planes are different from any weak prime-material imitation. Compared to the Prime, everything's greater here Mountains are loftier, glaciers colder, deserts hotter, and even the colors have an extra hue. Nothing on any prime-material world can ever quite match its counterpart on the Outer Planes. After all, what's a basher supposed to expect in the homes of the gods?

LAYERS AND REALMS

Another important thing that many of the Clueless don't realize is that a plane's not just a single place. It's got divisions and areas within it, and things can change from area to area. Planes are made up of layers, different worlds that all fall within the plane. Generally, each layer falls under the sway of a different power or group of powers, which accounts for often stark differences in appearance.

In some places, like the Abyss, the layers stack up like a messy deck of cards, mostly on top of each other, with an occasional layer that sticks out where it shouldn't. On Baator, the nine layers form the tiers of a descending cone, perfectly regular to each other. Other layers are joined by rivers, bridges, or - most fantastic of all - great clockwork gears.

Within a plane, and even within a layer, there can be a lot of different realms. A realm is an area ruled by a power or group of powers, who fashion the land to suit their desires. A pantheon of powers that calls itself "Greek" (after some favorite prime-material kip) has a realm called Olympus on Arborea. It's a place of great stone temples, rocky mountains, olive groves, and warm sunny coasts, where heroes fight monsters and philosophers debate. The same plane also holds the realm of Arvandor, home of the elf gods. Their realm is one of ancient woods, flowering meadows, rippling brooks, and crystal palaces. Here, bards sing and nobles partake of the hunt.

Each realm can modify the physical laws of the land. Gravity, weather, and even directions are subject to

the control of the local powers. Hence, it's usually easy for a cutter to tell when he's entered a new realm. There's a shift in the landscape, one that matches the ideals of the new rulers, that's noticeable to all but the most addle-coved travelers.

GETTING AROUND THE OUTER PLANES

Just being on the Outer Planes doesn't make getting around easy. There's still vast distances to be covered and mystical barriers to be crossed. It helps for a fellow to know the ways and means of quickly getting from place to place, unless he wants to spend a lifetime just crossing from one portal to the next on the Great Road.

First, a cutter can always use the Astral Plane in pretty much the same way a prime uses it to reach the Outer Planes. Through spells or magical items, a blood can step into the Astral and then will himself to his destination. It takes power and practice, but it can be done. The astral method's not perfect, though. The Astral only touches the uppermost layer of each plane on the Great Ring. If a fellow wants to go to Mount Celestia, for instance, he can only get to the first layer this way. He's got to find another way to reach the seventh layer (or the second, for that matter).

Fortunately, other, more efficient means of getting around exist. There's conduits, just like those that thread the Astral Plane, which link different layers of a plane. These conduits can even link different layers of different planes. It's said there's a conduit on the 492nd layer of the Abyss that'll carry a being to the first layer of Ysgard, which just might make for a handy escape someday. These conduits can be either young (one-way) or mature (two-way). Most conduits are pretty stable, and maps to many of them can be bought in Sigil. 'Course, fakes are available for purchase, too. The biggest problem with conduits is they don't always take a body where he wants to go. Step through a conduit and a berk may still have long distances to travel.

Every plane's got regular paths between the layers, too. On Baator, a sod can pass through the gates of the city of Dis and end up in the bog of Minauros, the next layer down. On Elysium, a body can sail down the River Oceanus to reach the next layer. To use these, a being's just got to know the dark of them. They're not as quick as conduits, but their dependability makes them regular trade routes. These roads are also used for formal occasions, like when one power goes calling on another. It's the polite thing to do.

Finally, there's Sigil's portals. Just like the portals to the Prime Material and Inner Planes, Sigil's got doorways to more places on the Outer Planes than can be mapped in a millennium. For most planars, or at least those that can get to Sigil, the portals are the preferred way to travel. Odds are good for finding a door at least somewhat close to where a cutter wants to go - if he's willing to search the streets long enough.

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MAGIC ON THE OUTER PLANES

For the most part, magic functions normally on the Outer Planes. Spellcasters should remember, though, that there's no



contact with the Ethereal Plane out there, and even the Astral reaches only to the first layer of every plane. A caster needs keys to overcome these limitations.

Because of the nature of the planes, conjuration/summoning spells can only draw upon creatures and things from the same or an adjacent plane. For example, a wizard using a monster summoning III spell while on Elysium could call up something native to the planes of Elysium, the Beastlands, Bytopia, the Outlands, or the Astral.

Elementals summoned on the Outer Planes aren't the same thing as those creatures that appear on the Inner Planes and the Prime Material. Since the Inner Planes are pretty well cut off from the Outer ones, spells that call upon an elemental creature actually create one from the elements of the plane where the spell is cast. That means these monsters are going to act a bit differently from the real thing. First, the elemental adopts the alignment of the plane where it's created. It'll refuse to do anything that would contradict that alignment. This also means that elementals created on the Lower Planes have a little of the deviousness that other natives possess, so a spellcaster better watch out for tricks, misinterpreted instructions, and outright treachery. Finally, the chance for an elemental to break the caster's control over it increases by 5% for every plane between the monster's and the caster's (as determined by faction plane of influence) - the system is the same as that for priests casting spells. Luckily for primes, that last problem doesn't affect them.

Healing and necromantic spells cast in the Outer Planes have absolutely no effect on petitioners. Petitioners can only be raised by calling their spirits back to the Prime Material, at which point they're no longer petitioners. When a petitioner dies on the Outer Planes, he or she's gone for good.



As noted on [Table II: School Alterations by Plane](#), some schools of magic are affected by the nature of some planes in a specific way. Most times, this will fall into one of four categories: ENHANCED, DIMINISHED, NULL, or ALTERED. The DM should always check that table before allowing a spell to go off.

If Table II indicates that the school is ENHANCED, then all spells operate as if they had been cast by a wizard one level higher. For example, a fireball spell cast by a 5th-level mage will inflict 6d6 points of damage.

If Table II indicates that the school is DIMINISHED, then all spells operate as if they had been cast by a wizard one level lower. In the example above, the fireball would inflict only 4d6 points of damage.

If Table II indicates that the school is NULL, then the nature of the plane is such that spells of that school fail when cast and are subsequently lost from the wizard's memory.

If Table II indicates that the school is ALTERED, then the spell may need help to work, or its effects may be changed. For example, spells that have ethereal pathways need spell keys.

In the descriptions of the planes presented on the following pages, any peculiar spell effects will be noted under "[Special Magic Conditions](#)."

SPELL CRYSTALS

A minor hazard to planar characters, but a hazard nonetheless, is the occasional spell crystal. These things aren't useful items to adventurers, but are the handiwork of prime-material wizards.

What happens when a wizard summons something from the Outer Planes or communes with a planar being? He doesn't realize it, but the force of his magic creates a whizzing, glowing crystal on the target plane. This crystal shoots across the plane, unerringly searching for the object of its master's spell. Upon reaching its goal, the crystal swoops in and touches the target, releasing its magical energy. If it's a summoning, the target vanishes, instantly drawn to the Prime Material Plane through a magical, temporary vortex. Commune and divination crystals release a flood of insistent imagery that clamors for an answer. The effect depends on the spell cast.

Spell crystals come in a variety of colors and shapes, although all are crystals of some sort. Neither is an indication of the spell carried. However, creatures that have a Wisdom score of 19 or higher can instinctively know the nature of a spell crystal by making a successful Wisdom check (-5 modifier to the ability score).

Wise planars carefully avoid spell crystals. No one wants to be blipped off to some strange prime-material world without preparation or warning, as the chance is too great to take. A few intrepid souls have managed to capture spell crystals; these imprisoned magicks command good prices as curiosities. It's also possible to trap them and use the crystals as weapons by releasing them on enemies. This technique is dangerous not only while catching the crystal, but also because there's no promising who its target will be once a spell crystal is released.

PATHS WITHIN THE GREAT RING

Passage through portals, conduits, color pools, and vortices is nearly instantaneous, allowing a cutter to slip through infinite spaces as quickly as a child's wish reaches a star. These planar gates, once found, connect the entire multiverse - a paradoxically simple and complex system.

There are a few other paths between planes and layers, and these are unique. The River Oceanus, the River Styx, Yggdrasil, and Mount Olympus are not instantaneous portals, and there are many opportunities for extended adventures along their trails. A basher might even happen upon a door to Sigil or somewhere else along the way. These paths are legendary, and any blood who's been outside the City of Doors has used them.

THE RIVER OCEANUS

Rising on the plane of Elysium is a great river, broad in its banks, whose waters flow smoothly across the upper realms. Its surface is calm, barely marred by ripples, and its depths are deeper than any line can fathom. The water isn't dangerous, but sweet - indeed fragrant - to those who stand on its shores. Its surface is calm, yet it has its share of dangerous currents and creatures in the depths below. This is the River Oceanus.

Like its sister the Styx, the Oceanus is a worldspanning river, a waterway between realms, layers, and planes. Its headwaters lie in Thalsasia, on the plane of Elysium. From there it flows through all of Elysium's layers and eventually breaks through the boundary between the planes, passing through the top layer of the Beastlands. After this, it crosses another boundary and enters Arborea, passes through the first layer, and finally disappears somewhere in that plane's second layer, Ossa.

Although Oceanus looks like a normal river, it's far from that. In some places the river is, but in other places it isn't. It flows in and out of existence without once breaking its continuous flow, defying the logic of connection. A ship might sail through one plane or layer for an hour or a week (depending upon the DM's plans). Passage through the barriers can be arduous or instantaneous. Sometimes, a body just slips from one plane to the next while he wasn't looking.

Oceanus is a commonly used path between planes and the layers of planes. Trading vessels sail up and down its length, and small towns line its banks. Travelers can usually find a boat to hire somewhere along its shores.

THE RIVER STYX

No one knows where it rises and no one knows where it ends, but all the Lower Planes know the River Styx. This wine-dark, rank river bubbles and churns through the top layers of Acheron, Baator, Gehenna, the Gray Waste, Carceri, the Abyss, and Pandemonium. Side channels of this odious river reach to other layers of these planes - the fifth level of Baator and some of the unnumbered layers of the Abyss in particular. The flow isn't linear or predictable, either. On one journey, a boatman goes from Baator straight to the Abyss; on the return, the river shifts its banks and carries the cutter from the Abyss to the furnaces of Carceri. The flow is unmeasured and unmapped.

