

PLANESCAPE CAMPAIGN SETTING
CHAPTER 6:
LIFE IN THE MULTIVERSE

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Jordel walked up to the stall, noticeably awed by the assorted wares that practically spilled off the long, wooden table. The Great Bazaar was like everything else here - completely overwhelming. But the smiling merchant behind the counter looked human. Jordel's eyes flicked over the objects for sale for a few moments, until the merchant spoke up.

"Yer new in these parts, friend."

Jordel looked up from the colorful blanket he had been inspecting. He stammered, "H-how can you tell?"

"Don't worry, friend. Nothing wrong with it. Yer hardly the first to step through the wrong doorway. Ye've got that certain look about you."

Jordel furrowed his brow; he was reticent to get into conversations here. The cant was confusing, and he'd had enough of being called "clueless" for his ignorance. This merchant seemed friendly enough, but then, that was part of his trade, wasn't it?

"Here, this is what you want." The merchant handed him a silver object, shaped like a silver star with a somber face. "That there's a mimir, it'll answer yer questions. A bargain indeed at 2,000 gold. Contains the notes of many a graybeard, compiled by the infamous Nizsab. Err, Sabzin. No, that's not it..."

Jordel rubbed his finger over the curious object, only for it to suddenly shack and spring from his hand. The mimir hovered in the air staring straight at him, the graven lips speaking...

"Races of every shape and size, factions and deities struggling for the belief of billions, planes filled with wonders and dangers the likes of which cannot be imagined stretching out for eternity. Yep, the multiverse is an exciting place, no doubt about it, cutter. Of course, that bare description hardly does life on the planes justice. A blood needs to know quite a bit more about how things tend to work if they're going to live long as a planewalker. Even though each plane has its own properties and diverse cultures, a canny cutter can make do by parking his ears close to those who know the dark of things. Translation: listen up, berk! Contain herein is the knowledge and wisdom of some of the greatest minds the plane has to offer, without the usual screed you're going to find in some bar or faction hall. I've spent many a exploring every path the planes has to offer; now it's your turn!"

TIME & HIST+ORY

Orfizal Palengras

Don't you shove that accursed *mimir* in my face! I shouldn't be kept from my work. The Unfinished Book certainly won't complete itself. Every second lost is one I may never get back. Who knows what matters of import will have passed by, and I won't have been there to record them! It is no small thing to be tasked with writing the history of the infinite planes, I shouldn't need to tell you. Indeed, I owe you a boon, and so I will spare a moment to dole out scraps of wisdom for those who have the wits to listen. But get it down the first time; I shan't be repeating myself for your little talking bauble.

It should come as no surprise that most planars can't be bothered to keep track of time, at least not in the way primes do. It certainly is harder without stars in the sky, changing seasons, or even day and night. While a plane might have one of these features, it'll rarely have all of them. Even if it did, there's no reason the time in one region would match the time on different planes, layers, or even realms. And if the time of day is difficult to measure, it's nearly impossible to accurately count the months and years. So most planars don't bother. The past is left behind, only rarely recorded, and the multiverse goes on about its business. What is

passed on through the generations normally does so through stories and legends, or simply by asking someone who was alive and present at the time. To be fair, what occurred centuries ago is recent memory for some critters. But this is an imperfect, short-sighted method, and someday planars will regret not paying attention. Then they'll appreciate Orfizal and the Unfinished Book. Then they'll come pounding on the door of my study, hoping for a peek at the pages of the Book.

Ah, but let's return to the matter at hand. Now doubt you want to know how folks manages to coexist without some shared system. When planewalkers pay attention to the passage of time, they normally use Sigil Standard Time (SST), based on that city's cycle of light and darkness. Days in the Cage are twenty-four hours long, with the twelfth hour called peak and the twenty-fourth hour antipeak, which are the brightest and darkest periods respectively. It's easiest to use on planes that have approximate days and nights, but many planes keep a constant level of light or have none at all. Of course, with no mechanical means of tracking the day, most planars just keep a general idea of how long an hour is, and that's as official as it gets. So if a body says he'll meet you in a burg in two weeks, he might show up anywhere between twelve to sixteen days later, and you're expected to know that. It's because of that sort of laziness that I no longer bother making appointments. But it seems to work for less organized persons.

For longer periods, Cagers used to measure the year based off the time a particular factol came into power (normally the Fraternity of Order's, since they actually make some effort to record things). A few use the turning of Mechanus's gears, as a cutter could hardly find a more precise system than that. With the factions banished from Sigil, Cagers have come to mark the year by how long it's been since the war, making this the 5th year Post-Faction War (PFW). Other orders might base the year off the ascension of some power, or a significant event for their pantheon, but most just use the Faction War as their marker. Make Sigil out to be more important than it actually is? Sure does, but what do you expect from a city that considers itself to be the center of everything?

The multiverse is old, far older than any Prime Material world, and even the oldest of the old don't claim to have been there in the beginning. Maybe the powers know how it all started, but if they do they're not talking, and planars have seen enough gods come and go to doubt any of the current powers have been around that long. Reports on Sigil only go back to little over a thousand years ago, though most everyone figures the city has been around much longer. The yugoloths claim to have records dating back to the early days of the Lower Planes, but you'd have to be barmy to take their version of history at face value. Some cutters have uncovered evidence of races and societies that preceded the exemplar of this age, and if something is older than *they* are, there's no telling what has come before. Most don't care; today's fights will always be more important than those of the past, or so the leatherheads think. Call me a graybeard if you like, but any fool with a working brainbox knows that you can't learn the secrets of the multiverse without understanding how things came to be. And there are some events that have been so monumental as to be remembered for centuries later, even by the common rabble.

Blood War

Every planar, from the deepest hole in Pandemonium, to the loftiest heights of the Mount Celestia, knows about the Blood War. All blood spilled across the multiverse is but a drop in the ocean of gore that has been this oldest of conflicts. And there's no end in sight. The lawful baatezu and the chaotic tanar'ri have locked horns since they first stumbled on each other. These two forces are arguably the most powerful of the fiends, and millions of the vile creatures march and seethe across the Lower Planes, great machines and dark spells are designed and thrown into the conflict, lives and supplies are sucked in never to be seen again. The only way it will ever end is one side completely annihilates the other. Many graybeards believe it is a war to determine the face of evil. Others just write it off as proof that evil

defeats itself in the end, and are thankful the fiends have something to keep themselves busy. How the war started is anyone's guess, but no one seems to remember a time the Blood War wasn't raging across the Lower Planes.

The war takes place mostly on Gehenna, the Gray Waste, and Carceri, but its horrors touch every part of the multiverse and just about every group is involved in it one way or the other. The yugoloths and other fiends stand in the middle of the conflict as mercenaries, joining whoever suits their own interests at the time only to turn stag a moment later. They are as trustworthy in battle as they are with history. Lawful forces aid the baatezu, preferring the evil they know over the evil they don't, while chaotic forces favor the tanar'ri, hoping that they will prevail over tyranny. The forces of good continue to be split over how to deal with the Blood War and as a result do a little bit of everything, but not much of anything. Some believe the good powers are the ones responsible for keeping the war going so long, as it's a widely accepted fact that a consolidated evil force could overrun the Upper Planes. Only by keeping evil divided can the forces of good survive, so the chant goes. Truth being, none of the powers have been known to interfere directly. Sure, they'll manipulate events and send supplies to whatever side they favor, but no acts of divine might ever take place in the war. Whatever the dark of the war is, it's a blessing for the rest of the multiverse, especially Sigil. Neither side can claim the Cage without immediate reprisals from the other, so both sides are real leery about sending forces into the city.

Still, Sigil can hardly claim to be above the war. Baatezu and tanar'ri alike use it to trade weapons and other supplies, for spying, and to recruit (or otherwise obtain) soldiers to fight in the war. Great fame, wealth, and power are said to await anyone who survives service in the war, but trust me berk, you're far more likely to end up in the dead-book the first day than see a glimpse of reward. Besides, you'd have to be plain barmy to take a fiend's word.

The Great Modron March

Ah yes, the fabled Modron March. Used to be a time you could depend on things. Every couple of centuries the lawful exemplar of Mechanus, known as the modrons, begin a mass march from their home plane and travel around the Outer Planes along the Great Road. This march takes the modrons to each of the Outer Planes until they return to Mechanus. No one knows why the modrons suddenly feel the need to leave their clockwork paradise, but no one really understands what it's like to be inside of a modron's brain-box in the first place. That doesn't stop the berks from guessing though, and most agree that it must be the modrons' way of gathering information on the condition of the planes. Considering the modrons stay close together and rarely talk to outsiders along their path, this could just as well be screed, but it's too suspicious a possibility to drop.

The march itself creates quite a chaotic spectacle, even though the sods are supposed to be representatives of law. The modron army moves along its predetermined path without pause or consideration for whomever happens to be in their way, sometimes leaving entire cities in ruin. Likewise, while otherwise peaceful, the modrons will attack any force that seems to be inhibiting the march, and will only change course when continuation proves impossible. The march takes the modron army from Mechanus along the Upper Planes and through several gate-towns to Limbo, the plane of absolute chaos, and finally into the Lower Planes. During this time the modron army develops quite a following: graybeards taking the opportunity to study the modrons, planewalkers and other merchants trying to profit from the event, and a couple of sods who try to make some of the modrons go rogue or otherwise succumb to chaos (which never works, mind you). This crowd steadily grows as the army crisscrosses through the Outlands and Upper Planes, but begins to break up once the march reaches Limbo and begins to enter the Lower Planes. Only the truly zealous or barmy follow the drones into fiendish territory, and those who do almost never return. The modron army is hit hard as the various fiends take the opportunity to rip them apart every step of the way. By the time the modrons

leave the Lower Planes only a few of the strange critters are left to stagger back into Mechanus.

