Sanctum Secorum

Episode #03

The Halloween Special

Compatible With DCC RPG

Sanctum Secorum Podcast
Episode #03 Companion

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HARRY

Character Classes

The Masque

Judges may wish to allow players the option of playing a masque as character class. The masques are a dedicated group intent on keeping the balance of life in check, acting as a dark emissary of the god of plague and disease. Masques are masters of things most peasants flee from. Sickness, disease, and plague are the meat and drink of a servant of the Red Death. The “healers” study, create, and cure all forms of pox and fever while traveling the lands, observing population overgrowth in addition to areas of lingering sickness. Masques favor heavy robes and cloaks with which to store salves and poultice. They are also fond of wearing “Plague masks”, masks that usually have storage for herbs and oils to shield them from the smell of the sick and the dead.

A masque has an almost “alien” personality, and typically can count their friends on one hand. The masque realizes strength is found amongst numbers, so often reveals himself only as a healer and follower of one who serves to protect the balance of life.

The masque is essentially functions as a typical cleric, with some modifications. See the class rules in the DCC RPG core rulebook, p. 28. A few abilities are modified or omitted, as listed below.

Choosing a god: Players wishing to play a masque must choose the Red Death as his or her patron.

Weapon training: Scythe (1d8; two handed weapon; use 1d16 for initiative rolls).

Alignment: All masques must be neutral. The act of keeping the balance of life in check can only be tasked to a person who understands the role of man and animal in the world. If one is allowed to overpopulate over the other, the scales tip, and the “greater balance” is upset.

Plague Mongering: This ability replaces the *turn unholy* ability given to the standard cleric*. Plague mongering* is a term used to describe the mastery and practice of all forms of sickness. The masque spends his free time by cataloguing various maladies and plague. This results in a better chance of healing while using the *lay on hands* ability when related to any form of sickness or disease. In addition, the masque also gains the ability to *cause disease*. This ability is used when the masque receives divine insight while visiting an area deemed to be tipping the scales. It can also be used in rare cases for self-defense. See the *plague mongering* chart for effects.

Luck: A masque uses his Luck modifier while using their *lay on hands* or *plague mongering* abilities. The *lay on hands* table is modified for the masque with the addition of a diseased column. If the recipient of the healing has any sort of disease or sickness, magic or otherwise, use this column, ignoring the target’s alignment.