Where the Oceanus is sweet, the Styx is foul. Its water is black, putrid, and greasy, yet still a temptation to those suffering from thirst on these planes. One taste or touch of its water and a being must

successfully save vs. spell or suffer total amnesia of his past life, including class, alignment, and spells. Even those who do save forget the events of the past day. Beneath its sluggish surface, the currents of the Styx are swift and dangerous, often sucking down boats or pulling swimmers under.

Still, the Styx is useful for travel from plane to plane. A journey to any point on its banks never takes more than a day (although it might be a dangerous day). Horrid and fantastic boatmen called marraenoloths ply its waters, their skills supernaturally competent. All of them are willing to carry passengers - for the right price.

YGGDRASIL, THE WORLD ASH

One magnificent feature of the planes is the great tree Yggdrasil, the World Ash. Rising on the first layer of Ysgard, Yggdrasil's roots and branches extend into many other planes, providing yet another way for travelers to get around. No one has mapped the extent of these pathways, but some of the important paths are known. One of the roots reaches to Niflheim on the Gray Waste, and another stretches to Pandemonium, where Loki (of the Norse pantheon) resides. The branches are no less widespread, even crossing the silvery void of the Astral Plane to reach the very Prime Material. There, it's said, the smallest branch tips touch hundreds of worlds where the Norse gods are revered or remembered. Other branches reach Elysium, the Beastlands, and Limbo, and there are likely to be many more such pathways.

Traveling Yggdrasil's paths requires the traveler to climb through the branches or roots. At each planar crossing, the tree disappears through a portal of shimmering color, like a color pool found on the Astral. Only the vaguest of shapes can be seen through the window. To know for certain what lies on the other side, a traveler must step through. The colored portals are all two-way passages.

MOUNT OLYMPUS

Like Yggdrasil, Mount Olympus is a pathway to many other planes. Rising from the plane of Arborea, Mount Olympus has veins that reach into the planes of Gehenna, the Gray Waste, and Carceri. These planes are reached by twisting caverns that pierce Olympus's stone. On its slopes, a cutter can climb through the Astral Plane and into a number of prime-material worlds - worlds where Zeus and the fellows of his pantheon aren't forgotten. Unlike Yggdrasil, Olympus has no connections to any of the other Upper Planes, and its links to the rest of the Outer Planes are well mapped.

When crossing into another plane via Mount Olympus, the traveler must find a color portal like those found on Yggdrasil. Beneath the mountain, the right cavern must be taken, since there are many false trails and dead ends. On the slopes, the traveler must search through rocks and woods for the shimmering curtains that mark doorways to other planes.

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DEALING WITH THE POWERS

Since the Outer Planes are home to most of the powers known to mortals, it's understandable that adventurers might expect to get involved with them



in one way or another. Sigil is full of tall tales of bloods who outwit this god or that, steal divine treasures, or undertake dangerous quests personally assigned by their deity. A berk'd do well to look at who's telling those tales, though, because they're all tall tales.

Here's the real chant: Maybe - just maybe - one blood out of ten thousand's actually even seen one of the powers, particularly one of the greater powers. Then, of them that's seen one, maybe one out of a hundred's actually done anything for or against the greater powers. And of those few berks, maybe one out of ten actually survived. And finally, maybe one, just one of those actually did give a power the laugh. He'll be the sod with the look of a chased rabbit in his eyes, though, and it's a sure bet he's never leaving the safety of Sigil again.



The dark is that powers just don't go and parley with most normal folks, probably because they don't want to take such a direct hand in the multiverse, as it would inevitably lead to a like response from other powers. Good and evil, lawful and chaotic, the powers made the multiverse, and they know that direct confrontation is the quickest way to wreck the whole show. Maybe they went that route once, in time before their own measuring, and found that no one could win that game. Oh, they still meddle with each other's followers, try to subvert realms, and generally work behind the scenes, but getting directly involved can bring down the combined wrath of a lot of fellow powers. All of them remember what happened to the last deity that tried it - Yavass, Lord of Tyrants. His moldering body drifts in the Astral Plane as a mutual warning to all the powers.

Because of this hands-off policy, powers make proxies, servants to carry out their will. It's all part of the game. A power may not be able to act directly, but it can send its proxies to do things instead. 'Course, even then there's limits. It usually doesn't take much to figure out which power sent a host of proxies to bash down a front door, and once the insulted power knows, it's a matter of revenge. So even with proxies, a power's got to be subtle. There are RARE times when a power might recruit a mortal agent, even a player character.

So, maybe a berk thinks powers do deal with mortals, but it ain't that clear. Fact is, mortals are a lousy lot at keeping anything dark, so the powers don't trust them with the truth all that often. Instead, most powers try to trick mortals, get them to help without ever realizing it, and even this kind of trick is extremely uncommon. Rarer still does any power actually reveal itself to a mortal. Those chosen for such a revelation are paragons of whatever the power esteems. One is chosen for righteous beliefs, another for trustworthiness, and a third for masterful duplicity. Some poor sods go barmy, exposed to the radiance of their lords. Most die carrying out their quests. Others are cheated of their reward - whatever it is, it's usually not a winning offer.

There are a few madmen in Sigil who claim to have either personally called upon the powers or to have

killed one. These are lies. *The powers cannot be visited and chatted with.* Any mortal who meets a power does so because the power chooses. Sure, a berk can see the temples of Olympus and even walk inside some of them, but that doesn't mean Zeus is opening the door. The powers are unreachable, berk.

Nobody (except a lot of combined other powers) ever kills a power. After all, they're immortals, tied to the essence of their planes. There might be some slim chance of destroying a power's body, but even that wouldn't kill it. In time, the god would reappear with all its powers and memories - particularly of who ever caused it harm. Face it, the chance of getting that far against a power is unimaginable. Powers are just what the name says - powerful. Within their own realms, they are the law of the universe. They can strike with a thought, or without any thought at all. No mortal has ever reached a deity's status and none ever will, for in attaining it a being is no longer mortal.

That's the true strength of the powers.

THE LADY OF PAIN

*'Course I'll talk to her!
Hey, I can bob a baatezu, charm an aasimon,
and get a modron to turn stag -
I can certainly talk to the Lady of Pain!
- Darel Silvatong, rattling here Bone-Box for last time*

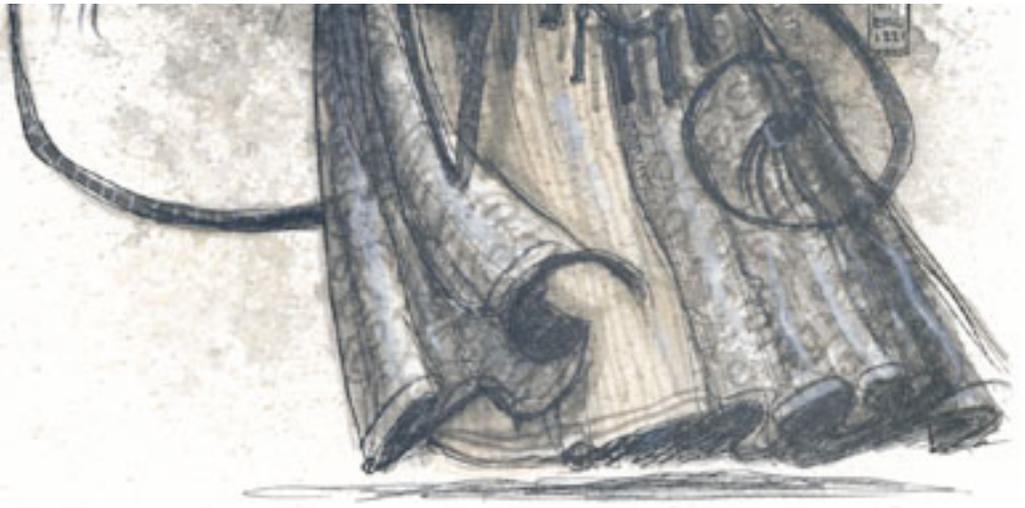
Even though it's closed to the powers, life's not all happy and safe in the City of Doors. The place is a prize and the gods know it. Every one of them would love to seize Sigil and control its doors, but of course the good powers won't even try - they know it'd start an outright war. Neutral powers hold themselves in check, thanks to the delicate balance of power on the planes if any one of them seized the place, the harmony of the universe'd be broken.

Unfortunately, this don't hold true for the powers of the Lower Planes - fiends and the like. They don't care about some "imaginary" balance or who gets hurt. They just want the whole birdcage and they'll do what they



must to get it. Gods help the sod who gets in their way.

It's a good thing, then, that Sigil's got the Lady of Pain. Don't be so barmy thinking she's just a symbol. She's real and she didn't get her name or looks for nothing. The Lady of Pain's about power - the power to block the doors of Sigil to all deities. She's the protector of the whole Cage, the one being that keeps Sigil safe.