So that's how it used to be. Like clockwork, heh. The Great Modron March would start up every three hundred years or so, so most bashers would never even see one. But just a few years ago the march happened, a couple centuries ahead of schedule. Why'd it start up early? The modrons appeared just as confused as the rest of us. They've always been hard to talk to, but they were even worse this time. There's plenty of wild theories going around, though none worth considering. What? Of course I have some ideas. No, I ain't talkin', not 'til I've got it all entered proper in the book here. But something big must have set them off, and it's a fair bet that its repercussions aren't over yet. It should be over two centuries until the march occurs again, but there's no way to be sure with how the modron are acting. And when you can't trust a modron to keep a schedule, what can you rely on?

Vecna

What? You want me to talk about the Maimed One? Dark business that. A thousand curses on his name, but not too loud, lest he hear. Still, I was there, when he first made his presence known, and I've carefully recorded every detail of that affair. The god of secrets is hated by just about all Cagers, and only Rowan Darkwood gets as much bile. They say he is the only god to find a way through the Lady's wards, the one's that keep powers out of Sigil. He causes misery and suffering throughout the planes, and his name is whispered on a hundred prime worlds. It wasn't enough for him to be feared and hated on the out-of-touch world he was born to. It's said that he even stole Citadel Cavitius from the Doomguard, which he then used for the centuries that followed as a prison colony for those who dared stand against him. Eventually, Vecna ascended to become a demigod, despite the betrayal of his most senior lieutenant. It was not long after this that Vecna and Citadel Cavitius disappeared. There were plenty that rejoiced at his apparent fall, and true enough, he was not heard of again for many years.

Then, less than a year after the Faction War ended, the Maimed One appeared again. Common chant holds that he was imprisoned within a demiplane of horror somewhere in the Deep Ethereal. Through a twisted series of events, he became a real power and during his moment of triumph forged a bridge into Sigil. Everybody knows that the Lady stops all deities from entering the Cage, and with good reason, as we soon saw. As Vecna entered Sigil, it became all too apparent what a single power could do to a city like the Cage. The sudden incursion of pure divine energy sent ripples of power throughout the city, causing reality to flop and flounder like a fish dredged from the ocean floor. The ensuing chaos was catastrophic.

Lurid green hailstones fell from the Sigilian sky, crushing unlucky berks, scorching winds seared the streets, and the city was wracked with quaking tremors. Waves of impenetrable darkness blanketed whole wards at random, and violence and desperation began to rise to levels never before seen within the city. Vecna himself left a 200-foot wide path of destruction where he passed, crawling from the place where he first entered Sigil to his new chosen seat of power, the remains of the Armory.

The Armory was destroyed during the Faction War, and the ruins were avoided by all sensible cutters. It was common knowledge that several dangerous Sinker weapons were still inside when the structure collapsed. Vecna used his newfound power to rebuild the structure, replacing the previous Doomguard icons with glyphs and symbols of his cult. He set up a shield of deadly energy around his new kip, and reanimated several of the *spheres of annihilation* that had been left behind. The Cult of Vecna spread through the city like a plague. Ely Cromlich, a cambion and high-ranking member of the Doomguard, was brought back to life and took position as high priest of this new religion.

The newly formed Sigil Advisory Council placed the Sons of Mercy, who at the time still controlled the city guard, in charge of the Cage's defense. The Martyrs gathered a huge army around the Armory, recruiting all who were able-bodied and could wield a weapon. Although the cultists were outnumbered by more than one to twenty, the gathered defenders of Sigil didn't make any headway, Vecna squashing every attempt they came up with. Of course, the sods who made up the army started losing faith. Some said they could hear whispers offering them their deepest and most base desires, while others felt an overwhelming sense of futility. Wasn't long before sods started turning stag, passing through the barrier to join the cult. Even Autochon the Bellringer and other well-known bloods were accused of siding with Vecna, though no one could ever prove it.

Days passed by, and then She appeared. She whose shadow cuts, She who rules in silence. Just as the crowds around the Armory reached their peak, the army was graced with the presence of the most influential and enigmatic being in Sigil, the Lady of Pain Herself. Arriving with an escort of dabus, the Lady did not seem to be actively intervening, instead simply watched in silence. If the Lady had acted, it may have only made things worse; as with most things concerning Her Serenity, the truth is uncertain. In the meantime, small groups of adventurers attempted to infiltrate the Armory, but only a few managed to get through, the rest destroyed by Vecna's defenses. After a little under twelve days of siege, just when all hope seemed lost to the gathered crowds and morale had reached an all-time low, things changed yet again.

Gouts of flame leapt into the Sigilian sky as the Armory erupted into pyrotechnics. Night became day, and all could feel the evil presence which had infiltrated Sigil suddenly vanish. Taking this as a sign, the army descended upon the Armory, seeking to put an end to the cult in Sigil once and for all. The mob slaughtered Vecna's neophyte cult without any major resistance, Vecna seemingly long gone from the Cage. Without Vecna's power supporting the Armory its structure began to weaken and collapse, forcing the army to evacuate before properly investigating the building, with only a handful of unlucky berks being trapped as it crumbled.

A lot of bashers tried to take the credit for Vecna's defeat, such as Shemeshka the Marauder and Ronnasic, a sage and writer of great renown (of course, sages and writers should be above crass puffery). The truth of it all is still unknown. Some claim the Lady of Pain simply mazed Vecna. Others say that she enlisted demigods to assist her, though even more wild and outlandish theories arose over time. A group of adventurers from the Prime also attempted to take credit, though their version of events was hardly taken seriously, especially when they began to claim that they wielded Vecnan relics against their creator, and fought him with the backing of the Lady herself. Surely anyone who hears your *mimir* won't make up such naive tales, eh?

Since his grab for power, Vecna's cult has met with hatred throughout Sigil, the religion having since been banned by the Advisory Council. Following the battle and the celebrations that followed, a series of witch-hunts began intended to root out the religion and cleanse the city. Among Cagers, Vecna is now only ever referred to as 'the Failed God', and it is considered very bad luck to mention his name in Sigil. Even outside of Sigil, the wise cutter keeps talk of him quiet. As for Ely Cromlich, he was found cringing in the ruins of the Armory. Maybe the berk had been written in and out of the dead-book one too many times. The always-helpful Bleakers took him to the Gatehouse, while the Sigil Advisory Council debated what do with him. The rabble was hungry for his blood, but the Gatehouse wardens said it would be wrong to put a barmy to death. Ely stopped the debate by escaping with the help of some of his old friends in the Doomguard and what little was left of the Maimed God's cult. Cromlich made himself scarce, but there's a rumor that he was last seen leaving the Quasielemental Plane of Salt heading towards Citadel Exhalus with an army of Doomguard behind him.

So, what does it all mean? Well, the Lady would never allow a god to shove his way into Sigil,

that's plain. So he must have been let in, right? Not the first time the Lady's let dangers into the Cage. She's always stopped just short of letting them cause irreparable harm to the city, and this time was no different, though She certainly put a scare into folks. Why would She do such a thing? There must be something She wants. She's setting something up, I'm telling you. What? How should I know? Her Dread Majesty keeps her own council.

There's been some planar anomalies since, and one cartographer went so far to say that an Inner Plane had run aground on a prime world, but he was probably hitting the bub when he came up with that one. Eventually everything resettled, with only a few minor changes. The Shadow Plane, once thought to be a mere demiplane with connections to some prime worlds, has since appeared coexistent with most of the multiverse, as if whatever walls sealing it off have been shredded. At the same time rumors of a new, mysterious border plane known as the Ordial are beginning to arise, prompting would-be prophets to babble about some "Completion of the Ring". Regardless, no one has come to any firm conclusions about how Vecna's presence had an effect on the whole multiverse. It may have been a side effect of violating Sigil's wards, some dread ritual Vecna was preparing, or even a hidden power locked away in Sigil itself.

One last bit, for the record. When the Maimed One became a true power, Citadel Cavitus was spit back right where it used to squat on the Quasielemental Plane of Ash. Most feel that the disappearance proves that it was imprisoned with Vecna in the Deep Ethereal, and evidence seems to support that belief. Since its return, the Citadel is said to have been reclaimed by one of the four main splinter groups of the Doomguard. The Great Wheel keeps spinning, no matter what you or I may have to say.

[Editor's note: Although our first contributor claims to have been "tasked" with writing the history of the multiverse, it's unknown who gave him such a commission, and he's not saying. He appears human, but exudes a feeling of incredible ancientness (mayhap it's the cloud of dust that shrouds him). He certainly knows his history, though, including current events. Oddly enough, none of his neighbors see him ever leave his case in the Clerk's Ward, nor does he often have visitors.]

TRAVERSING INFINI+Y

Jordel made his way out of the Great Bazaar, seeking a quieter place where he could hear the mimir's tale in peace. The strange magical device floated a foot before with him, and at times he felt like it was the one doing the leading. Yet he had no complaints when he found himself on a small bench nestled between two impressively tall buildings lined with menacing thorns along their rooftops. The mimir paused its recitation for a moment, seemingly considering what it had next to say...