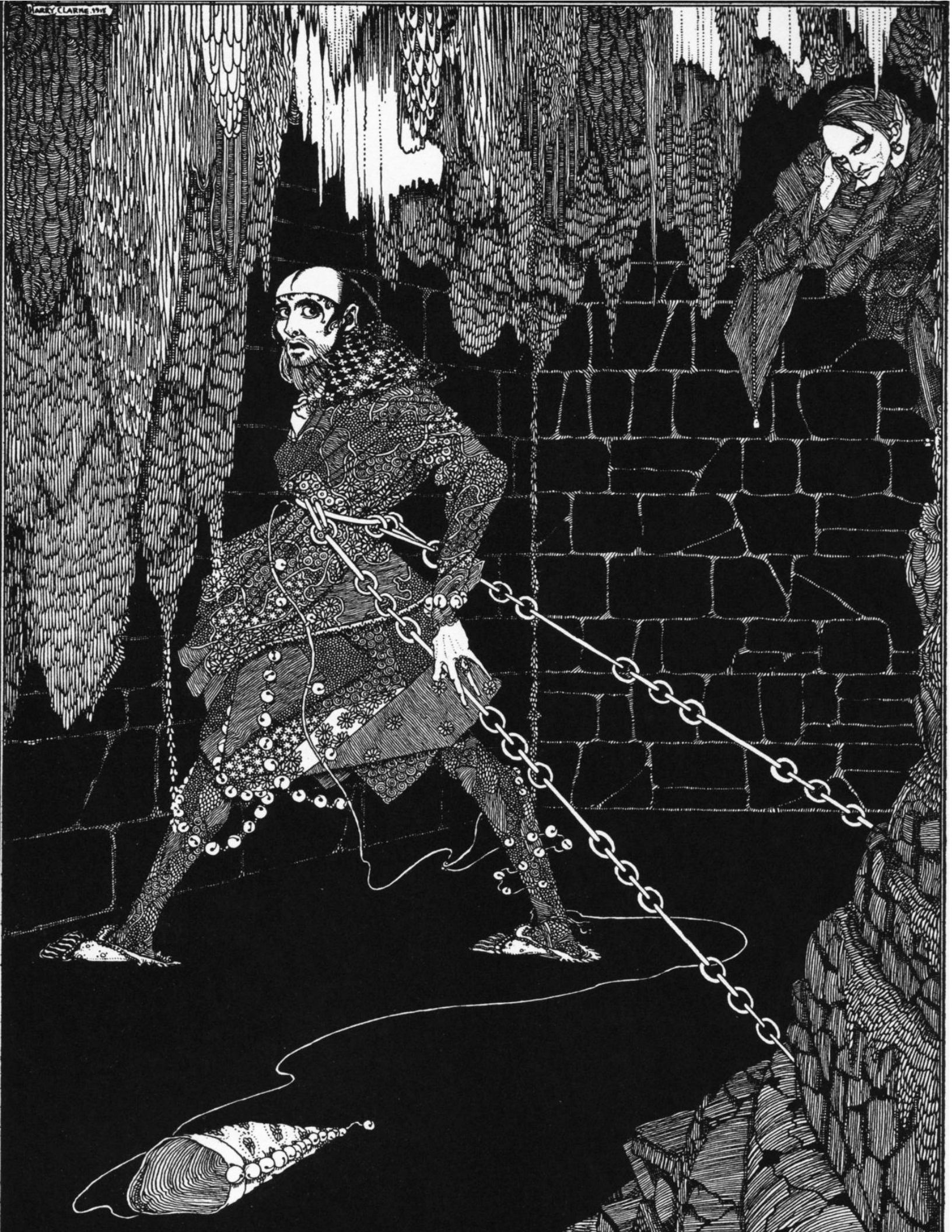
Lay On Hands

Spell Check	Same	Adjacent	Opposed	*Diseased
1-11	None	None	None	None
12-13	2	1	1	2
14-18	3	2	1	3
19-20	4	3	2	4
21+	5	4	3	5

Plague Mongering

Result	Effect
1-11	No effect.
12-13	Slight infection. Target develops a fever, chills, and flu-like symptoms. This results in the victim making a save with a target DC of the original spell check. Failure results in a severe cold lasting 1d4 weeks resulting in -1d to all physical rolls
14-19	Disease. Target develops a more serious ailment that is both contagious and can only be cured by a cleric. One Fortitude save is allowed with a DC matching the spell check. Failure results in festering boils with accompanying fever to manifest causing 1d8+CL damage. Target also suffers -1d to all rolls until cured. Target has the ability to spread the pox to others.
20-21	Plague. Target becomes a walking time bomb. The ailment reveals itself with gruesome signs. Boils, open wounds, and foul smells immediately manifest. One Fortitude save with a DC that matches the spell check is allowed, with failure resulting in an immediate 4d8 damage. Target also suffers -2d to all physical and mental rolls. The target gains the ability to spread the pox to others and must be healed by a cleric.
21+	Carrion. Target instantly finds himself on Death's door. Orifices begin to bleed and weep. Skin cracks while veins bulge. Target must pass a Fortitude save with a DC matching the spell check result, or suffer 4d10 damage immediately. Target must pass the same Fort save with each passing day or suffer 2d10 damage. Target also suffers -3d to all physical and mental rolls. The target becomes a plague bomb and must be healed by a cleric of at least the same level as the masque who created the plague.

Level	Title (All Alignments)
1	Vermin
2	Canker
3	Ravager
4	Infector
5	Afflicter


HARRY CLARKE 1918

Locations

Montresor Crypt

For generations, the Montresor family has been known for their greed. The Montresor house must be a manse – nay, a palace. The parties hosted must be glamorous carnival events, not mere galas. And their propensity for collecting and – dare we say, hoarding – wines? There was no rival in the land.

And the family's favored location for keeping the most premium selections? Amidst the cool, dark, still air under the ground upon which sits the Montresor palace. Down, safely beyond the primary wine cellar, another dozen feet below the floor hosting innumerable guests, is the deep musty chamber best suited for the most treasured of belongings. It comes as no surprise that the stone walls, cold and wet, originally built to house the sarcophagi of the family's ancestral line, has been repurposed to entomb stacked casks and cased drums and rows of bottles of what may be nectar of the gods…if any were allowed down here to sample but a drop.

Rather than lying in rest and repose, the Montresors of yore are instead seen heaped in piles along the walls – these chilled, damp walls – with no care as to whom was once a father or brother or personage of high station in life, with no cipher of description placed within nor any sign of deserved respect. No scrap of clothing or jewelry or identifying attributes remain, save the occasional obscured creases or abrupt wrongness of a bone spotted amidst the death debris: the sign of a humerus, broken as a child and healed prior to this final place of deposit; or that of a pelvic crest, snapped by an elderly matron shortly before spending the rest of her physical existence in this dark, humid, un-sacrosanct crypt. If the deceased are exceptionally lucky, a set of carpals will be utilized to right a tilting vessel unfortunate enough to touch the earthen ground.