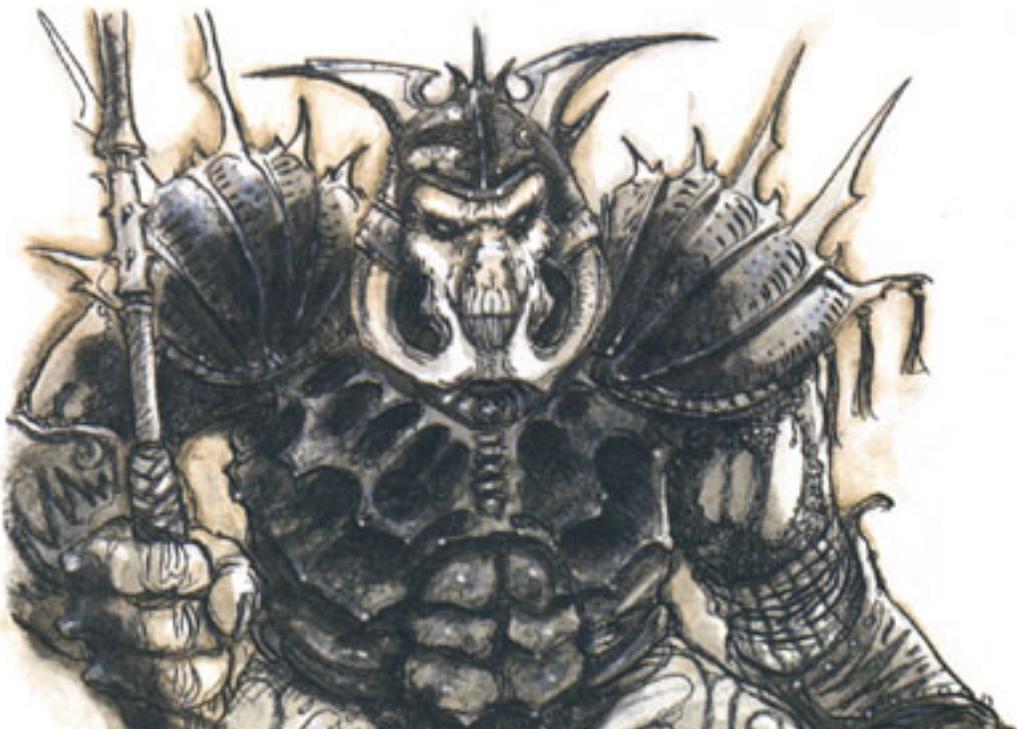


The Lady of Pain's real, but nobody ever talks to her. Nobody. Many who've seen her floating through the streets wind up in the Hive with all the rest of the barmies. She's not kind or caring, and a berk can't expect mercy from her. On a whim she'll aid, but more often she kills, and yet it's to her the city looks for protection. The Guvners think she created Sigil, while the Ciphers wonder if it's all her dream.

'Course, just because the Lady of Pain's blocked the doors doesn't mean the fiends quit trying to get in. She's got to remain strong to keep them out, and if they can weaken her, the seals will fall - and all Pandemonium will break loose. Maybe the fiend lords can't enter Sigil, but their agents, proxies, and sympathizers are there. Those berks are searching for the key, the way to bring down the Lady of Pain.

THE BLOOD WAR

*Where do I go
to see the Blood War?
- Anonymous clueless*



It's a good thing that most of the fiends are preoccupied with another problem: the Blood War, a savage quest for annihilation that ravages the Lower Planes. It's supposed to be a war of tanar'ri against baatezu, but everyone and everything down there seems to be involved. And neither of those "sides" can be trusted, either. A baatezu'll turn stag on



his brothers if it'll gain even a little power in the process, and the tanar'ri have always been at odds with each other. In between them all are the gehreleths and the yugoloths, eager to fight for the best-paying side. It's a war that's been going on as long as mortals have lived on the

planes, and it's a war neither side has yet to win.

Nobody even knows what the exact goals of the war are. Genocide's the best guess - the tanar'ri and baatezu'll fight each other until there's none left. Why? What berk understands a fiend's mind, can figure out its depraved depths? Maybe the local powers are playing games and making them fight. Maybe they fight just because they want to. Nobody knows for sure how the war started, but a lot of folks figure the Lady of Pain had something to do with it. Some barmy philosophers claim that she's one of them, a fiend now turned stag against all her own kind. Maybe it's true, and maybe it ain't.

The only thing known for sure is that the Blood War's a grim blessing to Sigil. Every move on Sigil by one force triggers a reaction from the other side, since both groups are desperately afraid of the other controlling such power. Sure, it makes traveling the Lower Planes dangerous - especially the battlefields of Gehenna and Carceri - but it keeps the fiends busy.

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Beginning on the following page, there's a general overview of the Outer Planes. Layers within a plane are identified with a *, and realms are noted with a #. The PLANESCAPE Cosmographical Tables, found on one of the poster maps included in this boxed set, lists all currently known layers, realms, cities, and sites of interest and may prove useful to the DM.

THE ABYSS

(Chaotic Evil)

There are multitudinous layers of the Abyss, perhaps even an infinite number. No one has ever catalogued them all, and it's doubtful that any of the plane's natives, let alone any other bean counter, has ever considered the effort worth the time and danger. Plain and simple, no one's ever done so because each layer is so horribly grotesque that a berk would have to be barmy to want to see any of them. Even fewer sods have the power to actually do so and survive. For one thing, almost every layer of the Abyss is completely inhospitable. For another, this plane is home to the tanar'ri, one of the two races locked forever in the infernal Blood War - and they aren't particularly hospitable either.

Watch out for those tanar'ri bashers. They'll either try to impress a berk into one of their armies - whether for the Blood War or a local squabble - or they'll flat out put him in the dead-book. Their reason? As often as not, just because they can. Don't expect a better reason from beings of utterly evil chaos. They're

devoted to seizing everything they can for themselves, and killing or enslaving everyone else. To their minds, that's the only way to power, and power is the goal of their existence.

Petitioners on this plane are the spirits of the chaotic-evil. Most take the form of manes, the very lowest of the tanar'ri, though a few especially powerful or evil ones may begin their Abyssal existence as something more powerful. Being a mane isn't so special, because more powerful fiends vent their bloodlust on these poor sods, sometimes slaying them in droves. But tanar'ri ain't tanar'ri because they're being punished or because of any other dim-sided reason some green prime has thought up. Here's the real chant: Tanar'ri want to be tanar'ri, even if all they are is a lousy mane. Those who survive long enough may be transformed to more powerful forms, should a master find the need for such a servant. Raw, indomitable power's all those sods care about, and the Abyss is the place to get it.

Plains of Infinite Portals. This, the top layer of the Abyss, is a dim, barren place baking forever beneath a bloated red sun. In numerable holes and huge iron fortresses dot the landscape. The holes are conduits that lead to other layers of the Abyss. The fortresses are strongholds of individual tanar'ri lords, where their bodies are protected by slavishly devoted servants while the leaders' spirits traverse the Astral Plane and the Prime Material, seeking corrupt and evil types to press into service.

Special Physical Conditions. There's no single unifying theme to the physical nature of the layers of the Abyss, except that they're all incredibly harsh. Some are endless deserts of baking sand, salt, or even rust. Others are nothing but bitterly cold ice plains, with razor shards of ice dotting the land. Some are endless seas of stinging salt or smoking acid. Others are plains of rock and lava, with atmospheres of choking fumes. Still others are unimaginably worse.

Special Magic Conditions. Spellcasting on the Abyss is as normal as can be expected for the Outer Planes. The only problem is that magic use tends to draw the attention of the locals - especially the agents of powers - who are likely to view the spell user as a threat, one to be dominated or destroyed. Interestingly, illusions and wild magic are enhanced on the Abyss.

Native Inhabitants. Eyewing, fetch, fire shadow, quasit, retriever, and tanar'ri all reside in the Abyss. A short list of the powers here includes Sess'inek of the lizard men, Laogzed of the troglodytes, the beholders' Great Mother, and virtually the entire drow pantheon. Chemosh and Hiddukel (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Beshaba and Umberlee (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) also claim the Abyss as home.

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ACHERON

(Lawful Neutral Evil)

*Artists are engineers of the soul.
That's why we lock them up.
- Tall Tally of the Mercykillers*

*Justice is not law.
- Mercykiller proverb*

Here's the safest place for a cutter to go if he really wants to deal with the fiends of the Lower Planes -

the iron-shod Acheron. It's a plane of enforced order, where conformity is more important than good. The Mercykillers will tell a berk that the fiends of Acheron aren't that evil - it's only their rigorous adherence to order that upsets those who lack such discipline. Other folks tell of the random cruelty that blind conformity brings - the crushed spirits, the broken hopes. This is the true face of Acheron.

The plane of Acheron is made of immense blocks, black and smooth, whose surfaces ring metallic underfoot. They drift endlessly through space, these cubes the size of cities and kingdoms. Sometimes they meet with a fearsome clang that crushes all between them and sends shudders through the plane.

The petitioners of Acheron, warriors lost to the joy of battle and saviors who forgot their cause, are consumed by the need for conformity. They cannot conceive of anyone refusing to obey the will of the group, as determined by their commanders. They are dedicated soldiers, forever lacking a cause.

* **AVALAS**. The battle plain of Acheron is filled with worlds where armies muster, drill, and wage war upon each other. The space echoes with the metallic clang of marching men, as vast legions hurl themselves at each other. The armies fight not to conquer territory, as some believe, but to force all others to conform. Fiends from Baator come here to recruit battalions for the endless Blood War. The ground is covered with the wreckage of war, scattered between iron citadels that dot the plains.

The power Lei Kung, Duke of Thunder, keeps his home on this plane, in a palace floating on a storm cloud amid the drifting sea of iron. One of the blocks is the continual battleground of Maglubiyet and Gruumsh, powers of the goblins and orcs, respectively. These two fling their humanoid legions at each other in futile battle, neither able to gain the upper hand.

* **THULDANIN**. The blocks of this layer are pitted and hollow, and their insides are filled with the cast-off machinery of war. Flying ships, spelljammers, catapults, cannons, and things yet to be invented on a thousand prime-material worlds all lie in broken, tumbled heaps, slowly transforming into the ironlike stone of this plane. Patrols from Avalas forage for anything useful in their endless wars, and they skirmish with each other over the smallest scrap. There's a 1-in-1000 chance per day of finding anything useful.

* **TINTIBULVS**. This layer is barren of life. The only things to be found are tumbling blocks of geometric solids of all types. Made of gritty stone, they collide and fracture along crystalline faults, spawning yet smaller solids to join in the planar dance. A few daring wizards can be found here, conducting researches possible only in this barren void.

* **OCANTHUS**. This layer is made up of razor-thin plates - some barely an inch across, others miles in width. Although the plates could support life, it's too dangerous here. The plates slice through the darkness, striking creatures like vorpal blades (THAC0 11, ignore armor; only Dexterity bonuses apply).

Special Physical Conditions. All layers drift in a void of air that supports life and flight. Gravity here conforms to the shape of the solid, always pointing toward the center. Thus, armies can range on all six sides of one of the immense cubes, or they can walk on both the top and bottom of Ocanthus's drifting plates. Travelers in Avalas and Thuldandin must be wary of collisions between the cubes, since everything between the two masses is crushed. Approaching cubes are seen a day or two in advance, depending on size, giving just enough warning to escape. (So pitched are some of the wars between legions that they fight until crushed, ignoring all other perils.)