"A tad long winded that one, but you can find worse bashers to learn from. Of course, what's most important to planewalkers is how to get from place to place. The profession doesn't entail lounging in one area, after all. There's too much to be seen, far more than can be squeezed into a single lifetime. Fortunately most of the multiverse, save perhaps the Prime Material Plane, is riddled with portals and other pathways to travel between the planes. For those powerful enough, magic simplifies planar traveling as well, and of course some creatures have the inherent ability to cross planes. Every method has its advantages and disadvantages; each can provide its own adventure. And the real excitement typically starts once you get to your destination, which is why it's important to know what you're getting into and to be properly prepared in advance. You don't want to head into Pandemonium without being ready for the winds, and you don't want to step onto Elysium without knowing a way out."

[Editor's note: Hajzeek is a sad sight these days. You'll be hard pressed to find a cutter who's seen more nooks and crannies of the planes than that old bariaur. But everything passes with time, so they say. He certainly makes Sigil richer with the time he has left.]

Hajzeek Gnarl-Hoof

Portals

Ah, was a time these hooves took me all across the planes. I saw the darkest, smelliest hole in the multiverse and the brightest, sweetest heights of 'em, too. And I loved 'em all. Pass me another mug o' that bub there, and ol' Gnarl-Hoof will tell ye all about it. I'll lann ye the ins and outs o' planehoppin', I will. The first thing a planewalker needs knowin' is how to get around. There's lots o' ways ye can get to where ye're going.

The way most folks get around the planes is portals. There's really three reasons for this. They usually take ye to the same spot every time, just about any sod can use 'em, and the things be as common as Dustmen at a mass burial. Portals connect two places through a permanent teleportation effect. This makes 'em quick and handy shortcuts, sometimes to a place on the same plane, but oftentimes to another plane altogether. Now, the portal itself can be up to about 15 feet in radius, and exists in two-dimensions. I got that from a Guvner. Most portals're in doorways or gates that have the same sort o' shape, but they can also be found in other sorts o' bounded spaces like windows, holes, or natural opening.

Portals keep things movin', allowin' people to get to places they could never reach otherwise. Some of us use 'em just for the noble art of explorin' the corners o' the multiverse, but lots o' folks use 'em to spread their jink around. Opportunistic traders can get rare goods from out-o'-the way spots and bring 'em to other out-o'-the way spots. Portals make Sigil the City o' Doors; that city has more portals in and out of it than pointy bits on a bladeling, and so the city has a big sway on planar doin's. Lucky for all of us that the Lady can't be bought. She ignores all the posturin's of the sycophants and cross-traders o' the factions and guilds, and She's the only one that can make portals that lead in or out o' the city. Outside the Cage, it seems that portals are a natural part o' the planes, sometimes crafted by deities but usually just appearin' and disappearin' of their own accord. But mortals who try to make 'em *always* fail. Now, I hear tell that some primes can make portals on the Prime Material Plane, but those spells only work on their out-o'-touch worlds.

Since planars can't make their own portals, many groups and businesses make chartin' the portals that do exist a big priority. Then they turn around an' sell that knowledge to planewalkers. Good thing, since portals ain't so easy to find. And they usually need a special key to open 'em. Mark ye well the Rule of Threes when usin' portals: find the portal, then figure out its key, and then get ready for what's on the other side.

Finding Portals

Portals are invisible, but they give off a faint aura o' transmutation magic, so bloods using *detect magic* an' *true sight* can see 'em, and they give off a much stronger aura when they're open. Planars can kind o' sense portals, spottin' traces of the aura around the portals. Usin' witchery, or just sniffing it out yerself don't give ye a clue on how the portal is opened, though. How hard a portal is to find or get to can give an idea of how out-o'-the-way its destination is. Thank the powers that most portals are medium-sized and stay in one place, but there be plenty of 'em that can be moved, like barrels, wardrobes, or mirrors, and others that change on their own

Just finding one portal usually doesn't finish the job. They ain't many portals that're static, and lots o' times they have conditions that make travelin' back and forth more difficult. For

starters, portals can be either one-way or two-way, which means ye may have to find another portal in order to find yer way back. Even portals that're two-way oftentimes have different keys to open each side o' the portal. And if that ain't enough, portals are either temporary, permanent, or shiftin'. Most portals be temporary, appearin' and disappearin' at what seems like random times, or changin' their keys every once in a while. Permanent portals are hard to find, and're jealously guarded by those who want to keep 'em under their thumb. Lastly, some portals don't disappear but just move about between locations. These shiftin' portals move one or both o' their ends to other locations based on some pattern, though a lot o' them seem to shift in ways that make no sense. Shiftin' portals can be pretty dicey if ye don't know where ye're goin' to be comin' out.

Discovering the Key

Almost all portals need some sort o' key to open 'em up. This key can be just about anythin' a cutter can think of: a word or sayin', a gesture (like waving your hands), a thought or emotion, a musical note, the castin' of a particular spell (which is then sucked up by the portal without any harm), or the channelin' of divine energy. Many portal keys are part of a general group such as a flower, a bottle, or a broken sword. Others may be more specific such as a particular amulet, or an object the wielder considers to be junk. A few rare portals may be set to open only at certain times during the day or year, or only to someone wit' a particular name or alignment. The kind o' portal key is oftentimes related to the portal's destination, but that ain't always the way o' things.

The most obvious way to figure out a portal key is the ol' "trial and error" method, but it's not the best way to go about things. This only has a chance to work if ye got some idea about where the portal goes and think the key's connected to that. Spellslingers, on the other hand, are oftentimes given the job of learnin' portal keys by castin' divination spells like *analyze portal* or *legend lore*. These bloods can make a good livin' sellin' their skills and knowledge to planewalkers or catalogers. Most planars, 'specially in Sigil, learn portal keys through word o' mouth or exchanges of information. The cost of a portal key can vary wildly. How much does the physical key itself cost? How few're portals to the place in question? How much does the operator of the portal want to keep traffic down? How much is it worth to ye, berk? For portals that see common use, a portal key (whether 'tis an object, action, or mental concept) will generally cost from 5 to 100 gold pieces.

Once you have the right key, turning the portal on is normally pretty simple. Usually the person wit' the key just walks through the portal, and it activates when the key passes through. Sometimes the key's gotta be used a certain way, though, like holding it in the air or tapping it against the portal itself. It don't matter whether the portal is bein' activated on purpose or not; if someone happens to carry a portal key on 'em, or otherwise triggers the portal, it opens, oftentimes catching the person 'fore they realize it.

The Other Side

When it opens, a portal crackles wit' energy and sometimes lets out a burst of air or other effects. Sometimes the portal's destination can be seen as a dim outline once the portal is on. Unless something special opened it up, the portal stays open for a full six seconds 'fore it shuts down. Usually, all ye have to do is put any part o' yer body into the portal, and ye'll get sucked through. But if the portal's two-way and ye have the key for both sides then ye can move freely in and out o' the portal. So ye can poke yer head through and peer around, for instance. If there's something solid blockin' the other side o' the portal, it won't open.

Any planewalker'll tell ye that knowin' what's on the other side o' the portal is the most important knowledge ye can hold. No point in going through it if ye don't know where it goes,

unless ye're just burnin' up wit' curiosity. Usually ye know somethin' o' where the portal leads 'fore ye pass through it, either by using *analyze portal* or by lannin' it from whoever gave ye the portal key. Some planewalkers have developed the ability to sense where a portal goes to and even if there's a natural danger on the other side. The best way to handle planar hazards is wit' spells, but some devices have been made to use on specific planes.

The Exceptions

Well, this is the multiverse we're speakin' of, and there's always somethin' that breaks the rules. There be portals that don't need keys, that're always open, or don't even need to be in bounded spaces. The easiest examples to point to be the portals along the Great Road, the World Ash, or Mount Olympus. And o' course the ways portals work may be completely different on certain prime worlds or other obscure regions o' the multiverse.

Using the City of Doors

Sigil hangs above the Spire like an apple just out o' reach from those who want to grab it. Many have lusted to control the city and its portals, but it knows only one mistress. Luckily, She makes sure no one gains too much control o'er her doors. I've spent a lot o' time in this city. In the old days, I stayed just long enough to get to where I was going next. Now, it makes a better place than most to rest these creaking bones and talk wit' travelers by a warm fire.

Adventurers and traders could hardly find a better place to set up shop than the Cage. Nowhere else in all the known planes gives as much access to the rest of existence. Though Sigil's portals may not always drop a cutter off in the exact spot that body wants, they can get close enough. Even parties that don't call kip in the city oftentimes pass through, finding that the shortest path between two points goes through the Cage. In fact, there ain't many planar explorers that don't make use o' the City of Doors in some way.

Though Sigil is full o' portals to the other planes, getting to use 'em is another matter. Whilst even the Guvners can't keep track o' just how many portals exist at any one time, 'tis the opinion o' most bloods that nearly all portals in the Cage are under someone's control, be it a guild, faction, or random basher. Usually, such portals be on property owned by the controller. But sometimes, the portal ain't under direct ownership, but the location and portal key needed be such a closely kept secret no one else is goin' to be able to use it, at least 'til someone finds a way to make it worth tellin'. If a cutter's a member of the controllin' group, they might have easy access to the portal, or at least for some small cost. If not, the cutter will probably need to provide a garnish of some sort (jink, favors, what-have-ye). That being said, if there's one thing that'll get ye flayed, 'tis tryin' to tax the use o' the Lady's portals. That business has been punished so harshly by Her Serenity that only the barmiest ever try it anymore.

Not all Sigil's portals're controlled, though. New portals appear oftentimes enough; maybe they're products o' the Lady's whim or some cosmic fluke. Some o' these vanish just as quickly, though others stick around. Shiftin' portals are also really hard t'keep track of, though the Guvners still log what details they can in their tomes.