In this place, explorers may find unopened bottles, sticky with the dust of dank human remains. With a successful Luck check, it may even turn out to be something other than rancid vinegar. The contents of the barrels and casks are of similar dubious quality, though the containers are sturdy and may be of value to a vintner. No other "treasure" is to be found here, though, as the Montresors' greed should lead explorers to expect.

The most valuable artifact in this under-earth chamber is to be found on the wall opposite the earthen stairwell: a disturbance in the stone wall's patterning. Shifting the piles of former Montresors – some taller than the living family members – reveals an opening into another vault, this one a scant 3' deep and just as wide, carved to be about 6' high, with absolutely no visibility without a light source. Pushing the concealed door into this room, a thin line of webbing is stretched inward. Unless an intrepid explorer discovers the strand (DC 18 Find/Disable Trap checks) before the door is separated from the wall by 6 inches, the webbing is snapped. Two heavy iron rings appear to be set into the back wall, and they shoot out to encompass the trespasser, flipping open and shut seemingly of their own accord.

If the trap is disarmed prior to entering this area barely the size of a closet, the iron rings in the back wall are inert.

Iron Rings: As a surprise round, the iron rings snap around victim's arms or throat: Two +8 melee attacks (no damage, but victim is held; DC 19 Reflex save to avoid; DC 22 Str check to break free). This attack repeats at the top of each initiative round until the rings successfully grab at least one target limb. Once they have grasped a victim: Chains on the rings, unseen until the initial attack, recoil into the wall, dragging the held victim into the vault with force for 1d6 damage (DC 18 Str check to resist the pull and take half damage).

The chains and irons are imbued with magical force. No portion will break unless sustaining 40 hit points of damage from a magic weapon. There is no visible link in the chain, no lock, nor mechanism with which to free oneself. The victim may be freed by the casting of *dispel magic* with a success of 27+; however,

the victim will also be subject to any effects of the spell. Until the victim is unshackled, no actions requiring the use of hands may be attempted (including spellcasting, though praying for divine intervention is permissible and understandable).

As suspected, the entire vault has been enchanted by the spirits of the mistreated deceased Montresors – primarily that of the first matriarch of the family, once a sage with knowledge of nearly a millennium past, now spending her un-life in this forsaken tomb. Entreating with the remains of the dead is the easiest method of freeing a comrade. Victims' cries for help mean nothing to these un-dead in their situation of unrest, but able-bodied, living servants who can create (or arrange for the creation of) a proper burial chamber would be quite useful indeed. Simply speaking to the untidy piles of bones in a kind manner results in a pulsating, soft violet glow suffusing the chamber, and while not entirely communicative, explorers should get the idea that the glow is positive feedback. Spilling the wine stored in the crypt will result in all communication from the spirits ceasing for 1d3 hours. Using *speak with the dead* will prove most valuable, as the Montresor ancestors can, over time, direct the explorers (or hired help) as to whose bones are whose, ensuring remains are arranged correctly and completely. If PCs are willing to add demarcation with names and exalted titles, each character involved – excepting any victim(s) of the vault – may earn a minor boon from the Montresor Matriarch (as from a patron, at judge's discretion).

Magic Items

The Ebony Clock

The Ebony Clock is an enormous “grandfather clock” standing 20’ tall. It has a closed base where an 8’-long pendulum swings back and forth with a dull, heavy monotonous clang. The clock is unnerving and will test positive to *detect evil* spells.

Typically when the clock chimes on the hour, it will produce a loud, deep, and exceedingly musical note, causing all within a 60’ radius to pause for 1d3 rounds; treat as a *forget* spell (+5 to spell check).

However, when the clock strikes midnight during a blood moon, it acts as an implement of *demon summoning*. When the final note is sounded, the clock will have invoked a plague reaper.

Prince Prospero’s Candles

While tripods of flame and elaborate chandeliers illuminate Prince Prospero’s the main ballroom, each of the small rooms along the perimeter was themed to a specific color – and of course the candles lighting the alcoves coordinated perfectly. One may be left to wonder whether the light sources were obtained to match the rooms, or if the rooms were actually decorated to the exact hue of the candles.

A man of privilege and eccentricity, Prince Prospero can surely afford such items as these, but they are, expectedly, extremely rare. It is suggested they be discovered singly if found as treasure during an adventure; they can also provide a set of quests. At judge’s discretion, tapers may be purchased as a pair if the Fates wish to bestow them upon a merchant, but seldom are more than one color found in the same vicinity.