Special Magic Conditions. Wild magic is diminished on Acheron.

Native Inhabitants. Achaierai, baatezu, imp, modron, rakshasa, rust monster, and yugoloth are all found on Acheron. Only yugoloths and rakshasa are truly native, the others coming to recruit or feed. Most of the orc pantheon resides here, having been driven out of Gehenna and Baator.

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ARBOREA

(Chaotic Good)

*He screamed, turned purple and
writhed to the floor for an hour
after just one sip?
Okay, I'll give it a try.
- Flishard willowheels, a Sensate*

This plane's called Olympus by primes who've heard of some of the local powers, and Arvandor by prime elves who revere a few other powers that live here. 'Course, they've both got it wrong, but whatever a sod calls this plane, the best way to sum it up in one word is to say "boisterous." This is the home of a pantheon of gods that call themselves "Greek" - a tag that reflects one of their favorite prime-material worlds. Wherever that world is, it must be a wild one because this pantheon is half-barmy with the party lifestyle. Their passions run high and deep, and the plane reflects that with stupendously craggy mountains, unbelievably deep gorges, forests of monstrously huge trees, and vast wild stretches of wheat fields, orchards, and arbors. The petitioners who live here are a hearty lot of backslapping, wide-grinning, epic-singing bravos when they're happy. But they drink to excess and wail like banshees when they're sorrowful. When angered, they leap into battle without a moment's hesitation (though their "combats" are better called "brawls" - lots of heads get thumped, but people seldom die). A swashbuckling cutter feels right at home on this plane. There's always hunts and battles, contests of strength and derring-do, and long, loud parties - it ain't ever dull around here!

The elven pantheon also makes its home on this plane, but it remains separate from the Greek gods. The elf gods are a bit more elegant in their behavior, though no less passionate. The petitioners pour out their joys and sorrows in achingly beautiful music, their rage in hard-eyed, cold-blooded vengeance.

The Sensates maintain a palace on this plane. It's a rambling structure of white marble, filled with sumptuous viands, beautiful art work, excellent musicians, and graceful dancers and acrobats.

Portals between the layers of Arborea are rarer than on most other planes, and those few are well guarded by the powers and petitioners, sometimes even with stone walls and iron gates. The idea isn't to keep travelers out, but to stop or slow the influx of unintelligent or dangerous monsters.

* **OLYMPUS.** The first layer of the plane takes the same name of the plane's most significant feature, Mount Olympus. This mountain dwarfs all others in size and significance (except Mount Celestia, of course), and it serves as an interplanar conduit to all crystal spheres where the Greek pantheon is (or has been) worshiped on the Prime Material Plane. Its caverns reach into various lower levels of the planes, like Gehenna, the Gray Waste, and Carceri. Separated from the Greeks by a stretch of wilderness lies the home of the elven pantheon. By some trick of the land, both the Greeks and the elves occupy the highest point on the plane, yet neither is higher than the other.

* **OSSA.** The second layer in Arborea is called Aquallor by the elves. It's one vast yet shallow sea, scattered over with islands. In the waters lie portals to the other layers of the plane, which are guarded by elf petitioners. Those gateways on the islands are watched by Greek petitioners. Sashelas of the elven pantheon swims these waters, as does Poseidon of the Greeks. The River Oceanus flows into Ossa from Thaliasia (on Elysium), too. Watch out for the huge, funnel-like maelstroms that can suck a cutter into Elysium in the blink of an eye.

* **PELION.** This layer, called Mithardir ("white dust") by the elves, is a place of blowing white sand and snow with a few scattered ruins. The temperatures aren't extreme, but the land seems to have disintegrated, fallen into an infinity of shifting, blowing dust. The Egyptian goddess Nephthys maintains a palace of dun-colored stone here in the middle of this desert plain.

Special Physical Conditions. Travel on this plane is difficult because of its immensity and wildness. Don't plan on walking from one town to the next; it'll take a berk forever. Besides the sheer distance involved, there are appallingly steep mountains and ravines to be crossed, dense forests to traverse, and mighty rivers with no bridges and few fords. A flying mount can help a lot, but magic's a better answer. 'Course, that's just speaking of the first layer. The other two are even tougher in their own ways.

Cyclops, foo creature, giant (and giant animals), sphinx, titan, and other beings of Greek legend abide here on Arborea. Most of the Greek and elven pantheons dwell on this plane, as well as Llira, Sune, and Tymora (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting).

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ARCADIA

(Lawful Neutral Good)

Standing on the slope of Arcadia's tallest peak, it's easy to see why this plane is known as the Land of Perfect Good. Everything here radiates peaceful order. Forests grow in neat rows, more like orchards than wild woods. On the plains, grasses grow to only a certain height. Wildflowers grow in self-defined beds of color, one never intruding on the other. Fields are geometrically perfect and towns are laid out in neat squares. Even day and night are ordered and perfect. All light and darkness comes from an orb set in the top of Arcadia's tallest peak. Half this sphere radiates starry darkness and the other half emits gleaming sunshine. The orb revolves in a regular 24-hour day. Light changes to dark abruptly - there is no dusk or dawn - and each change signals the beginning or end of another perfect day.

Arcadia is a land of fields, orchards, and woods. Throughout, there are the perfect forms of beneficial and peaceful animals from the Prime Material. Even the animals here reflect the goal of Arcadia - organization for the common good. Nectar-laden bees, industrious ants, silver-wooled sheep, fat deer, gleaming foxes, and other creatures that watch and protect their own are common here.

This plane is one of the most hostile to evil sods. Squadrons of petitioner militia regularly patrol the land, seeking out anyone evil. All Arcadian petitioners can know alignment at will, and travelers are always questioned as to their alignment. Lawful-good creatures are invited to join such hunts, chaotic goods are tolerated as long as they don't disturb the public order, neutrals of all types are stiffly requested to finish their business and leave, while evil types are instantly attacked. For the petitioners of Arcadia, it's no failure to fall when fighting evil.

Arcadia is said to have three layers, though only the uppermost is known, perhaps due to the difficulty of dealing with the Arcadian militia. The two realms described below are found on this layer of Arcadia.

MARDUK. The realm of Marduk, a greater power, has at its heart the great city of Marduk. This is a sprawling megalopolis of orderly design built around two rivers, the Kath and the Luar. The rivers cross at the very center of the city, the Kath flowing in an aqueduct over the Luar just at the point where the latter tumbles over a perfect waterfall. Marduk's streets are broad, the markets are well regulated, and the numerous parks are neat and well maintained. Patrols of einheriar militia, called kindari, make regular rounds through the streets, ever watchful for transgressors. All of good alignment are welcomed here, save any kind of dragon or dragonkin, for the deity Marduk has fought too many battles with such creatures to abide them in his realm. Many planars of the Harmonium faction reside here.

Marduk isn't utterly perfect, although even its imperfections are highly lawful. Well hidden in the city is a thieves' guild, the members' alignments concealed by magical devices and spells provided by beings of the lawful-evil planes. Though evil, the guild is nonetheless highly ordered, with strict laws and regulations as vigorously enforced as any ordinance of the kindari.

MOUNT CLANGGEDIN. This realm is a great mountain filled with dwarven halls, forges, and armories, as befits a dwarf god of battle. The mountain is a perfect cone, and the halls are carved perfectly straight. Here, dwarf einheriar hone their battle skills. At regular intervals, the hosts of Clanggedin cross the planes and raid the evil forces of Acheron. Such battles, no matter how small, are always epic.

Special Magic Conditions. The creatures of this plane (but not petitioners) are immune to illusions and phantasms. Likewise, a natural animal of this plane isn't affected by a prime's spell that might summon or control its counterpart on the Prime Material.

Native Inhabitants. Deva, einheriar militia, giant versions of normal creatures, hollyphant, and t'uen-rin inhabit Arcadia. Powers found here are Marduk and Clanggedin Silverbeard, as well as Reorx (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Azuth (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting). Because of their immunity to illusions, Arcadian hounds are prized as watchdogs.

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BAATOR

(Lawful Evil)

*Like the view?
It's all yours for a small price.
- Malkaresh of Baator*

This is it: the Big One, the Nine Hells, the Pit of Darkness, the Stinking Mire, whatever. It's got more names than there are prime-material worlds. It's the plane of the most dangerous evil there is: the baatezu, fiends of unsurpassed power. These monstrous beings are absolute masters of their plane. Among their kind exists a rigid hierarchy of domination that defines all life on Baator.

The most vile petitioners consigned to this plane are transformed into larvae - grub-things found throughout the Lower Planes. All petitioners endlessly suffer the tortures of the baatezu, for the wretches

can never truly die by torment. Their burnt, broken, and bleeding carcasses reform within a day and the entire process begins again. The petitioners endure this in the hope that someday they will advance and torture others.

* **AVERNUS**. This is a rocky wasteland with a dark red and starless sky, though the landscape is lit by spheres that weave and flare into fiery explosions. The blasted plain is scoured by savage legions, ready to repel invaders. This host is led by Bel, a pit fiend, eagerly earning honors from the infernal archduke of the plane. Tiamat, Queen of Darkness, guards the entrance to the next layer. The River Styx flows through this layer.

* **DIS**. The smoking black walls of the iron city Dis, which is also the name of this layer, rise into the ashgreen sky, and narrow streets run as far as can be seen. Condemned petitioners toil at meaningless labor, one team tearing a building down as fast as another erects it, and all work is done without tools. The fiery iron burns the flesh, and the streets echo with cries of agony. The archduke of this layer rules the Iron City from a tower of lead and stone.

* **MINAUROS**. This is the layer of greed. Foul rain, oily sleet, and razor-sharp hail sweep across the layer. All is bog, save the ridges of volcanic glass that slither through the landscape. The only city is Minauros the Sinking, built of black stone, forever settling into the mire. Fiends drive petitioners onto the bottomless bog to find ever rarer stone to bolster the city's structures. Decayed bodies gurgle to the surface, filling the air with disease.

* **PHIEGETHOS**. Here is the legendary realm of fire, filled with volcanos and rivers of liquid fire. It's virtually the same as being on the plane of Fire. The only city is Abriymoch, built in the caldera of an almost extinct volcano.