Of course, before getting' access to a portal, ye have to find one that suits yer needs. Luckily, that's normally the easiest part, as there be more than enough bashers makin' a livin' off findin' portals and tradin' chant on 'em. Askin' around in any o' Sigil's pubs will get ye a few recommendations to those in the know, who will likely be just as willing to point ye in the right direction; for a minor fee, o' course. This can be 'specially handy if ye're looking for a little-known portal, or mayhap one less public. On the other hand, it ain't guaranteed that what ye pay for is legit. There be plenty out there looking to bob would-be planewalkers. If'n ye're looking for something' more reliable, there be a number o' businesses that sell portal

information that live by their reputation, with the Guild of Doorsnoops bein' one o' the biggest.

In the wake o' the Faction War, the Lady of Pain shut the portals down completely, then scrambled 'em, a time we speak of nowadays as the Tempest o' Doors. Not all portals reopened, and those that did oftentimes had new destinations or new keys. Over the last five years, things have gotten more regular, but many bashers are now leery of usin' Sigil's portals. 'Tis a sad thing when the planewalkers can't rely on the City o' Doors. An era has passed us by, but all sweet grass turns brown in the end, I suppose. Now most cutters put more stock in the planar pathways and other forms o' travel, which means Sigil is a bit less crowded and no longer guaranteed to have access to every bit o' planar merchandise. But even yet, travel through the Cage is still very high, and the lessened demand for portals has forced businesses to provide cheaper rates for their services.

The Gate-Towns

Sigil's not the only anthill that has important portals. Around the "edges" o' the Outlands lay the gate-towns, one for each o' the Outer Planes. These burgs are shadows o' the planes they are connected to, culturally an' philosophically. The land within and around each gate-town takes on the features o' the plane 'tis linked to, making them a good way for a basher to get a handle on what to expect on the plane itself. Even more important, each gate-town has a gate to the Outer Plane 'tis coupled wit', usually large enough for caravans to cross, making 'em the main road for merchants. The destinations of most of these gates be well known (though they have been known to move), and guides can be hired in most o' the gate-towns, which is especially handy for some o' the less welcomin' planes, ye'd best believe me. Don't trust 'em, but so long as they be willin' to go through a portal first, ye're probably safe on the other end.

Gaining access to the gates ain't as easy as ye might expect. Whilst they're always open and don't need portal keys, in some o' the gate-towns, the folks that live there keep a tight grip on passage. The bureaucrats of Automata make all potential gate users fill out forms, whilst Tradegate's gate is actually owned by a fine and worthy bariaur named the Master Trader, who must be found and negotiated with for passage. Some o' the other burgs, like Glorium, Sylvania, or Torch have gates that are a little more difficult to find or physically get to, though no one stops a body from trying. But most of the gate-towns don't have any rules or physical barriers keeping others from using their gate. So long as sods don't make trouble, they can use the gates all they want.

O' course, when traveling through the gate-towns, any canny blood is goin' to be mindful o' that burg's own personal quest. Y'see, the petitioners o' the gate-towns are made up o' sods who held a particular philosophy but didn't quite measure up, and didn't end up on their proper plane. From then on the petitioners o' that town are devoted to overcomin' their own stumbling blocks and getting' their burg to become more and more like the nearby plane until the entire gate-town up and moves there. This is good for the petitioners so they can set about trying to merge with their plane proper, and 'tis good for the plane's original inhabitants 'cause it means more territory and followers. O' course, this means that it'll be a while 'fore folks find where the gate has moved and a new town is built, but 'tis not a recurrin' problem 'cause these shifts take a *long* while, what with opposin' forces

Gate-Towns to the Outer Planes

Plane	Gate-Town
Arcadia	Courage
Mount Celestia	Excelsior
Bytopia	Tradegate
Elysium	Ecstasy
The Beastlands	Faunel
Arborea	Sylvania
Ysgard	Glorium
Limbo	Xaos
Pandemonium	Bedlam
The Abyss	Blight
Carceri	Curst
The Gray Waste	Hopeless
Gehenna	Torch
Baator	Ribcage
Acheron	Rigus
Mechanus	Automata

interferin' all the time and most o' the burg's mortal residents preferrin' their homes where they are. Since there tain't too many petitioners to begin wit', their desires are normally ignored by more influential bloods. The most recent crossin' was when the gate-town of the Abyss, Plague-Mort, crossed and was replaced by a burg known as Blight just two years ago.

Elemental Vortices

Portals ain't the only way to get around, though. One of the other ways is usin' an elemental vortex, though planars rarely make use of 'em. See, a vortex usually appears on the Prime connectin' to an Inner Plane, though sometimes vortices connect one Inner plane wit' another. Near as anyone can tell, vortices are natural holes in the fabric between the planes. These vortices usually last forever and stay nice an' stable. They don't need a key neither, but most smart cutters try to find another way to get where they need to go. Why go to all the trouble of finding another way, when these vortices seem so handy? Well, the Prime ends of most vortices tend to form in places where there's lots an' lots of the elemental stuff that the vortex leads to. So, a vortex to the Elemental Plane of Fire could be locked deep in the heart of a volcano, while one that leads to the Elemental Plane of Water may be in the deepest reaches of an ocean. But in spite of all these dangers, elemental vortices are many times the safest ways (if ye've got the right elemental protections) to get from the Prime to the Inner Planes and back.

Findin' the vortex ain't hard, they show up through *detect magic* and the like, and skilled folk can sense 'em. So, first things first: find a way to survive the element itself. Use a spell, magic item, or some other sort of adaptin', and then away ye go. Easy as gallopin'. Ye just get yerself down into the elemental matter, deeper an' deeper until ye're all the way under it. The only thing around ye now is that one element. At that moment, ye leave the Prime behind and find yerself in the Inner Plane. There the vortex can't really be made out from the surroundings, though its elemental properties are actually a bit less strong than the rest of the plane.

The most common an' stable elemental vortices connect to the four main Elemental Planes. Vortices that get a body to the Para- an' Quasielemental Planes are much harder to come by and ain't as reliable. Temporary vortices to Lightning may open up durin' really violent thunderstorms, and vortices to Ice may appear at the snowbound poles o' prime worlds on occasion. I've even seen Para- an' Quasielemental vortices muscle their way in and take over other permanent elemental vortices. This one time, I was headin' for Fire and next thing I know I'm treadin' through the stiflin' Plane of Dust. I was prepared for bein' singed, not chokin' on all that dust. Use a vortex if ye need to, cutter, but be warned.

Astral Conduits

The Astral Plane offers up many ways to go to and fro. The Astral is a sort o' bridge between the Material Plane and the Outer Planes. Sure, there are strange beasts, horrible astral thought storms and the inhospitable githyanki to make any trip through the Silver Void hazardous, but it still sees lots o' traffic. Spells like *astral projection* or powers such as *astral caravan* allow a body to get onto the plane while spells like *dimension door* and *teleport* use the astral to travel without actually physically moving between two spots. Those are just some of the most common methods of using the Astral.

A lesser known route is by usin' astral conduits, which'll take you from the Astral to 'bout anywhere on the Planes. They're strange things; they twist an' turn throughout the Silvery Void like wormholes in a piece o' fruit. Now, their ends are invisible, but they don't need keys, so all a body has to do is go inside and then away ye go, faster than a Taker grabbin' for the last piece of pie. Travelin' down one o' these things feels like goin' through a portal, but really, that's not how it is. Ye're actually movin' down the tube, but so quick it seems the trip takes no time at all.

So, easy to use, but a cutter needs to know it's there first, and for that they'll need to be able to see it, with a spell like *true seeing*, p'rhaps. Now, where does it lead? Well, unless ye want to take yer chances, divination magic will give ye an idea. So, ye're smart, you can guess what's comin' next, right? Hard to find but useful? Can ye hear the jink changin' hands? Most spivs in Sigil have it "in with a basher, who's in with a cutter" who can give the chant about astral conduits. Also, those bookish Guvners have all sorts o' notes written down that'll help find conduits. There's more conduits than there's pages, though, and more turn up all the time. They tend to roam about too, so make sure yer source is up to date.

Why do they exist? Why do planars need one more way to get around? Well, seems the conduits may really be there for another reason altogether. They've got plenty of other uses. Firstly, astral conduits are how the planes of belief and the Prime Material Plane talk to each other. Prayers and devotions from mortal bashers go from the Prime to the Outer Planes through the conduit network and all the spell energy that deities hand out to their faithful comes back that way. When a sod dies, the spirit goes through the astral conduit network to whatever afterlife they've earned. 'Cause of all this, many cutters speculate that the conduits were put there on purpose, and that new conduits come about the same way. Only makes sense. And seeing as conduits mature with time, some berks go so far as to say that the conduits themselves are alive. The life stages are broken down to young, when it drifts about and only works one way; then mature, where it tends to stay in one place, moving about every few centuries, and works both ways; and old an' dodderin'. Then 'tis really dangerous, as it moves around from plane to plane without any way of tellin' where 'twill end up. And finally, they just die.

Even the stable ones can be treacherous, though. Sometimes, a group traveling t'gether down a conduit gets split up, ending up in different places. And some say this can happen to the spirits of the dead, too, and the poor sods end up in the wrong afterlife. Then there's some critters that prey on the conduits. See, while the ends of a conduit are invisible, that's not the way 'tis in the Astral. The conduit tubes can be seen twistin' through the Silvery Void, and a cutter can tell when a body's travelin' down 'em. The githyanki know some spells that can tear open conduits, spilling the contents out into the Astral Plane, and these spells have made their way into other hands. Then there's the astral vampire (h'rak'va in the githyanki tongue) which can pierce a conduit with its long proboscis and suck out the life force of hapless travelers. Some berks figure these dangers ain't enough, and tell tales of another beastie called a conduit cleaver, which has hundreds of arms ending in cleavers, and chops through conduits with its bladed limbs just for fun. Me, I'm too old for bogey stories.