Lighting the candles is a tricky prospect, but Prince Prospero clearly has staff to take care of that sort of thing. Being present or inhaling the vapors when a candle is lit may have some interesting repercussions. The properties of the molten wax (obtainable only when the candle is aflame) are likewise mysterious. Unless noted on the following table, there is no effect from simply touching the candle when unlit, nor the cool wax base when ignited. Each candle may last for one hour (though effects are limited).

Candle Color	Candle Vapor Effects	Molten Wax Effects*
Blue	Immediately upon lighting, any creatures within 15' take 1d4 cold damage per round of proximity. Prolonged exposure (more than 4 rounds) requires a DC 15 Fort save to avoid being frozen in place. Effect lasts for 2d12 rounds.	If molten wax is applied to any subject,* it acts as a patch of glue, attaching it to the very next thing it comes into contact with. May only be broken with a DC 15 Strength check.
Purple	Safe ignition. If vapor is inhaled without interruption for 2 rounds, PC gains +1 Intelligence permanently. Effect can be used twice per candle.	May be used to create a temporary seal of *protection from evil* (spell result 14). Molten wax must be applied to the flesh of the recipient.* One use.
Green	Safe ignition. 3 rounds after lighting, all within 40' suffer -1 temporary Stamina loss. Effect occurs every time candle is lit.	Molten wax must be applied to the flesh of the recipient.* Roll 1d7: (1) 1d10 points of acid damage; (2) heal 1d3 damage; (3) heal 1d4 damage; (4) heal 1d5 damage; (5) heal 1d6 damage; (6) heal 1d7 damage; (7) 1d8 points of acid damage. One use per PC.
Orange	Upon its first lighting, all PCs present in the area receive a +1 Personality bonus. Each subsequent ignition results in a 20' *choking cloud* (see spell result 18).	When held unlit, this candle is pleasantly warm. Wax steams when poured on any subject,* but no effect.
White	Any creature attempting to light this candle suffers 2 hit points of electrical damage, but it may be lit. No vapor effects.	No effect while candle is lit. After melted and re-cooled, the entire candle may be cut into 5 pieces and carried as permanent talismans bearing a *blessing* (+1 bonus to saving throws).
Violet	Safe ignition. Inhalation for 3 uninterrupted rounds grants living creatures +1 hit point and restores 1 point of any temporary ability loss (including from spellburn). One use per PC; no penalty for repeated attempts.	Molten wax must be applied to the flesh of the recipient.* Grants the ability to *speak with the dead*. Beginning with spell result 16, may repeat as needed within 1 hour to increase the spell result (-1 hp for each additional application). Good for 6 applications (up to spell check 32).
Black	Each time this candle is lit, the creature igniting it must make a DC 14 Will save vs. *sleep* (spell result 14) or immediately succumb.	When held unlit, this candle is pleasantly warm. When molten wax is applied to a creature's flesh or hide, they must make a DC 18 Fort save or be blinded for 1d12 hours.
Scarlet	Safe ignition. When lit in a dark environment, surroundings appear completely black and indistinguishable.	When held unlit, this candle is cool to the touch. When touched while lit, it is as if trying to handle the flame itself (1d6 fire damage for each round of contact). The wax has no discernible effect.

Each "recipient" of molten wax takes an initial 1 hit point of damage from application, before any effects are factored.

Monsters

Plague Reaper

The plague demon appears as a tall gaunt death shroud, dabbed with splotches of both dried and flesh blood. Atop the cloak is a hairless head covered with the desiccated skin of a withered corpse with blossoming red pustules commonly found on those infected with the red death disease. Those attempting melee with the plague reaper will realize it has no body.

Plague Reaper (type II demon, Ahriman): Init -3; Atk *redirect wounds* +3 melee (special, see below); AC 16; HD 6d12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP *inflict disease*, *detect good* (+6 spell check), *fear (*5' radius, DC 12 Will save), immune to non-magical weapons, demon traits; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6; AL C.

The plague reaper has two primary means of attack: *redirect wounds* and *inflict disease*.

Redirect wounds: If the plague demon is attacked by a non-magical weapon, the attacker must make a Luck save or find that he has actually attacked himself using the same roll for attack and damage. [NOTE: I came up with this after re-reading how the prince attacked the thing with the dagger – he just dropped over dead…]

Inflict disease: The plague reaper casts *inflict disease* (a reverse of *neutralize poison or disease*) with a +6 spell check. The plague reaper's disease of choice is Red Death, a fast-acting, fatal disease whose symptoms include sharp pains, sudden dizziness, and profuse bleeding of the pores. Players who contract the Red Death must be magically cured of disease or die within 1d3 + 6 turns.