* **STYGIA**. This is the realm of ice, a great frozen sea, although there's open water where the River Styx flows. Small plants grow here, creating an icy swamp. Lightning scours the sky. On a great ice floe stands the ice-crust city of Tantlin.

* **MALBOLGE**. This layer is a great rockfall, immense in size. With no clear path, travelers must scale a constant parade of building-sized boulders or wind through the dark tunnels they form. The sky burns with clouds of red steam. There is no single city on this layer, but a series of copper-clad fortresses among the scree.

* **MALADOMINI**. This is the plain of ruins. Under the blood-black sky, petitioners quarry, carve, and build new cities for the archduke of this layer. The land, once fertile, is scarred by mine pits, slag heaps, brackish canals, and half-destroyed ruins. Cities are built upon cities, but only one, the newest, Malagard, stands above the surface. Beneath, the ruins are dungeons so extensive that even the lesser fiends fear what lurks in them.

* **CANIA**. Worse than Stygia, this layer is solid ice. Exposure here is equal to that on the plane of Ice. Huge glaciers grind at the jagged mountains that hold them. The archduke of this layer rules from the citadel of Mephistar, overlooking the glacier Nargus.

* **NESSUS**. This is the deepest pit of Baator, a plain shattered by rifts deeper than the deepest ocean trench. At the lowest depth sits the palace of Baator's current overlord, a citadel even greater in scope than Khin-Oin on the Gray Waste. It's unmapped and undescribed, which suits its fiendish master just fine. The citadel stands on the shore of a lake of fluid ice that feeds the River Lethe. This layer is a land

of extremes - the coldest freeze, the hottest fires, the steepest cliffs, etc.

Special Magic Conditions. Wild magic is diminished on Baator, due to its lawful bent.

Native Inhabitants. Baatezu, hellcat, hell hound, hordling, imp, larva, and simpathetic call Baator home. Within the strict chain of command, the greater baatezu constantly jockey for power, each attempting to overthrow its rivals and become the supreme master of Baator. Takhisis of the DRAGONLANCE saga resides on this plane, although the Clueless of Krynn think she lives in the Abyss.

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THE BEASTLANDS

(Neutral Good Chaotic)

Although it's known to some bashers as the Happy Hunting Grounds, most bloods prefer to call this plane the Beastlands. The name fits, too, since this part of the multiverse is rich with wild animals. A berk on a safari could bag quite a trophy here - if his prey didn't make a trophy of him first.

Of all the planes, this one has no settlements, no towns, no citadels built by its petitioners, and the reason's simple: All the petitioners here are animals. When a body arrives here, someone like a great provider for his clan, he becomes a wild creature of wood, plain, sea, or air. That's why it's called the Beastlands - natural wild animals roam in abundance, living the lives that animals lead. This means only natural animals. A basher's not going to find a beholder or a catoblepas here - they ain't natural animals in the true sense of the word.

The plane's a seeming hodgepodge of every natural environment that there is. There's veldt, jungle, swamp, plain, and forests of all types, filled with trees of all description. Everything here's more lush, wild, and savage than any prime's ever seen at home. This plane's the epitome of wilderness.

'Course, a petitioner-turned-lion's got to have some things different than just an ordinary lion. First off, he can talk; becoming an animal doesn't rob a petitioner of his faculties. There's still a mind beneath the fang and fur. Second, those that were spellcasters before they died still have some spell ability. For the most part they don't use their spells, though, since that'd spoil the natural life they now lead. But if some berk shows up and starts making trouble, it's a sure bet the petitioners will strike back as best as they can.

* **KRIGALA.** The first layer of the Beastlands is a place of continual noon. Here are found the creatures that live and hunt under the glare of the sun. In some places it burns hotly, creating savannahs, while in others it barely penetrates the thick canopy of jungle. Running almost straight through the center of this layer is the River Oceanus, headed between Elysium and Arborea. The jungles and forests are thickest along it. Moving away from the river, the land becomes plains, then dry veldt, then desert, only to rise into coniferous wooded mountains and arctic tundra. Lions, zebras, deer, hawks, eagles, and other day-cycle creatures fill this layer. It's along the banks of the Oceanus that the Signers maintain a citadel.

* **BRUX.** This is the layer of perpetual dawn (or dusk, depending on a cutter's mood). The sky is always filled with ruddy half-light, competing against the silver trace of a moon. The land's cool and misty. Forests are thick with shadows and the plains glimmer in the almost-light. Again, every type of terrain can be found here, the home to something. Bird calls, monkey howls, and other stirrings herald the dark. These are the cries of creatures that live and hunt in the not-quite hours of dawn and dusk. Bats, tigers,

foxes, wolves, bears, and more fill this layer.

* **KARASUTHRA.** The third layer is the land of night. Glittering stars outshine the almost-vanished moon. Clouds streak the sky and fogs cling to many areas. The air rings with the croaking of frogs and the stealthy rustle of trackers. Here the realm is filled with creatures of the night - owls, bobcats, panthers, and others that stalk their prey through the black shadows of the world.

Special Physical Conditions. In terms of natural law, this plane is the closest of any to a normal primematerial world. Furthermore, because of the "perfect wildness" of this plane, those who have wilderness skills (tracking, animal handling, direction sense) find their talents enhanced by 10% (+2 on 1d20 checks).

Special Magic Conditions. Because of the mortai, a type of living cloud creature, spells affecting weather, wind, or air automatically fail. Furthermore, no matter how "normal" they seem, the animals of the Beastlands aren't normal beasts and can't be affected by spells controlling normal animals.

Native Inhabitants. Aasimon, baku, mortai, and normal and giant-sized animals of all types live in the Beastlands. Those that have spell ability can cast 1d10 spells per day. Chislev and Habbakuk (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Deneir and Milil (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) are said to call this plane home as well.

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BYTOPIA

(Neutral Good Lawful)

Now here's a place where a basher can feel safe and not be bothered by the petitioners at the same time, because Bytopia (called the Twin Paradises by primes who don't know any better) is a place where a being's left to himself until there's good need. That means folks here help each other when they need assistance and leave each other alone when they don't. All in all, it's a pretty sociable place.

Now, Bytopia is just that: a pair of layers filled with mountains, streams, forests, meadows, and all the other stuff of a wild and natural world. While it's a far cry from the perfect order of Arcadia, Bytopia isn't the untamed wilderness of the Beastlands either. Both layers are sprinkled with towns filled with hard-working souls and little city-states. Caravans and traders pass from community to community, linking the whole together.

What makes Bytopia particularly unusual is that a cutter can look up, past the sky, and see the other layer of the plane. That's because the layers are stacked on each other like a sandwich, sharing one sky between them. The tallest mountains of each layer actually touch so that they're more like columns (where stalactites and stalagmites meet). During the day, the plane is lit by radiance from the sky. When nighttime comes, the light fades and the sky becomes dark. What looks like stars overhead are actually the lights and fires of communities on the other layer.

The petitioners of Bytopia are industrious to a fault. Truth told, their lives are defined by work. Petitioners figure everybody's got to have an honest trade. Folks who don't, for whatever reason, are shiftless if not outright evil. Adventuring isn't really an honest trade here, and thieving is just intolerable. Petitioners here don't offer charity, although they're fair in all dealings, A basher looking for a handout is

likely to be given an axe and pointed to the woodpile with instructions to work up a sweat before dinner.

* **DOTHION.** Of the two layers, this one is dedicated to pastoral industry, Its vast woods are the province of hunters and woodcutters, its meadows are given over to herders and farmers, and its rivers are plied by fisherfolk and traders. The towns on this layer are small, self-supporting farming communities, each with its own militia and council. The largest of these is Yeoman, a good-sized market town. Dothion is the realm of most of the gnome pantheon, Garl Glittergold being the greatest power. The realm of the gnomish deities is marked by deep woods, great warrens, sentient trees, and large numbers of gnome petitioners. The creatures of the woods are normal animals like those found in temperate regions of a prime-material world, although they're larger and more curious. Seasons are mild, but they do occur.

* **SHURROCK.** The other layer of Bytopia is rough and stormy. The land is more mountainous, rich with ore, and blessed with abundant running water. Farmland is sparse and the woods deep. This is the layer of craft and industry. Mining, smelting, quarrying, and carving are the most frequent trades. The towns hum with energy as mills churn, pumps grind, and forges crackle with activity. Still, it isn't a layer of organized factories. Each laborer maintains his own shop or works as part of an informal cooperative - it's a pre-industrial, industrial world.

Special Physical Conditions. A traveler gets from one layer to the other by climbing to the top of one mountain and then climbing down the other. It's a tricky bit of business when gravity reverses, but after trying it once, a berk gets used to it. Travelers can fly to the top of the sky and make the crossover, taking care not to fall when up suddenly changes to down.

Native Inhabitants. Baku, hollyphant, normal animal, and treant all live in Bytopia. The foolish titan Epimetheus wanders this plane and can unwittingly create trouble. This plane is also the home of Kiri-Jolith (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Ilmater (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting).

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CARCERI

(Neutral Good Evil)

*We must take certain liberties
in the name of freedom.
- Chancellor Margute of the Harmonium*

There's some berks that say Sigil's a birdcage, a prison, and other folks are too dim to realize it. Well, they ain't seen Carceri. That's a prison. Sigil's a holy temple compared to this plane. Known as Tarterus to green primes, Carceri is the land of exiles, the place where the outcast, the overthrown, and the defeated fume and plot for the day when they'll return. Olympic titans are the best known of the lot. Carceri plays its role in the Blood War by serving as a mustering ground and battlefield for the mindless armies of gehreleth.

Carceri is called the six-fold realm because it has six layers nested like little wooden dolls, one inside the other. Each layer is of immense size, sometimes the equal of the layer that contains it, and infinite by most standards. The layers radiate their own light, a dull reddish glow like that of a fire beetle. Though the light is fiery, it gives no heat, so the layers of Carceri range from cool to bitter freezing.

Petitioners consigned to Carceri are most frequently dead traitors, backstabbers, and other souls of underhanded ambition. While the petitioners don't remember their past lives, the old traits can't be broken. Thus it is that no petitioner of Carceri can ever speak the entire truth. They lie compulsively and most cunningly.