Color Pools

Handier than conduits are color pools, as long as a cutter can get to the Astral in the first place. Color pools are holes in the fabric of the Astral. Yep, that's right, more holes in reality. Startin' to sound like there are more holes in existence than there be in a halfling's socks, don't it? Anyways, color pools are like doorways that go from the Astral to any of the planes it connects to. They look like colored disks that can only be seen from one side. Even though they can't be seen from one side, both sides work, so astral travelers who ain't paying attention can tumble right through a color pool 'fore they even know it. Color pools work a lot like the colored disks that are all over Mount Olympus and Yggdrasil. Graybeards wag their bone-boxes about what color pools are, but most planewalkers are just happy to get off a plane infested with githyanki. They don't care that the exit is a blandin' of "liquid reality" and "astral ectoplasm".

Color pools are everywhere in the Silvery Void and even the greenest rube can find one. Just think about going to a color pool that'll take ye to the plane ye want, and ye'll start driftin' in that direction. Now, ye can't choose where the pool is goin' to take ye on the plane in question, so ye have to take yer chances. And keep this in mind: despite what some knight o'

the post in the Hive Ward may tell ye, there is no set code to the colors of the pools. One portal to Celestia may be bright blue whilst another is blood red. 'Tis much better to follow yer mind than yer eyes whilst searching for color pools.

Most color pools are one-way portals, so's ye can get off the Astral, but ye can't get back that way. A cutter that steps into one is swallowed by the pool and appears, as if from nowhere, on the other side. The color pool's exit on the plane is invisible. Now, just so there'll be an exception I wager, every great once in a while, two-way pools come into being. These color pools allow a body to go onto and off o' the Astral. The entrance back to the Astral is still invisible, though, so mark ye well where ye came out.

Planar Pathways

Now, the planar pathways, they see much more travel than about anything else. Why? 'Cause they're pretty easy to walk or ride down. They got well-mapped routes and trails and lots o' connections to different planes. They ain't the quickest, but they're great if a body likes the scenic route. See, unlike the instant travel offered by portals and the like, the great planar paths are roads, staircases, waterways or such that a basher needs to actually travel to get from plane to plane. On some of 'em, the change from plane to plane is so gradual ye might not even notice, while on others, there be portals an' doorways that connect the path to other planes. 'Cause the pathways are actual physical locations, they each have their own hazards, inhabitants, and special laws required for traversal. There's six generally recognized planar paths, and these be the Great Road, the River Styx, the River Oceanus, Mount Olympus, Yggdrassil, and the Infinite Staircase.

The Great Road

The Great Road is so great, it's moved beyond bein' a real road into what a graybeard would call the 'archetype', and what most of us unlearned sods would call the 'idea', of a road. As most anyone knows, the Outer Planes form a ring. You've got yer Upper Planes, and yer Lower, and then you got those ones in between. Now, if a body is of a mind to, he or she can go from plane to plane, following the ring. This is known as walkin' the Great Road, and every planewalker should do it at least once. At least part o' the way, 'cause walking through every plane would take ye a few centuries. Even the modrons take shortcuts when they're on their march. On each plane, there's an archway at either end. Yeah, I know planes don't have ends, and that they go on forever. I still have a workin' brainbox! Just keep up with me here, aye? Imagine there's an end to the planes, otherwise ye'll never get anywheres. These archways are a lot like the doorways in Sigil, and they hook the plane up with the two planes on either side of it. If a basher looks through the arch, the other plane can be seen on the other side. Just step through that arch to get to the other plane. There's usually some kind of town or fort around the portal. If ye're in the Upper Planes, ye can buy some wares or have a mug and a rest. In the Lower Planes, you might find yerself the newest spear holder in a Blood War regiment. The fiends make sure an' secure their portals, both to guard against their foes and to spring their own attacks.

The River Styx

Feh, I'd rather go floppin' about the Ditchwater than row a boat down the Styx again. Dangerous, smelly, and I can't remember my first love's name no more. But sometimes, a planewalker might see the need to travel down its chaotic, meanderin' course through the Lower Planes, so I'll tell ye what I know of it. The River Styx connects to the top layer of every Lower Plane and its tributaries connect to lower layers. Its putrid, blood-colored waters steal away a body's memories if ye so much as stick the tip of yer littlest finger in the sludge. If

ye're so unlucky as to fall in completely, ye'll find yer very sense of self slippin' away like smoke in the Foundry. Walkin' along its banks ain't much better, 'cause there's corpses and pointy rocks every which way, and the banks don't take much to collapse and spill a sod into the waters. And I told ye to stay out o' the water, aye? Right, 'cause not only will ye lose all yer memories, but there's horrors in the deeps that keep their wits just fine, and will happily munch on ye.

The river's path can change at a moment's notice, sending travelers over dangerous rapids, impossibly high waterfalls, or directly into the hands o' their enemies. Now, most o' the time, we picture the Outer Planes as a ring, with a Great Road goin' between 'em. Well, the Styx don't make sense that way. Accordin' to it, the planes ain't sittin' cozy side by side. A traveler can go from Acheron to Pandemonium with no in-between stops, or they can travel through every lawful evil plane in their travel from Carceri to the Abyss. Movin' from plane to plane is so gradual that a body'll look about and realize of a sudden that the planes have changed.

Best way to go down the river is to get a ferrymen. Some of 'em are fiends, others are the spirits of the dead, and a rare few are livin' beings putting their sailin' skills to use. Without a ferryman who knows the way around, yer'e liable to get very lost indeed. But just remember this: on the Lower Planes, ye can trust nobody, even if ye've paid cold, hard jink. They'll peel ye and give ye over to an archfiend given the chance. But in spite of that, the Styx sees constant travel. Since it connects all o' the Lower Planes, the Styx is used as the main method of movin' troops about for the Blood War. Other travelers make use o' it, too, 'specially merchants, since portals on the Lower Planes are even more treacherous than the Styx at times. And it never takes a body more than a day to get somewheres.

Several different bein's make kip on or in the Styx. The best known are the silent marraenoloths. These fiends call the yugoloth lord Charon (or Cerlic, depending on which graybeard ye ask) their high-up, and they look like skeletal boatmen shrouded in black cloaks. They sell their services, but they charge a steep price, and they may turn stag if some other cutter has given them a bigger garnish. Besides the marraenoloths, the waters of the Styx are home to all sorts o' fiendish creatures that are unaffected by the Styx water. They either play some part in the Blood War or feed on the tainted memories lost to the churnin' waters.

The River Oceanus

The bright, cheery mirror o' the foul, depressin' Styx, the River Oceanus winds through the Upper Planes of Elysium, the Beastlands, and Arborea. Its waters are fragrant an' sweet, always carryin' the tranquil nature of its headwaters in Elysium. Oceanus is a well-used trade route between the layers of those planes; ports have been set up all along its banks and trader's boats are always going up an' down it, and travelers can usually find safe passage if they wave around a little jink.

Even though the river goes through the Upper Planes, it can still be dangerous. In a lot o' ways, travelin' down Oceanus is like travelin' down the Styx, just with better scenery and water ye can drink. If berks ain't careful, they might find their selves plunging o'er a big waterfall, crashing o'er white-water rapids, or being made the food of some mammoth sea creature. The river meanders and can't be charted; its course vanishes from time to time only to reappear on a different plane. One moment a body can be lookin' out on the fields of Elysium and then the next see the shores of Arborea and have no idea when the change happened.

The Oceanus is deeper than any cutter can figure, and within it, strange and fantastic creatures live. There's all manner of beasts like ye'd see on the Prime, like dolphins, fish, and turtles, but it's also home to all kinds of intelligent beasts. And hidden deep in that dark deep there are creatures never seen on any Prime Material world, huge monstrosities that rarely rise to the surface, which suits the bashers livin' and sailin' on the river just fine.

Chant says that the Oceanus has been expanding into the first layer of Ysgard, forming a connection to the homes of the Asgardian pantheon and their followers. Mayhap. There are less likely things, like the Styx flowing into Nessus, the lowest layer o' Baator, but if 'tis happenin', it ain't a stable path yet.

Mount Olympus

On prime worlds where the powers of the Olympian pantheon are worshipped, the mortals tell tales of a massive mountain their gods call kip. Well, like a few clueless tales, this story's pretty much true. On the Outer Planes there really does exist a towering mountain that links the cases of the Olympian deities, a mountain that makes a safe route for planar travel if'n a blood knows the way of its paths. Mount Olympus connects to Arborea, the Gray Waste, Carceri, Gehenna, and every prime world where the Olympians are worshipped. But most of the gateways can only be used by worshippers of the Olympian pantheon, and unbelievers find their selves stranded on the Gray Waste. But the Olympian powers are some of the most popular out there, so the mountain still sees lots o' hikers.