Plague Specter

On occasion, overzealous followers of the Red Death find themselves transformed into a twisted mockery of life. Their humanoid form is replaced by a skeletal-crimson mist. These mists normally inhabit the Land of the Flies, native plane to the Red Death, but there are exceptions. The specters are sometimes sent to defend the faithful, or form spontaneously where plague has gone unchecked in heavily populated areas. The plague specters exist only to infect.

Plague Specter: Init +2; Atk envelope +2 melee (1d4 Stamina plus choking mist); AC 15; HD 4d8; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP choking mist, immune to non-magical weapons, un-dead traits, telepathy 20'; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; AL N.

Choking mist: The plague specter attacks by enveloping its target and forcing its mist form down the throat of the target. A successful attack results in the target taking an immediate 1d4 points of Stamina damage, and the victim must pass a DC 16 Fortitude save to avoid contracting a deadly pox. The Stamina loss is cumulative with each successful strike. Targets reduced to 0 Stamina die, the poor soul drowning from the mist overwhelming the lungs. The corpse will re-animate in 24 hours as a plague zombie unless the remains are burned.

Plague Zombie

The very mention of the word “plague” is enough to send entire kingdoms into mad hysteria. They sweep from the shadows, embracing both strong and weak, rich and poor. Plagues ravage the systems of the human body, often leaving the poor soul meeting merciful death in a puddle of its own liquefied remains. There are strains of fevers and pox that refuse to be satisfied with their host’s death. They continue to twist and change the corpse, giving it an unlife with a desire to “infect”. Plague zombies are almost always humanoid, but animals have been known to reanimate when whole communities are ravaged. Plague zombies spread their pestilence by both bite and puss-laden boils.

Plague Zombie: Init -2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4 plus disease) or boils +2 missile fire (disease); AC 10; HD 1d8; MV 20’; Act 1d20; SP disease, undead traits; SV Fort +2 Ref -2, Will +1; AL C.

Disease: Whether by bite or boils, should a victim be exposed to the disease the zombie carries, an immediate DC 12 Fortitude save must be passed to avoid contracting the disease. Those infected slowly begin to rot from the inside out until death is brought on by horrific convulsions. This amounts to a daily loss of 1d4 Stamina points each day the save is failed, and victims finally die when they reach 0 Stamina.

Patrons

The Chromatic Court

Although death has many deities associated with it, there is still Death itself and its many faces. Perhaps amongst the lesser known masks of the untiring dark are those of the Chromatic Court. While each of these faces is but Death in a differing guise, any of the Chromatic Court may be taken as patrons for those who wish to serve the master of eternal silence. Other than their appearance, some mannerisms, and their given plague, the members of the Chromatic Court are, for all intents and purposes, identical.

Death, in the guises of the Chromatic Court, does not act in terms of magic, but instead in terms of disease. Thus, each member of the court is associated with a specific plague with which they carry out their efforts on behalf of Death. These plagues are unleashed if the *invoke patron* spell check is high enough. While transmitted through normal means beyond the initial outbreak, these sicknesses are magical in nature. Ability damage from these plagues may not be cured so long as the disease remains and these ailments may *only* be healed through the use of magical assistance.

The infections will incubate for the noted duration before the first symptom becomes apparent. In cases of airborne transmission or contagion through contact, the maladies are contagious from the beginning of the incubation period and may begin to spread immediately. If left untreated, the plagues of the Chromatic Court are 100% fatal in all cases. The patient dies when an affected ability drops to zero.

Invoke Patron check results:

12-13 The member of the Chromatic Court breathes the faintest wisp of his power towards the foes of the wizard. A single target of the wizard's choosing must make a DC 15 Fort save or be struck by a wash of burning blisters across their face, blinding them for 1d5 rounds.

14-17 Hearing the wizard's call across the void, the bearer of the plague bestows a minor blessing in response to the beseechment. Fortified by Death, the wizard gains a +2 to all saving throws for the next turn.

18-19 A haze of infection fills the air around the caster in a 100' radius. This strain of the plague is only half strength requiring only a DC 10 Fort save to avoid infection – although, if infected, the disease runs its course as normal.

20-23 An infectious wind blows across the area towards a single target chosen by the invoking wizard. That target, confronted with the power of Death, suffers a -5 to all saving throws for the next 24 hours.

24-27 On a sepulchral wind comes the guise of the member of the Chromatic Court. Appearing as a shimmering apparition, this member of the Chromatic Court causes *fear* (DC 15 Will save) in all creatures less than 4 HD (including the wizard).