* **OTHRYS.** The outermost layer of Carceri is home to most of the exiled titans - Coeus, Crius, Cronus, Hyperion, Iapetus, Mnemosyne, Oceanus, Phebe, Tethys, Thea, and Themis. Once this layer was linked to Arborea, but in the war that threw the titans down, Zeus and his fellow powers shattered the bond, thus trapping their enemies here. Othrys is a realm of vast bogs and quicksand, fed by the Styx and its channels. Cronus's palace is old and in need of repair, but the plane offers none of the noble stone originally used to build the place.

* **CATHRYS.** Little is known of this layer, as it's filled with fetid jungle and scarlet plains. Traveling here is dangerous, for the plants ooze acidic sap that can eat through man or metal. Those creatures that live here are immune.

* **MINETHYS.** This is a layer filled with sand. Stinging grit is driven so hard, by the wind that it can strip an exposed being to the bone in a matter of hours. All who dwell in this layer, save the powers, are bundled in cloth and rags to block out the cutting blast. Tornados are common, and to avoid all these hazards, most petitioners live in miserable sand-filled pits, dug by hand. Coeus maintains a palace here.

* **COLOTHYS.** This layer is one of those mountains more immense than any in the Prime Material Plane. Travel on foot here is almost impossible, because the land is riven by canyons miles deep. The few trading routes that do exist carry travelers across impossibly rickety bridges and on cliff-face trails barely wide enough for a single man. Petitioner villages cling to the clefts in the rock, and Crius maintains a citadel on the highest peak in the layer. Crius is often at war with Grolantor, the hill giant deity, who has terrified the gehreleth shator into his service.

* **PORPHATYS.** This layer is a cold, shallow ocean fed by black snow. Both the snow and the water are mildly acidic, inflicting 1d6 points of damage per turn to unprotected travelers. Small islands rise above the waves, barely more than sandbars. The exiled titan Oceanus maintains a half-sunken palace here. Starving petitioners crowd the little isles.

* **AGATHYS.** This is the coldest layer of the plane, an orb of black ice streaked with red. The air is bitterly cold and burns for 1d2 points of damage each round. Petitioners here are half-frozen into the ice. Nothing else is known to live here.

Native Inhabitants. Achaierei, gehreleth, greater titan, hordling, imp, larva, mephit, nightmare, quasit, shadow fiend, and vargouille all inhabit Carceri. Many other creatures of the Lower Planes can be found here, like as not stragglers or routed troops of the Blood War. The armies of the tanar'ri are most common, and greater tanar'ri come to recruit gehreleth for their causes. These near-mindless monsters almost always accept, eager to kill and destroy. The greater titans, proudly believing themselves better than all this, remain aloof, although they sometimes attempt to maneuver the tanar'ri generals into serving their own goal of freedom from the plane. Also said to live on Carceri are Malar and Talona of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting.

ELYSIUM

(Neutral Good)

This place gets called the Restful Plane or the Land of the Thoughtless, depending on a sod's attitude. The Ciphers'll tell a berk it's the perfect place, having goodness without thought. Then again, the Guvners can barely stand it because there's no order or discipline on the plane at all. That's because the driving force of Elysium is goodness and goodness only. Order or anarchy - it doesn't matter, as long as it's for the good.

Elysium is a land of fertile richness and unsurpassed natural beauty. Near the banks of the River Oceanus, which winds through all the layers, are tall trees, waving reeds, and lush meadows. In the hundreds of miles beyond the river's banks, the forests give way to grassy plains, then rolling hills, until the land finally becomes rugged badlands that are wind-sculpted into forms of artistic beauty.

The petitioners here live their lives in peaceful repose, more or less living as they wish. There's no need to work unless a person wants to, for the land is abundant enough to fulfill all wants. Nonetheless, there are towns and cities here, organized by those who want to live this way. Either choice is fine by the petitioners of Elysium.

Clearly the petitioners are an independent lot. Such is their nature that they're completely immune to charm, hold, and summoning spells. No one can force the inhabitants of Elysium to do anything they don't want to do.

* **AMORIA.** The layer connected to the Astral Plane, Amoria is an untroubled land of woodland and meadow. There are several trading towns here, strung like pearls along Oceanus's banks - the largest of these is Release From Care. Scattered throughout the layer are the huts of Ciphers, who make this plane their headquarters. Unlike other factions, the Ciphers don't maintain a permanent citadel on their home plane. Instead, they gather at each other's homes or in clearings as needed. Isis maintains a realm on this layer, and it's famous for the firefly lanterns that line the river's banks. Meanwhile, her sometime-rival Ishtar maintains the City of the Star, a metropolis lit by a brilliant star set in the top of the city's highest tower.

* **ERONIA.** This layer is mountainous, and here waterfalls and cascades interrupt Oceanus's flow. River travel without a guide can be dangerous. The banks are sheer and rocky except for a few landing points. Here, the power Enlil maintains a mountain realm, while Nanna-Sin plies the river on his great crescent moon barge. This vessel, as it passes, bathes the river canyon in the silver radiance of moonlight.

* **BELIERIN.** This layer is mostly marsh, rich with wildfowl and tree-covered hummocks. Unlike other marshes, however, this one is free of pestilence and bothersome insects. Very little is known of it, save that there may be realms in the higher ground around its edges.

* **THALASIA.** Here is the source and end of the River Oceanus, rising out of the sea that is Thalasias, which fills this layer. Small islands dot the waves, but the majority of the realms of interest on this layer lie far beneath the surface. It's said that many of the sea deities make their home here. The islands are home to those petitioners who in their previous life died in the cause of pure good.

Special Physical Conditions. The primary means of travel on Elysium is by river. This requires a boat and a guide, neither of which are automatically available. Sailing on Oceanus is relatively safe, free of hideous fiends, but there are still hazards. Giant versions of natural creatures swim in the river and will

hunt for food. Waterfalls, snags, whirlpools, and rapids - the hazards of normal boating - are greater here, as befits the majestic scale of this plane.

Native Inhabitants. Baku, foo creature, moon dog, per, phoenix, and solar are all native to Elysium. Numerous powers reside here as well. Tsuki-Yomi, Ushas, Mishakal, and Majere (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Chauntea and Lathander (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) are the most important of those not already named.

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GEHENNA

(Neutral Evil Lawful)

"The four-fold furnaces, the fires terrible..." The epic poet Ioleuf saw Gehenna when he wrote this line, a berk can be sure. Gehenna's a plane were volcanos float in a great void, belching their magma sprays onto barren, lava-crusted slopes. Sulfurous steam wheezes from fumaroles, and horrid gases drift in choking clouds through the air. Not the best place for a berk to take his favorite dollymop.

Gehenna's not a forgettable place. Where else is a cutter going to see mountains peaked at both top and bottom, floating in space - mountains that are nothing but greasy black slopes, bubbling rivers of steam, and spraying plumes of lava? Is there another place where the very rock provides the carmine glow that outlines all? These are mountains where nothing is flat, nothing is green, and nothing is easy. Gehenna's void is filled with volcanic mounts, each hovering in space, unmoving except for the occasional shudder of a particularly vicious eruption.

The suffering petitioners of this plane must cling to these slopes or risk tumbling to oblivion. So they cling as they try to make little lives for themselves, pretending that nothing has changed, that this is and always has been their home. The barren bitterness of their land makes the petitioners suspicious and greedy, so much so that no petitioner on this plane will do anything without some kind of payment. Guides must be paid, answers bought, even strangers offering aid must receive compensation. This is a plane without charity, without even a glimmer of what that means.

* **KHALAS.** The kindest of Gehenna's cruel layers, Khalas, the First Mount, connects to the Astral Plane. The air is crimson near the ground, quickly fading to black no more than a few dozen feet overhead. Chamada glows like a bloody moon in the darkness, brightened by sparkling fountains of lava and flame. Khalas's sides are streaked with waterfalls, cloaked in steam from the singing ground. The rivers here never reach the bottom, either evaporating or disappearing into black caverns. The Styx is the largest of these rivers, plunging over falls thousands of feet high and winding through the glowing caverns of Khalas's interior. Here is found the Teardrop Palace of Sung Chiang.

* **CHAMADA.** The Second Mountain is the most savage of the four. The ground burns with the orange glare of magma so intense that it blots out the sky. Rivers of lava cascade down its slopes, continually hardening, forming dams, and then bursting forth in new directions. Vents unexpectedly split open and spew fresh ejecta, and volcanos swell on its surface like warts. The air is full of the smell of burning hair and sulfur-scorched flesh.

* **MUNGOTH.** The Third Mountain is constantly assaulted by a rain of ash and acidic snow. The ground is cool, with only scattered volcanos that barely make enough light to show the way. Avalanches of cold

mud threaten travelers at every turn.

* **KRANGATH.** The Fourth Mountain is the dead realm. Here, all the fires are out and the mountain shudders no more. All is blackness and ice. Nothing dwells on the frozen surface. Deep underground is said to be the realm of Shargaas of the orcs, the Night Lord.

Special Physical Conditions. There are no level points on the surface of any mountain. Should a traveler lose his footing, he tumbles down the slope until stopped by something solid or until he can catch a passing outcropping. This tumble causes falling damage equal to half the distance rolled in feet. The hot surface of Khalas inflicts 1d2 points of damage each round to unprotected skin; Chamada's surface causes 1d6 points of damage per round. Mungoth's acidic snows cause 1d3 points of damage per turn, and storms can last for hours. Krangath's utter cold causes 1d6 points of damage per round.

Special Magic Conditions. Enchantment/charm magic is diminished on Gehenna, while invocation/evocation magic is enhanced.

Native Inhabitants. Vaporighu and yugoloth are native, while other creatures such as imps, quasits, overthrown baatezu, and exiled tanar'ri often hide here. Sargonnas (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Loviatar (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) also live here.

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THE GRAY WASTE

(Neutral Evil)

Oinos, Niflheim, and Pluton - these are the fabled "three glooms" of the Gray Waste that a cutter hears so much about. This land is evil solely, and them that's here don't care if they're in it alone or together. This is the great battlefield of the Blood War, called Hades by some primes, but anyone who's ever been here knows why "the Gray Waste" says it all.