Travelin' Olympus is like travelin' any other mountain, really; get where ye want by climbin'. Some places, the slope o' the mount is gentle and the climb easy, at others the slopes become rocky cliff faces that can spill berks o'er infinite drops, drop showers of boulders on 'em, or slap 'em about with bitin' winds. The gateways to the other planes look like colorful, freestanding disks, hidden behind rocks an' woods or in deep caverns. A body can't see through 'em, so a basher has to step through to find out where they go. They're usually two-way, so a basher can get back out if 'tis not a plane they're lookin' for. Well, unless they end up in Carceri; that plane's never been one to let berks leave easy. Areas that see lots o' travel have paths carved into them by merchants and caravans to make the trek easier. Great monuments and temples built by mortal and immortal beings alike also dot the landscape, providing a welcome restin' spot for weary travelers, though just like the disks, only the faithful get any hospitality there. These great marble palaces are covered with statues of deities and mortal heroes, and have endless courtyards filled with pretty marble statues, and lovely gardens and orchards. It's all a bit on the showy side, but 'tis nice enough. 'Sides the flocks o' sheep, temples, vineyards and orchards, Olympus has many glades and forests, where fey bashers like satyrs and nymphs are said to cavort around. The path is also guarded by hounds, mountain spirits, and other mystical beasts. Again, it's a nice way to travel around if ye follow the Olympian gods.

Yggdrassil, the Great Tree

Yggdrassil's a lot like Mount Olympus; 'tis really, really big and connects up wit' all the places important to a particular pantheon, the Asgardians this time. And the World Tree is spoken of on many prime worlds, where followers of the Asgardian pantheon say that the different realms and worlds of existence are cradled in the great ash tree. Mayhap their belief in such a thing made the tree grow, or mayhap they heard stories about it. Either way, Yggdrassil is one of the main planar pathways. It looks like a massive tree with branches that can be miles around, its bark be silver and flaky, like gray clay, and its leaves're shimmering blue-black ovals.

Ysgard has many connections to the World Tree, as does Hel's realm in the Gray Waste. Loki's realm in Pandemonium has a connection to the World Ash, an' so do scattered points in the Outlands. The site called Pinwheel in Limbo also has a connection to one of the World Tree's routes, though why this be so is dark, 'cause it don't seem to have anythin' to do wit' the Asgardian pantheon.

To get where ye're goin', just walk along the tree and find the right colorful, disk-shaped portals. Lots o' merchants an' planewalkers climb the branches, and 'tis also home to the squirrel-like ratatosk, friendly cutters who can be hired as guides. 'Tis also guarded by eagles, aasimon, yugoloths, and even the legendary dragon Nidhogg who lies at the tree's roots (though he doesn't so much guard as vent his frustration on any poor sod who comes by). Gravity on Yggdrassil goes towards the center of the branch that a basher is standin' on and moving from branch to branch can be unsettin' when gravity moves over to the new branch almost instantly. Any poor sod who falls off a limb ends up in the Astral Plane, and 'II have to find another way. The portals on the tree move around a bit as the tree sways in the Astral winds, but trips across Yggdrassil almost never take more than a week.

The Infinite Staircase

There's one last important planar pathway — the Infinite Staircase. The Infinite Staircase is what it sounds like: a set of stairs that stretches beyond all horizons, takin' a cutter to the depths o' the Hells or to the heights o' the Heavens. 'Tis a spiralin' silver staircase with ivy hangin' from it here an' there. No support can be seen for the Staircase, which is twenty feet wide, and is inside a silver tower shaft. Along the Staircase are platforms o' wood or marble, some straight, some curvin', and each one leadin' to doors or even more stairways. The platforms are of many makes, from small doorsteps with a wooden door to large platforms that stretch out o' sight wit' yawnin' archways.

Openin' one o' these doors, it opens into a quiet, out-o'-the-way area somewhere on the planes, coming out a door that the locals pay no mind. It could be in an abandoned building, or in the corner of a dusty basement, though usually the door takes a planewalker to an inhabited burg o' some sort. So, what kinds of planes are these? Any kind. The Staircase connects to any place in the multiverse where creativity and imagination springs up. 'Tain't as pleasant as it first sounds, rube. This could mean a trip to a pain garden in Baator or a potter's shed on the Prime. Bloods can usually get a feel for the type of place a door goes to by the surroundin's and the materials 'tis made of. I once stumbled across a door of stretched, humanoid skin painted with bloody symbols, on a shadowy landing wit' the soft sound o' moans comin' from somewhere just beyond knowin'. I was sure *that* weren't what I was lookin' for. Hoofed it up another staircase right quick. Most doors ain't so obvious, but there's always some clue.

Climbers of the Infinite Staircase may have a trip ahead o' them. No graybeard knows how many doors there be, though many have tried to find out. If they have a specific door they're heading for, it may be days away. That's a lot of walking up or down, and the Staircase ain't kind to berks who cheat with magic. Fliers who stay close to the stairs do all right, but if they try to take a shortcut to another set o' stairs or landing, they're likely to get sucked into a fold in space and spit out onto the planes somewhere. Teleporters risk the same danger, as does anyone who jumps, dives, or is pushed off the stairs.

Those walking the Staircase may meet the occasional fellow traveler or see no one for days. The Planewalker's Guild has taken over a massive landing as their kip high up on the Staircase, and I can tell ye that a body can do worse than joinin' up with those bloods. A fine bunch, interested in nothin' so much as learnin' the paths o' the planes. Travelers might also run into the lillends, servants o' Selûne, the moon goddess. The Staircase starts in the goddess's palace, and she takes an interest in who's usin' it. If'n the planewalkers have a close relationship to creativity, chaos, and good, they may get help from the lillends, mostly by getting directions or warnings o' dangers. If the lillends feel the planewalkers themselves are one o' those dangers, they won't be shy about nickin' the "intruders".

The Staircase is one o' the most useful of all planar pathways, but planar travelers often choose other routes. I've always found it a great way to get about, like the City o' Doors with all the different kinds o' portals, but for many berks, 'tis real lonely. It can be mighty tiring to

travel the Staircase, and caravans are right out. The other planar pathways don't provide as many destinations, but the ones they do are mapped out much better. But the truly adventurous, or the just plain lost, can be found walkin' up and down the silver steps, openin' doors that lead to worlds beyond the ones they know.

Using Magic

Canny bloods don't trek around the Great Ring without some form of protection to help them out against all the dangers the planes are host to. Planewalkers usually get chummy with a spellcaster or two, if their own talents don't go that way, if only because such cutters tend to have ways to survive new environments. Of course, most bashers also use potions and other enchanted items made to give their bearers protection. After all, creatures have made their homes in just about every dank corner of the planes, buildin' communities in every bizarre and hazardous situation ye can think of. While some creatures're naturally able to exist in those spots, many planars do so only with the help of magic. And though many o' us have other talents, the canny blood learns to respect what magic can offer. If not, ye'd best stay home.

On the other hand, a lot of the Clueless come to think that magic is the end-all-be-all o' planewalking, and that 'tis all a basher needs to get around. But if everythin' were that simple, we'd all put away our weapons and pull out some dusty tome, wouldn't we? Truth is, magic ain't nearly as reliable as it is on most prime worlds. Spellslingers have to keep in mind planar cosmology so they don't try castin' spells that rely on the Astral Plane in the Inner Planes. That arrogant look won't stay on their faces long when that important spell fizzles. What's worse, some parts o' the multiverse make certain type of spells more difficult or impossible to cast, meaning survival depends on old-fashioned, sweaty methods.

But properly prepared magic often makes the difference between a dead party and a live one. Spellcasters worth their scrolls will allow for the basics. Have some spells to make light with, since not all planes have much in the way of their own sources of illuminatin'. *Tongues* is real handy when talking to the weird bashers most planewalkers run into. Lastly, *avoid planar effects* (or better

Variant: Planar Environments Affecting Spells

Some DMs may feel that magic trivializes certain aspects of planewalking. Climbing the frigid peaks of Ysgard isn't as much of an adventure when using *endure elements*, nor is reaching a distant realm difficult when using a *teleport* spell. There are a variety of ways the DM can choose to have the planes respond to these spells, though the spells themselves become a bit more unreliable in doing so. *Teleport* and similar spells may not be as accurate on more morphic (i.e. chaotic planes), and may fail altogether when attempting to enter some realms or sacred areas as the powers there might wish to prevent outsiders from finding them. When in regions of the multiverse that have particularly nasty environments as part of the plane's overall philosophy, spellcasters may find spells such as *endure elements* and *attune form* gradually being eroded, their duration shortened or even requiring concentration to maintain after a certain point. Players should eventually be able to overcome these restrictions or be able to find specialized spells that work properly on the particular plane. In addition, spellcasters should always detect the latter complications when casting a spell and magical items shouldn't be affected, as there's no cause for invalidating hard-earned gold. The three most important things to keep in mind are not to drown players in tediousness, don't make them feel like their powers are useless, and be consistent. With that in mind, eventually players will reach a point where hopping from plane to plane is a simple task, and it *should* be, if only to allow them to deal with more interesting matters.

With that in mind, some places should never be accessible by normal spellcraft, including mysterious places such as the seventh layer of Mount Celestia or the ninth layer of Baator. Whatever forces hold sway there make sure no one can barge in uninvited (or leave without permission). Nor can one *plane shift* to the Ordial Plane, if it truly exists. Some destinations simply require journeys more taxing than magic.

yet, *attune form*) is a handy all-around spell to keep casters and their friends alive.

PERSPECTIVES

Jordul spread himself out across the bench, his attention focused on the mimir's words. Everything was so different from what he had been taught about the planes back home. There was so much life here, so much intrigue and conflict that it dwarfed the matters of his land. Indeed, the affairs of his home seemed small compared to the common life of these planars. Surely, to achieve renown and greatness on the planes in the name of the gods was a far greater service than he could've hoped to achieve otherwise.

Drawing some fruit to eat from a pouch at his side, Jordul lost himself in the mimir's voice, not noticing the small imp that had been perched upon the root above as it giggled and flew off...