28-29 Heeding the beckoning call of the aspirant, the Chromatic Death lashes out, infecting all foes within 20' with the appropriate plague. The wizard receives a +5 to his Fortitude save against becoming infected.

30-31 The Chromatic Death acknowledges the importance of the one calling upon him, and the greater importance of that individual to the eternal machinations of Death. Death thus grants a complete immunity to disease for 72 hours.

32+ There is only one possible answer for a supplicant who carries this much favor: an outbreak of the plague. The disease will appear in the nearest inhabited community, infecting 2d16 victims to start, and will sweep across the countryside.

Disease	Alternate Names	Transmission	Fort Save	Incubation Period	Damage	Damage Interval	Symptoms
Plague of the Black Death	Black Death Black Plague Bubonic Plague	Airborne (Sputum) Indirect Contact Insect Bite	DC 25	1d5+2 days	1d3 Stamina 1d3 Strength	twice/day	Buboes, chills, fatigue, fever, headache
Plague of the Blue Death	Wheezing Sickness Whispering Asphyxia	Airborne (Sputum)	DC 20	1d3 days	1d5 Stamina	once/month	Cyanosis, coughing, trouble breathing
Plague of the Purple Death	Purple Shakes Vineyard Tremens	Airborne (Mold Spores)	DC 18	1d5 hours	1d4 Dexterity 1d3 Stamina	once/day	Fever, hallucinations, palsy in extremities
Plague of the Red Death	Blood Sweats Crimson Fever Hemorrhagic Plague	Airborne (Sputum) Direct Contact Indirect Contact	DC 20	1d6 hours	1d3 Luck 1d3 Stamina	once/hour	Bleeding from pores, dizziness, fatigue, overall pain
Plague of the White Death	Bone Plague Devil's Ossification Pale Fever	Direct Contact	DC 15	1d3 turns	1d3 Dexterity 1d4 Stamina	once/turn	Flesh rapidly calcifies into bone
Plague of the Yellow Death	Jaundiced Fever Screaming Ague	Direct Contact Insect Bite	DC 22	1d7 days	1d7 Stamina 1d4 Strength	once/week	Fever, jaundice, painful joint inflammation

Special Note: Those closer to Death are more likely to gain his attention. Petitioners to the court add any Stamina penalty to their *invoke patron* spell checks. In addition, casters who have been recovered in the past turn gain a +5 bonus to their *invoke patron* spell check. It is worth noting that while infection by one of the plagues of the Chromatic Court would seem to be a sure way to increase one's chance of gaining the attention of the court, it is the opposite. Those infected have already been marked for death and the Chromatic Court will not intercede in any form for those thus marked. All such *invoke patron* attempts automatically fail.

Patron Taint: Without exception, a patron taint result with any member of the Chromatic Court results in immediate infection by the appropriate plague of the court.

The Black Death
Tatterdemalion, clad in a stained and torn shroud, the Black Death is that which is most easily recognized as death. With puss-filled sores weeping gore, and dark blotches on his cadaverous skin, this death has a frightening visage indeed.

Often covered in fleas or surrounded by infested animals, the Black Death strikes at the unwary. Those who take great care are said to be able to avoid his plague, but that may just be a cruel, false hope. The plague is a harsh and unforgiving disease.

The Blue Death
The Blue Death, with bulging eyes and cyanosis-marred skin, is a specter greatly respected by those who rely more heavily on breath. While all need to breath, divers, climbers, and the like watch very closely for the oncoming presence of this Chromatic Courtier.

Clad head to toe in a sky blue shroud, a swatch of cloth covers even the lower portion of the face of this manifestation of death. Should he physically manifest, all present must make a DC 15 Fort save or pass out from rapid asphyxia.

The Purple Death
Awash in amaranthine robes, the Purple Death is a strangely joyous figure. While his plague is often caught due to strange fungi sometimes created as a byproduct of wine fermentation, the Vineyard Tremens is an extension of the chaotic nature of this Chromatic Courtier. Clad in its robes and entwined with grape vines, the Purple Death hungers for the dreams of the living and feeds from them via the

hallucinations caused by its plague.

The Red Death
Wearer of the crimson robes of Death, the Red Death is a patron of cunning and patience. When he appears in person his visage is often disguised behind a mask of scarlet, or of a richly-appointed death's head. The actions of the Red Death reflect the inevitability of death, and that death may not be hidden from. Be a man rich or poor, the Red Death will find them. As a patron, the Red Death is a being to whom the bringing of death is the bringing of mercy, an end to the noise and torments of life.