The three glooms are just that, or so the chant goes - dull gray lands. The earth is gray, the sky is gray, even the petitioners here are gray. There's no color here; as soon as a sod steps onto the plane, everything he's got turns white, black, or gray. There's no sun, no moon, no stars - just gray.

The grayness reaches right into the hearts of the petitioners. They're a barmy folk without any feeling or emotion. They don't laugh, don't cry, and don't care. All they do is despair, their life and hope sucked right out of them. They make great liars, because a basher can never see a whit of emotion in their faces, but they're too lost to bother with even that most of the time. That despair eventually reaches into the heart of travelers who stay too long, sucking a little life from them, too. See a berk with a dead-looking stare and he's a gloom-bug of the Gray Waste, for sure.

* **OINOS.** This is a layer of stunted trees, roving fiends, and virulent disease, ruled by an ultroloth prince. His citadel is the great fortress Khin-Oin, the Wasting Tower. From a distance it looks like the spinal cord of some flayed beast, soaring into the air. Closer up, it takes on the form of a great tower encased by lesser towers. It's said to stand 20 miles high and have dungeons beneath it as deep, but this is some barmy's exaggeration. The tower is a necessity, for the prince of this domain constantly finds himself under attack by his rival yugoloths. The only time they unite is when threatened with another invasion of tanar'ri or baatezu troops, who use this layer as the battleground for much of their endless Blood War.

* **NIFLHEIM.** The second layer is more alive than the first, being free of the wasting disease that holds the land. Though the trees - mostly pines - are more abundant, they sport no color but gray. Thick mists hang among the trunks, gray-white on the gray-black background. This is the realm of Hel, from the Norse pantheon. Her palace is a great hall of wood. Deadly poisons drip from the ceiling, and the floor writhes with serpents. Reaching into this layer is a root of Yggdrasil, the World Ash. Curled around this root is a great wingless dragon Nidhogg, who forever gnaws at the root and will ultimately kill the tree. Nidhogg could be slain, but her place would be taken by one of her children, so what's the point?

* **PLUTON.** The third layer of the Gray Waste is connected to the Upper Planes by the tunnels of Mount Olympus. This layer holds willows, olives, and poplars, all black and slowly dying for want of care. This is the realm of Hades, Lord of the Dead. He lives within a palace of gray marble, protected by strong walls. The gates to his realm are beaten bronze, impossible for all but the greatest heroes to open. Just beyond is Cerberus, the three-headed dog who guards the entrance to Hades' domain. Imprisoned here are many fallen tyrants and vain heroes.

Special Physical Conditions. The despair of this plane is more than symbolic. It physically settles over all who come here. Each week, travelers must successfully save vs. spell or be trapped on the Gray Waste, unable to muster the desire to leave. Once trapped, a body becomes a larva in 1d6 months. Despairing travelers must be rescued by others if they are to be saved.

Special Magic Conditions. Since all color is drained on this plane, color-based magic (prismatic sphere, for example) is ineffective here. Neither can the intense despair of this plane be overcome by magical means such as emotion spells.

Native Inhabitants. Diakk, hordling, larva, night hag, and yugoloth all live in the Gray Waste. Baatezu, tanar'ri, and gehreleth can also be found on this plane, often leading armies against each other in another assault of the Blood War. Morgion (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Cyric, Mask, and Shar (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) are also known to occupy this plane.

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LIMBO

(Chaotic Neutral)

*And enjoy my stay to traveler!
Welcome your.
- A Xaositect named Sival.. for today*

Face it, berk, this place is a mess and it likes it that way. Take a chunk from each of the Inner Planes, mix them with a few prime-material landscapes, give the whole stew an extra tumble or two, and that makes Limbo on a quiet day. The Xaositects love this plane for its pure chaos, though even they impose some local order - at least enough so they can survive here and adore what they call the beauty of primal chaos. 'Course, most folks think the Chaosmen are leatherheads, and wish they'd embrace chaos all the way and just disintegrate.

* **LAYERS.** There's some debate as to whether Limbo actually has layers. Some ancient writings claim that there are five layers, each named after its chief inhabitants - Gith or Slaad first, Susanoo second, Agni third, Indra fourth, and the layer of the lost gods last but those high-up men seem to hop from layer

to layer. What's more, if there are different layers, they all look the same, so maybe Limbo really only has one level. Who knows?

Special Physical Conditions. Imagine Limbo as a roiling soup of the four basic elements and all their combinations. There's balls of fire, pockets of air, chunks of earth, and waves of water, plus lots of pieces of prime-type terrain floating around - even bits of meadow, forest, and whatnot. Limbo responds to a smart cutter's will, which means he can make a stable pocket around him. The smarter he is, the bigger the pocket he can maintain. But don't go to sleep: Once a body stops concentrating, the pocket reverts to chaos. Only the natives can maintain a pocket unconsciously, and the powers here can set up places that stay whole even when they're gone.

On the other hand, Limbo's petitioners just roll with the plane's changes, composing their bodies from whatever element suits their mood at the time. One minute a petitioner's made of fire, and the next he'll be nothing but wind whistling around some basher's head, or a wave splashing over his boots, or a boulder just sitting there, thinking.

Only natural forms come into being with the imposition of will upon Limbo. A sod can think a meadow into coalescing, for example, but not a building. Once the meadow is there, though, anybody can physically or magically construct a building on the site. In fact, the githzerai who dwell here do just that, so they have whole cities tumbling happily through the chaos of Limbo. The resident powers have temples and suchlike in their realms, too. However, the slaad - Limbo's natives - generally don't see the need for such trappings. Even pockets of stability are a waste of their time; they're just as comfortable lounging in a blazing fire as in a bubble of water.

Special Magic Conditions.> Virtually every spell cast on Limbo has a chaotic effect. In order to cast a spell on this plane, a wizard has to make a successful Intelligence check (roll less than or the same as the wizard's Intelligence score on 1d20). If the roll is failed, the spell is spent (and lost from memory) with no effect. But on a natural roll of 20, a wild surge occurs (see the Tome of Magic), which ain't usually pleasant. 'Course, the use of wild magic itself still incurs a chance for a wild surge accompanying a successful spell.

Native Inhabitants. Githzerai and slaad are the most common creatures encountered on Limbo. Powers that reside here include Agni, Fenmarel Mestarine, Indra, and Susanoo, as well as Sirrion (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Tempus (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting).

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MECHANUS

(Lawful Neutral)

*Doubt?
We do not question.
We do.
- Modron Tricalus*

A few primes think this place is called Nirvana, but where they came up with that barmy notion is anybody's guess. Mechanus is sometimes called "the Clockwork Universe," and it's easy to see how the place came by that name: Mechanus is a world of giant cogs that hover in space at all angles. Teeth

interlock, and the cogwheels click and turn to the rhythm of some cosmic harmony - all perfectly fitting for the plane of ultimate, cold law.

Some of the cogs are little, barely more than a small island of matter, while others are hundreds of miles across. Many times, several smaller cogs cluster around a larger one, feeding off its motion. Typically, such knots are a single layer, although each disk may be a realm of its own. Everything is interlocked, and nothing turns unless all of Mechanus's disks turn.

Petitioners found on this plane are notoriously honest and literal. They don't interpret instructions or requests, but do exactly what is asked of them. This can be true even if the action leads to death, for petitioners of Mechanus believe they are constantly being tested in their devotion to order and law.

* **REGULUS.** The greatest of Mechanus's layers is Regulus, the realm of the modrons. These bizarre creatures live absolutely regimented existences, following a strict hierarchy all the way up to Primus, the One and Prime, a greater power on this plane. There are few petitioners found in Regulus, for there are no organized cults of Primus - at least not on any known prime-material world. Those few petitioners that are here were once devoted to the cause of utter and absolute order. Primus seems to exist to supervise the modrons, which maintain the existence of the plane. Modrons are often found in other realms of the plane, polishing cog teeth and generally fussing over the great wheels.

ANU. This realm is known only by the power that rules it - Anu, a Babylonian god. His realm is a single disk 500 miles across, covered by his many-windowed palace. There, he presides over the affairs of his children and rules the other gods of his pantheon. Copper-plated soldiers patrol his palace, their pupilless eyes never succumbing to sleep. Petitioners work at crafts and tend the halls there.

THE JADE PALACE. This is the realm of Shang-ti, the Celestial Emperor. It, too, takes the form of an enormous palace, although it includes gardens, lakes, and parks. The architecture is what would be called "Chinese" on one particular prime-material world. The palace is the center of the Celestial Bureaucracy, which supervises all deities of the Chinese pantheon. From here, Shang-ti hears petitions, punishes the unjust, elevates the worthy, and decrees policy for all other gods. Foo dogs prowl the grounds, protecting in particular the peaches of immortality. Each fruit extends a being's lifespan by 100 years, making these great treasures indeed. Almost as important is the Great Library, which stores all knowledge gathered from every prime-material world that recognizes the emperor's existence.

OTHER REALMS. There are numerous other realms on the disks of Mechanus. Several lesser powers are located on them: Varuna, who rules a disk as smooth as the reflected moon; Rudra, whose disk is split into a great chasm, filled with maruts; and Yama, whose disk burns with the fire of purity. Finally, there's the Fortress of Disciplined Enlightenment, the stronghold of the Guvners. The fortress sits on a disk all its own, its spires forever watching over the revolutions of that realm.

Special Physical Conditions. The gravity on the disks of Mechanus always pulls toward the surface, no matter how that cog stands in relation to all others. It's possible to walk about on both sides of a disk, but only one side of any disk is ever built upon.

Special Magic Conditions. Illusions and phantasms of all types automatically fail on this plane. Such spells create little more than wispy outlines that fool no one. Needless to say, this isn't a popular place for planar illusionists to visit. Wild magic is similarly useless.

Native Inhabitants. Einheriar, marut, and modron (of all types) are found on Mechanus. Powers who

dwelling here include Anu, Horus, Primus, Rudra, Shang-ti, Varuna, and Yama. Helm and Mystra (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) are also said to dwell here.

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MOUNT CELESTIA

(Lawful Good)

A few primes call it the Seven Heavens, but as usual they're off the track. The tag is descriptive, but it's still wrong. For some cutters, this is the best of all worlds law and goodness tempered by understanding and mercy. For other berks, it's worse than the Abyss. It's Mount Celestia, or the Seven Mountains of Goodness and Law. Mount Celestia's a plane bathed in the golden radiance of justice and mercy, where everything is the ideal model of prime-material things.