"So, cutter, by now you've gotten the dark on how planars survive out here. Now it's time to get into their heads, have a look through their eyes at the wonders of the 'verse. It goes without saying that not everyone sees things the same way, but unless you're a real leatherhead by now you've figured out that belief is an important part of planar society. And I'm not just rattling my silvery bone-box about how bashers think other bashers should act (though there's plenty of that going on), I'm talking about how different bashers think the very multiverse works: how it came to be, where it's going, and what a cutter can do to affect that. Virtually every basher on the planes has an opinion on such things, and most are eager to argue their point. The difference between planars and the clueless on the Prime is that here it matters what folks think; planars aren't arguing for intellectual delights (well, most aren't). Get enough people to agree to some idea and eventually it'll make itself to be true. That's the most important lesson to toss around in your brain-box as you learn more about the planes: every bit of chant and screed is one more bit of power to hold over the multiverse however you might wish."

Orren Delaphage

Viewing the Multiverse

[Editor's note: Our first contributor, Orren Delaphage, was more than happy to aid in this work's creation. The tiefling is full of answers and speculations for any who will listen (and quite a few who won't). One hopes that this member of the Mind's Eye faction doesn't remake the multiverse in his own image. As with all of our esteemed sources, our audience must separate the useful information from that which is less so.]

Ah, this is the great quest, is it not? To understand the workings of the multiverse, and one's own place within those very workings. Yes, this is the thing. Not all appreciate the truth of my words, but would do well to do so. I will try to impart my accumulated wisdom to you and those who make use of your *mimir*. I do, after all, have a vast wealth of experience in these matters.

All of the various factions and sects try to explain the multiverse in some fashion, and most work to shape the multiverse to their liking. Culture has a large say in how a body looks at things, too; even those who never join a faction have a particular view of the way things are, and of course, the planes have a staggering variety of societies. Certainly, choosing the right faction aids a body in truly understanding things, but everyone has some inkling. In some fashion, almost everyone supposes that belief has an affect on the multiverse to some degree. Often, this is a simple faith that the multiverse is ordered by the various powers supported by their worshippers. Ordinary sods can't do much about the way things work, and just hope to

get by, understanding what they can. Of course, the great among them realize that there is more to existence than that, and hope to discover the dark of it all or make it as they fit. No one seems to have found the final answer yet; rather, if they have, they aren't sharing. Some of us have arrived at a better understanding than others, but even I am still walking the planes, learning to shape both the multiverse and myself.

How the multiverse came to be is perhaps the topic of least interest for the typical planar. The majority of folk don't have much interest in the past, even that of only a few decades ago, so not much thought is put into the beginning. And really, it's not so much where the multiverse has *been* that is important, as where it is *going*. Many believe the multiverse is older than even the most ancient fiends and celestials remember, so old that there's nothing left for evidence of previous eras to ponder over. A lot of bloods will at least point to some of their own adventures in protest to this train of thought, as a number of relics and ruins are scattered across the planes, forgotten and undisturbed for eons, but that's not really enough to give a real idea of the past. Some of the more naïve believe their powers gave birth to existence, but most bashers have seen enough deities rise and fall to view any deity's claims to be the first as screed. A lot of scholars think the cardinal planes formed one by one, the Inner Planes forming first and providing substance for the Prime Material Plane, then the thoughts and beliefs of that region forming the Outer Planes. Plenty of planars object to this theory, though, if only because it means the Outer Planes came last. A few counter that the primordial forces of Good and Evil, Law and Chaos, existed before time itself, and that the Outer Planes were formed around them, followed much later by the Prime and the Inner Planes. Nowadays, some berks point to the Ordial as the "source", the beginning and the end of existence, and view its appearance as a portent of the end. Then again, a few of the barmy and "enlightened" rattle their bone-boxes about overpowers and uberdeities controlling entire cosmoses beyond our own. Goes to show what screed people are willing to consider, doesn't it?

Now the progression of the multiverse today, that's the more interesting topic, and one that's likely to get a lot of debate at any pub. There's plenty to argue about when talking about the state and purpose of the multiverse, and it's not hard to make friends or rivals based on one's position. Sometimes it is best to keep to oneself, though it is difficult not offer a helping hand to sods drowning in their own shortsighted beliefs. The very fate of the multiverse is at stake after all, and our different beliefs clash at times. For instance, we of the Mind's Eye understand the multiverse is ascending to a new state of being, but the Doomguard believe the multiverse is gradually moving towards oblivion. Certainly, there's no talking to someone with such a blinkered view. Still others proclaim the end will come with a great apocalyptic battle to finally determine what moral and ethical force is right. On the other hand, you might think that the planes retain a status quo, the opposing forces that compose the Inner and Outer Planes staying in a relative balance. Well you're flat wrong, berk, so drop that idea now. Make no mistake, this is a war. It may not always involve great armies and mighty warriors (though it often does), but each side is doing everything it can to gain the upper hand every day. You can certainly see that such disparate beliefs cannot always exist side by side quietly. You simply can't live on the planes for long without witnessing firsthand the effects of this struggle on the billions of lives across the multiverse, with only the most apathetic or cynical able to chalk it up to some balance of powers. Planars choose sides and they support them, even planewalkers, who arguably encounter the widest range of beliefs and outlooks. It is up to you to choose the right side, of course. That is, if you're smart.

That being said, what does someone do to support their side and affect the multiverse? The average bashers live their lives and support their beliefs whenever convenient, neither letting their beliefs consume their lives nor falling to the wayside. Of course, many truly strive to follow their ideal paths and convince others to do so as well, and they normally find reward in return for their work and sacrifice. On the other hand, a small few simply don't care enough about their beliefs or come to think no belief has more merit than any other. Longtime residents of the Cage are often said to develop this level of apathy. (Methinks it was a blessing

to be forced out of that ant-hill. There are plenty of gates on the Outlands and so much more potential.) In either case these berks are typically either swept up in the crossfire or fade into obscurity as they find their lives shallow and empty. Do not fall into that trap. I will even go so far, grudgingly, to say that it's better to choose *any* belief over none at all.

Alicia DeMortina

Belief

[Editor's note: Bitterness can lead a person through many things as Alicia's story proves. Once a devoted follower of a now dead god, she turned to the Athar after coming upon his corpse in the Astral. After the Athar left Sigil (along with every other faction there), she's now turned to another philosophy of a sorts. One can find her out in the Outlands - usually sampling the wines at the local inn of questionable repute.]

Oh please, do sit down. Buy me a drink if you will, unless you're here just to stare at the one Athar who's walked away from the Spire and not got struck down for it yet. In which case, you can take your scrawny little tail out that door and remember I ain't an Athar anymore. Ah, you wish to record my thoughts on the matter in your little *mimir* there. Heh...well, I can tell you this about belief, too damn many people have too damn much of it. But, here's how it goes if you insist. Your listeners should prepare themselves for a right earful.

Belief affects the planes. I'm not talking about how one berk believes something and it affects his actions, which affect other actions and so on. Rubbish that is, and I get tired of Guvner's trying to work out how a butterfly's wing flap on Arcadia changed battles in the Blood War. No, what I'm going to tell you about is *direct* – the power of a person's belief acting to really change things.

It's not just a coincidence that the Nine Hells, the Abyss, and all the other Lower Planes reflect the ideas of punishment and evil on so many prime worlds. They *are* the ideas, made material. Same goes for Mount Celestia, Elysium, or anywhere, really. Outer Planes being all the same in the end: belief made manifest. You get enough people together believing in the same thing and I'm sure you could make some major changes in the planes that way. For the good or for the worse I wouldn't be able to say. But it's a powerful force. Bigger than just 'bout any mortal, I would imagine. Maybe even more than a god...

Anyways, how does this relate to what I was saying? Well, it goes to show you – belief can make planes, shift planes, even destroy planes. Or people, or gods, for that matter. Why do you think a power guards its worshippers and petitioners so strongly? Without them, they die. And I can tell you, I've seen plenty of those out there. Sit yourself down on some old dead god's corpse in the Astral and you'll get some perspective on things, I can tell you.

So, how do we get around to changing things? Well, there's groups out there, I'm sure you've heard of them, factions. All fighting, all believing, and it seems like none of them agreeing. Not a blasted one of them willing to let anyone else win, be that because they think everyone else is barmy or they don't want to fade away like the powers themselves. But if you lean in real close I'll tell you something else:

None of them are right.

So when the Lady's edict came down, I was right happy 'bout that. They think it takes so much belief to change things that everyone's got to believe the same thing to make it work. Bully for them, why haven't things changed *yet*? The Hardheads have themselves a whole world after all, but I don't see the Abyss blinking an eye. (I won't go into that much more, might get m'self tossed out of my favorite bar, I might.) And when the factions were shoved out of Sigil? Well, I'd say that just proves my point, wouldn't you? There's a right answer out there *somewhere*,

and they don't have it, which is why they can't get enough people to believe it. At least when the primes first imagined things, they were going on a simple belief in their own existence, nothing too fancy about it.

Which leaves us with this, why would someone keep going along with a faction if things didn't seem to be changing no matter how hard they worked? Well, belief from one person doesn't have a drop of water's chance on the Plane of Fire of doing anything to the planes as a whole, but oh, how it works for the individual. Belief fuels the powers you see these factioneers holding. An Athar's clerical spells — now don't look at me that way boy, I said clerical, I meant it; it smacks of the divine. You want details, you walk to the base of the Spire and ask them yourself. Blind faith in nothing is still blind. Anyways, an Athar's spells, the Dusties' way with the dead, a Ring-giver's luck, an Indep's uncanny resistance to enchantment, even a Cipher's ability to smell trouble brewing. This is from their belief, in themselves, their purpose, their philosophy. Its no 'I will it to be so, and so it is' sort of deal, it's more like 'It *is*, and so it is.' But for that you have to really believe in it, if you have a doubt, then you're just not going to get much of anywhere. There's nothing sadder than seeing a Cipher namer trip and fall.