There are no barriers to the Red Death. He can burn through a village, or penetrate the most barricaded abbey, with no impediment. Death comes to all, rich or poor, and the Red Death favors none in his selection. Like most members of the Chromatic Court, the Red Death is neutral.

The White Death
Appearing as an unclad and ill-formed skeleton, the White Death (the Master of Bones, the Inexorable Osseir) is the sole Lawful face of the Chromatic Court. Often appearing in conjunction with a plea received by a deity, the White Death brings punishment to those who would stand in defiance of law. It is, for deities and patrons, the most approachable of the faces of Death.

Most often, manifestations will take place in a cemetery, where a mass of mixed bones will rupture the soil and form into the monstrous form of the White Death.

The Yellow Death
Surrounded by swarms of biting, stinging, and pinching insects, the Yellow Death is a figure out of nightmares. Appearing as a walking, desiccated, corpse from which all manner of insects and larva pour. Staring into its almost beseeching eyes reveals that the Yellow Death is not the corpse, it merely inhabits the undying form of one of its plague victims. Uncaring of who is infected, the Yellow Death is truly neutral seeking to infect all it encounters. Should it manifest, it is accompanied by a quarter mile swarm of insects which serve to launch its plague into the world.

The Red Death
The Red Death is one of the more macabre and mysterious Patrons in the pantheon of gods, demons, and other beings attempting to attain divinity. Just the utterance of the name brings shudders and curses from those within earshot. The Red Death is a neutral power who holds sway over disease and decay. The mysterious force keeps watch over the domain of man, every vigilant for disease and plague that begins to out run the comprehension of man, during which a cure will be gifted to man by way of dream. Should such a sickness be allowed to roam unchecked, the potential to wipe man from the Prime as a whole is a plausible reality.

By the flipside of the coin there are generations of man, where the populace is bereft of war, famine, and other trials that normally "cull" the herd of man, keeping the balance with all living things. When time grows ripe, the Red Death gifts the world with plague and new disease.

Invoke Patron check results:

15-17 Red Death senses the petitioner's attempt at contact. The caster receives a +5 bonus to checks and saves relating to any sickness. The petitioner also gains a minor instance of "plague hand." For 1d3 rounds the hand of the petitioner can be used to afflict infection in the form of a rash of blisters. The afflicted suffers 1d4 damage to both hit points and Stamina.

18-19 The Red Death has turned its full attention to the petitioner. An eerie crimson mist begins to flow from the tear ducts of the petitioner as the mist envelops and protects by giving the caster a +8 bonus to any checks relating to sickness. A secondary effect is to cause an affliction to those

within melee range of the mists: a DC 15 Fortitude save must be passed, or the victim inhales the mist and begins to suffer from a malady that begins to attack the lungs. Victims will take 1d4 Stamina damage for 1d6 rounds. Should the "patient" survive the initial duration, the effect will fade. Reaching 0 stamina translates into the lungs filling full of blood, drowning the unfortunate.

20-23 Petitioner becomes bloated with a wondrous gift of bubo. The petitioner may vomit this vile essence at a range of 10'. Any target must pass a DC 16 Fortitude save or be immediately stricken with plague. Accompanying fever floods the brain, causing it to literally cook itself. This results in 2d4 points of Stamina and Strength loss each round. The plague lasts for 1d4+CL rounds. The petitioner also gains a +8 bonus to all sickness-related checks during the duration of the plague.

24-27 Petitioner is considered important for a future event. The Red Death sends a minor plague specter to aid the chosen. The specter will attack any direct threat to the petitioner for 1d2 turns, or until dismissed. The petitioner also gains a +8 bonus to all sickness-related checks during the visit of the plague specter.

28-29 Heeding the request for divine favor, the Red Death has special plans for the petitioner in the near future. A mist immediately shrouds the petitioner, forming a 10' radius globe that lasts for 1d3 hours. The effect of the globe is to repel any living life form by causing it instant decay. Living organisms that try to penetrate the mist suffer 4d12 damage and must immediately pass a DC 16 Fortitude save or die. Should the target be a player character, a "roll the body" save is allowed; however, healing must be found within 48 hours' time. Failing to obtain healing results in irreversible death. The petitioner also gains a +8 bonus to all sickness-related checks for the duration of the globe.

30-31 The Red Death chooses the petitioner as its personal emissary. 1d12+CL plague zombies appear and attack enemies of the petitioner. The zombies will remain for 1d4 days or until dismissed. The petitioner also gains a +8 bonus to all sickness-related checks while the plague zombies are present. Keep in mind that an NPC or fellow character may consider the zombies an abomination. As an added lasting side effect, the petitioner gains a permanent disease chosen by the judge. It is recommended the disease be colorful – and contagious.