It should be clear to even the most leatherheaded basher that there are seven layers on this plane. Each layer is farther up the slope of a great mountain, which rises out of an endless ocean. The first layer's at the mountain's base. Climb a ways and a sod eventually reaches the second layer, and so forth. Unlike a lot of other planes, a cutter can see the other layers, since the whole thing is one continuous mountain.

Petitioners on this plane are unique because their spirits are transmuted into archons as soon as they arrive. They start as lantern archons - little balls of light - and progress through hound, warden, sword, and tome classification. A petitioner's goal on this plane is to ascend to proxy - hound or better - and eventually become one with the plane.

* **LUNIA, THE SILVER HEAVEN.** The first layer is a land of constant night - not a fearful dark, but a pleasant summer's night, filled with stars and silver moonlight. Portals open into the shallow surf at the ocean shore's edge. The water itself is as sweet as holy water and has the same effect on undead. On this section of the slope are citadels and palaces of many minor powers as well as the trading centers of the plane. Heart's Faith is the largest of these towns, not far from a portal to the Outlands.

* **MERCURIA, THE GOLDEN HEAVEN.** This layer is bathed in golden light, hence its name. Here Bahamut, Draco Paladin, maintains an immense palace. Not far away are the jungle realms of Vishnu and Surya, which are filled with stone temples. Throughout the plane are armories and mustering grounds used by the armies of archons, which Mount Celestia calls upon in times of need. Archon troops constantly drill on this layer.

* **VENYA, THE PEARLY HEAVEN.** This layer is lit by soft, white light. It's also known as the Green Fields to halflings, for it's the home of Yondalla and other halfling deities. The land is lush and fertile, and the slopes are covered with terraced crops, meadows, and moors.

* **SOLANIA, THE ELECTRUM HEAVEN.** Here, the sky becomes silver and the land is rugged with impressive canyons and crashing rivers. Fog clings to the hollows. Monasteries founded by lesser powers dot the slope; Kuan Yin maintains the most powerful of these. In tunnels that pierce deep into the mountainside is the great hall of the Soul Forge, Moradin Dwarffather's realm.

* **MERTION, THE PLATINUM HEAVEN.** In Mertion, the sky burns with silver even brighter than that of Solania. Undead suffer 1d6 points of damage during each round they're exposed to it. The layer is dominated by great plateaus upon which rest huge fortresses. Here reside archons who in their previous

lives were paladins.

* **JOVAR, THE GLITTERING HEAVEN.** This layer is named for its sky, which glows with the sparkling fire of gems of all kinds. These pulse with the beat of life. The layer is home to the Jovian archons. The peak of the great mountain is found here, topped by a giant ziggurat that ascends even higher. This ziggurat is said to be the palace of a ruling council of archons. The seventh layer of Mount Celestia can be reached only by climbing the ziggurat.

* **CHRONIAS, THE ILLUMINATED HEAVEN.** Only uncertain tales describe this heaven. Supposedly it glows with the force of goodness and law so intensely that it burns out all indifference and evil. Furthermore, those who are already lawful good are said to merge into the very essence of the plane, losing their individual selves to the glory of all. Many greater powers might reside here, but no one knows for sure.

Special Magic Conditions. Wild magic is diminished on this lawful plane.

Native Inhabitants. Archon, deva, noctral, and zoveri inhabit this plane. Besides the powers already listed, Chung Kuel; Avoreen and Cyrrollalee (of the halflings); Berronar Truesilver (of the dwarves); Paladine (of the DRAGONLANCE saga); and Tyr (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) also reside here.

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PANDEMONIUM

(Chaotic Evil Neutral)

Pandemonium is probably the least inhabited of all the Outer Planes. And for good reason: It's arguably the least hospitable. Sure, there are hotter planes and colder ones, ones with crueller denizens, and so on, but none are any lonelier or more maddening. This birdcage's like an endless cave system, filled with winds that scream their way from one side to the other. Those cutters in the Bleak Cabal think it's a decent place to set up shop, but they're about the only ones.

* **PANDESMOS.** This first layer of Pandemonium has the largest caverns, some big enough to hold entire nations, if it weren't for the incredible winds. Nearly all its tunnels have a stream of chilly water running along a wall. In places, these streams even flow down the center of the tunnel, hanging in the air. The headwaters of the River Styx are here. Pandesmos is also the most inhabited of Pandemonium's layers, though that ain't saying much. In isolated places, a cutter can sometimes find a citadel or even a city, but mostly there's just howling wasteland.

* **COCYTUS.** The tunnels here tend to be smaller than in Pandesmos, and the wind is more piercing, too. The resulting wails cause Cocytus to earn the tag "the layer of lamentation," and they'll stretch a sod's mind past the breaking point. Strangely, the tunnels here bear the marks of having been hand-chiseled at a time so long ago that their origins are a mystery even to the powers.

* **PHLEGETHON.** This layer is one of deep darkness and dripping water. The rock itself absorbs light and heat, which hampers all types of visibility. Gravity here is oriented in one direction only, which - with the dripping water - gives rise to immense stalagmite and stalactite formations.

* **AGATHION.** Rather than tunnels, Agathion consists of isolated holes within endless rock. Where

portals open into these bubbles, the wind forms cyclones capable of carrying away a quarter-ton creature. Holes without a portal to another layer are filled with utterly still, stale air or vacuum; they sometimes serve as vaults where the powers hide things away (like troublesome monsters).

Special Physical Conditions. Pandemonium is made up of cavernous tunnels twisting through solid rock, and it's filled with howling winds. These tunnels range in size from mere crawlways to huge bores miles in diameter. No matter what the size, though, nearly all have two things in common: First, gravity within them is oriented toward whatever wall a cutter's nearest at the time. Second, they're filled with the eternal wailing of winds. In some cases this is little more than a breeze, carrying distant echoes that sound like the cries of beings in torment. In others it blows with supernatural force, causing a deafening caterwauling felt more in the bones than heard in the ears, making even the largest of caverns throb with its intensity. 'Course, in such gales the noise is the least of a berk's troubles. Winds that fierce can pick up a poor sod and carry him for hundreds of miles, banging his body off rock formations until there's nothing left of him.

Given the infernal noise on this plane, it shouldn't be surprising to learn that most of the poor sods here are barmy in one way or another. Oh, they may seem perfectly sane when a berk first meets them, but their madness will show when least expected.

Special Magic Conditions. The winds on this plane make spellcasting difficult, to say the least. Material components tend to blow away, and even speaking or gesturing is a problem. Wild magic is enhanced, however.

Native Inhabitants. There are no true natives of this plane. Those beings who dwell here seldom do so by choice. Most were either banished or came here to hide and have never been able to leave. Powers here include Gorellik of the gnolls, Hruggek of the bugbears, and the Fairy Queen of Air and Darkness. Loki of the Norse pantheon keeps a hideout here as well. Finally, Zeboim (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Talos and Auril (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting) are said to live on this plane.

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YSGARD

(Chaotic Good Neutral)

Called Gladsheim by primes who never found out the real chant, Ysgard is a tumultuous plane. It's made up of numerous immense rivers of earth flowing forever through the sky. These rivers consist of chunks ranging in size from small boulders to whole continents. Their undersides give off a reddish glow that lights the rivers from underneath. As each river flows, its "earthbergs" grind together fiercely, so the whole plane continually rumbles with a deep grating noise.

The plane's occupants are just as tumultuous. The Norse pantheon (sometimes called the aesir) dwells here, and it's a rowdy lot. Some think it strange that such chaotic gods would ever band together, but a strong leader and a common goal to maintain a home realm can be nearly as unifying as any universal law or code. Odin is that high-up man (though Thor is nearly as mighty and Loki is nearly as crafty), and by standing together these gods preserve their realm within Ysgard's physical chaos.

Petitioners on this plane are always eager to do battle. If they die in combat, they aren't absorbed like petitioners on the other planes; instead, they rise the next day to fight again. Unfortunately, they forget

that other sods who aren't petitioners might be averse to a death duel. What's worse, most other bashers here are members of the Fated faction, and they figure that if a sod can't defend himself, he deserves to die. The moral of the story: Ysgard's no place to take a vacation unless a cutter's looking for a real workout.

* **YSGARD.** Ysgard's also the name of the highest level of the plane, and it's the home of the Norse powers. This realm is where the top of Yggdrasil - the World Ash - is located. As Yggdrasil stretches down to the Gray Waste, it extends branches and roots into various crystal spheres on the Prime Material where the Norse powers are worshiped. These gods also command Bifrost, a rainbow bridge that they can connect to any prime-material location. Two other significant features of this realm are Gladsheim, Odin's feast hall, and Valhalla, Odin's hall of heroes.

Found in the layer of Ysgard are the realms of Vanaheim (home of the vanir, who have blood links to the aesir), Alfheim (where the most chaotic elven spirits dwell), and Jotunheim (a land populated primarily by giants).

* **MUSPELHEIM.** This layer of Ysgard adds another dangerous twist to the tumultuous nature of the plane. Here, the chunks of earth float flaming side up. This makes it a perfect home for fire giants, but a miserable place for pretty much everyone else. Portals here lead primarily to Jotunheim.

* **NIDAVELLIR.** Nidavellir, known to the locals as Darkhome, is so densely packed with earthen rivers that the spaces between seem more like immense, luminous caverns. Sometimes this makes travel from one realm to another extremely difficult, as passageways that were open on a previous trip are closed on the return. Many dwarf and gnome petitioners hang their hats in this layer.

Special Physical Conditions. All the pieces of the earthen rivers share the same direction for gravity, so their upper surfaces are habitable. Sometimes rifts hundreds of miles wide open in a river, while other times continent-sized pieces ram together with such force that they raise huge mountain ranges where they meet. Travelers will have to deal with the effects of gigantic earthquakes and yawning cracks that crop up without warning.

Special Magic Conditions. Wild magic is enhanced on this plane.

Native Inhabitants. Besides those mentioned above, foo creature, hollyphant, and planetar occupy this plane. Bast the Egyptian catgoddess has a realm here, as do Branchala (of the DRAGONLANCE saga) and Selune (of the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting).

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