32+ Petitioner bursts into a swarm of plague-infected crimson bats. The swarm covers a 40' x 40' area. Petitioner is only vulnerable to area attacks. Any friend or foe caught in the bubonic swarm will become infected unless a DC 17 Fortitude save is passed each round spent in the swarm. Failing the save results in the infected bleeding out from all orifices, taking 1d10 damage to both Strength and Stamina. Infected are also considered helpless for the duration of the swarm. The swarm will vanish after 1d10 rounds while the petitioner reforms from the spilt blood of victims. As a permanent side, the petitioner develops a bat-like face including fangs. The petitioner is now a carrier of plague and will suffer 1d4 Stamina damage per day. Healing must be a constant consideration lest the petitioner be called to the great beyond.

Patron Taint: The Red Death is on constant vigil over the domain of man. Patron taint results in the Red Death taking its attentions off of important happenings and judging the petitioners request to be trivial, resulting in taint.

When a patron taint is indicated, roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints at any levels, there is no need to continue rolling further.

Roll	Result
1	The caster develops a festering wound. The wound is usually on the top of the hand or on the face, to mark the petitioner as a carrier of blessing. The wound constantly weeps, causing -1d on any social rolls. Rolling this taint a second time results in the caster's eyes constantly pooling with blood. The unnerving sight results in -2d on the chain to any social based rolls. The caster also becomes a carrier of minor ailments (judge's choice). Rolling this taint a third time results in the caster's entire body being covered by festering wounds that weep puss. The effect causes *fear* in those who do not know the petitioner. A DC 12 Will save must be passed or target will run away for 1d4 rounds. As an additional effect, caster becomes a bearer of disease. The disease changes with every full cycle of the moon (judges are encouraged to come up with clever use of this taint).
2	Caster feels one random body part begin to shrivel. Roll 1d5 to determine the effect: (1) head; (2) left arm; (3) right arm; (4) left leg; (5) right leg. Affected part shrinks to 1/4 normal size. Affected legs result in -10' to movement rate. Affected arm results in -1d on the chain for any physical actions. Affected head results in -1d on all social rolls. Rolling a second time will have the same effect as above, except when the same body part is rolled twice: legs reduce speed by 15' and caster gains a horrible limp; arms result in a useless limb; head results in reduced sense of perception, causing all normal ranges to be halved. In addition, a -2 d on the chain applies to any social rolls. Rolling this taint a third time has the same effect as the first roll, unless a part is affected for a third instance: in this case, the part rots off, leaving no limb – and should the head rot off, the petitioner dies.
3	Caster develops a brain fever. The first time this is rolled, it results in any stressful situation having a small chance of causing the brain to overheat and send the petitioner into a seizure. The effect leaves the caster helpless for 1d3 rounds. Rolling this a second time increases the duration to 1d6 rounds. Rolling this taint a third time increases the duration to 1d10 rounds of helplessness. A DC 13 Fortitude save must be passed to avoid the seizure.
4	Caster acquires a minor disease of the judge's choice. This disease is contagious and spread by contact. Lesions, pustules, or sores will usually manifest along with the affliction. Judges are encouraged to come up with imaginative effects while keeping a balance with playability. Rolling this result a second or third time results in a new disease with similar effects.
5	Caster begins to attract creatures known to carry pestilence and disease. Crows and rats will begin to infest the local area of the PC within 24 hours. The PC will begin to notice the gathering of crows converging on the local tavern, or the red gleam of a rat's eyes glaring *en masse* from the alley across the road. If the PC spends more than one week in any establishment, a minor plague will break out. The PC must also make a weekly Luck check to avoid being linked to the outbreak. The type of plague and its effects are up to the judge. The PC is immune to the ailment. Rolling this result a second time will increase the effect to the point of the caster developing characteristic traits of the creatures that follow him (red eyes, beak-like nose, etc.). Rolling a third time results in the PC literally being followed by vermin. This unsettles the normal populace and the character will often be run out of town…or worse. As an added "bonus," the caster gains the gift of telepathy with the creatures that stalk him.
6	The caster develops a red stain on his body. The stain appears to be moving at all times, causing those who witness the effect to become unsettled. Rolling this result a second time results in the caster becoming slightly insubstantial, losing his body to a more mist-like form. This results in a +3 AC bonus, with normal weapons doing half damage. The caster can no longer hold physical objects unless a DC 15 Will save is passed, allowing the caster to will himself to manifest. Rolling the result a third time results in the caster becoming a completely incorporeal, humanoid mist. The caster can no longer manipulate or handle physical objects, but he is also immune to normal physical harm.

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