True belief is a powerful thing to have backing you, and when reinforced by others, even more so. Most of the more potent faction abilities wouldn't work without the shared belief of its members, after all. Good luck getting everyone to agree with you, though. That's why they wanted Sigil so bad, you know? It's about as central as they come, a good place to work from, and some graybeards say a good place to spin the rest of the planes from. If you can change something there, then, well, it'll snow ball out to the entire multiverse, so goes the theory. If you can prove that one, I'll buy you a drink. But you don't need the entire multiverse on your side to shake things up. Why, the Harmoniums managed to cause the third layer of Arcadia to move to Mechanus not to long ago, and that was *by accident*. Course getting it back has been more difficult, but it's definitely given them something to reflect on. Just cause no one's truly figured out the dark of the planes yet isn't any reason to be ignorant of the power belief has.

But hey, you obviously know how to park your ears to those with the chant, so I'll let you and your prospective listeners know something most berks don't have a clue about. Few people can muster up the belief to affect the planes on their own, so they gather in groups. But there are bloods out there with such conviction that the planes themselves listen. I'm not talking about the powers, but genuine mortals with the ability to shape the world around *all by themselves*. Rumor has they've got to be barmy to do it, or in some state that transcends anything we know. Eh? No, I've never seen one myself, but I've heard about it from very reliable sources.

Orren Delaphage

Philosophy

Ah, philosophy. The theory behind the practice, as it were. How we view the planes shapes our lives in more ways than one might imagine. Oh, indeed, religion is part of that, certainly. Communing with the divine (or at least their servants) allows one to see the real potential out there. No, no, I have no final answers. I'm still here, aren't I? My quest is not yet done, though I may be further along it than you. Ah, but who am I to judge? We all must find our own way in this great journey to enlightenment and beyond.

Most planars are taught some form of philosophy from an early age; not necessarily how the multiverse is, but how it should be. Of course, one learns the proper powers to propitiate soon afterwards, but it is an important distinction. Few planars follow a deity merely because it was what they grew up with; instead the principles that deity represents are so important to one's way of thinking it only makes sense to devote themselves to their divine manifestation. Thus any planar worth his weight can not only tell you what they believe, but argue why they believe it. Many bashers continue in this way their whole lives, never looking further than what

they were first taught, to say nothing of the petitioners or exemplar, who are literally born into their ways and unlikely to change them.

On the other hand, few realms are truly isolated from the rest of the 'verse, and those who planewalk inevitably encounter other ways of thinking. It's rare to find a power that isn't interested in spreading its faith beyond its realm, and then there are the factions. Most factions and sects have their dedicated proselytizers who will be more than happy to share the philosophy and ideals that are the core of their organization. Not too long ago, before the War, many faction members were caught up more in politics and bureaucracy than in the belief systems that should have been their focus. Now that our governance of Sigil has been relinquished, we're able to return to greater matters: shaping the very multiverse itself, not just the laws and commerce of a city. The factions certainly still hold positions of great influence throughout the planes, but by and large we have returned fully to the great debate. Philosophy often gets a bad name from those who do not understand and engage in it. Only the truly clueless look down upon it as dreamy nonsense, with nothing practical about it. Bar that! Only a right leatherhead bangs around without any sense of what it all means. We live and die by our philosophies and for our gods, cutter.

A Very Large Dragon

Religion

[Editor's note: The mimir that provided this transcript was retrieved bearing the marks of some rather teathy gnawing. Out of a sense of duty to my readers, as I certainly wouldn't want any of you harmed by following what you read here, I must warn you to travel with caution on the Outlands. There are many powerful and interesting beings who may consider you tasty in a tomato sauce. Further expeditions to obtain the actual name of this dragon have failed, in no small way due to an inability to return to the same place in the Outlands. Information regarding this entity would be welcome.]

Please, sit. I can assure you in this place we have all the time in the planes for your little interview... I did tell you to sit, did I not? Do you need further invitation? Stop trembling in your boots - I am still digesting my last meal. Besides, the fact that you have come to me with such a request intrigues me. That is why you are here, is it not? To ask about gods. Powers. Immortal beings worshipped by mortals. And to ask about religion, and perhaps your own place within it? I see it is - place your *mimir* before you and listen, mortal.

Factions and philosophers do not hold dominance over faith on the planes. There are many religions here, and they serve a purpose - like religions on the primes - within the places and communities that follow them. On the Prime, religion serves as a binding force, the blessings of a cleric on the crops, the social niceties of living in a community... all of that continues here on the planes as well. The common man, or the common dragon as I myself would be more concerned with, still worships, and still needs the attentions of their powers. Mortals feel a need for the watchful gaze of a power, and so religion still has a place here. But the gods serve an even greater role in the planes than that. As embodiments of the values most struggle to follow, they are a symbol of that belief's strength, their realms proof of what it can be accomplished. Deities might not always be revered as forces beyond mortal comprehension (which only goes to how arrogant mortals can be), but there will never be a group better suited as role models for the planes.

Is religion greater here than on the Prime? Well. That is certainly a question, is it not? The Prime Material is infinite. But then - so are the planes as well. Arguably one could say that one place is as good as the other. But there is no doubt that the Prime is core to the power of a deity. Aside from their realm, most of a power's attention is inevitably drawn first to the conflicts of the prime worlds where they hold sway, and to the rest of the planes second.

Perhaps it is that here, on the planes, the believers begin to understand that there are more things in existence than a god? Having seen Heaven and Hell, maybe the faith of a planar is shaken? Perhaps even the powers play "fair" and leave the planes to determine their own course, guided by the hands of general belief instead of the dictates of a customized mythology? One would have to ask a power directly to find the true answer to that, but the sight alone would likely kill one such as you. Myself? I have a very long view of things - I would say the Prime simply has less... competition for a power to deal with. No pesky fiends or obnoxious archons to counter the words of a power to its followers.

Still, a planar, though they share the planes with their gods, isn't held up to any greater standard than their peers on the Prime. They will still go to Heaven or Hell at their deity's whim (which is why some choose not to put their faith in the hands of a power at all, trusting in the belief that they will end up on an appropriate plane on their own). Indeed, planars can abandon a power and turn to a new one, with no greater likelihood of divine retribution, though I would not presume to speak for the servants or other passionate followers of a power.

The Powers

Religion and belief are intertwined concepts on the face of the Outer Planes. The planes are shaped by belief, and religion is a powerful tool in the creation of belief. But the deities themselves reside within the planes and are shaped by them in turn. Did the powers create the multiverse, or the multiverse create the powers? To listen to the myths of mortals, and knowing the influence of belief - it does raise the question, does it not? Then there are the exceptions; the Athar - amusing god defiers that they are - obtain their own clerical gifts, and the Ciphers claim to have contacted something beyond the senses of a power as well. But there can be no doubt that deities make their homes here. Tiamat in Baator, Bahamut at the foot of Mount Celestia, old Chronopsis in the Outlands, the Greek pantheon upon Mt. Olympus, or the entire Celestial Bureaucracy if that is your inclination.

Gods on the planes command much power. Within their own domains - their homes you may call it - they are supreme. They may deny one entrance, remove the ground beneath your feet, and destroy you in a moment for your impertinence. Many primes, on their first trip to the planes, expect that they can simply go to the realm of a particular god, knock on the front door, and be invited in for tea and learn the mysteries of the cosmos. While there are some who may be so lighthearted as to share a drink with a worshipper in the morning, the vast majority are far far too busy to do so. The downcast look on the face of primes when they discover that their power has no time for them is both heartbreaking and amusing. The gods are no more accessible here than they were back home. While their realms are here and may be visited, the powers themselves make themselves scarce, and it's probably better that way. They are beyond mortals and do not appear without urgent cause, and even then they must severely limit themselves, for the sight of a deity (and some truly powerful exemplar) is enough to kill. One instead deals with the petitioners, proxies, and other attendants of the deities who act on their behalf.

It can be quite a risky business, searching for a god. But then, you are obviously brave enough to seek audience with one such as I. A select few of the truly worthy may receive the honor of facing a god, but rarely does it come without giving up something in return.

Malkan

Magic and Psionics

[Editor's note: The githzerai Malkan grudgingly invited us into his walking tower to talk briefly about the mystic arts (both external and internal), a subject he has no small experience with. During our meeting, his tower tromped across the Outlands constantly. Malkan was periodically

distracted, as he peered out his study window, sometimes looking for the position of the Spire, but sometimes scanning the horizon for something. There seemed to be a sigh of relief when whatever he was looking out for failed to appear.]

Watch where you sit, blast your eyes! You almost knocked over that alembic. Think you that it be easy to balance laboratory glassware in a walking tower? Nay, it is not, berk, 'tis a most delicate art indeed, and your thundering big self almost knocked it all down. Come into my home and treat my things so shoddy, will you? All right, all right, so you didn't mean no harm. Neither does the Negative Energy Plane when it grinds your soul to less than dust. But fine, fine, just see you be careful, or I'll turn you into a puddle of ooze and keep your *mimir* for my notebook. All right, have you settled yourself down? Fine, fine. So, you wish me to prattle on about magic. Ah, and the psionic arts, too. Very well, to begin, the magical arts and the powers of the mind are common throughout the planes. And though many possess some magical skills, whether from rigorous study or their own innate abilities, magic still generates a fine amount of wonder in the ordinary, thronging berks.

While some bloods like to present a jaded, cynical persona, many are still as taken aback by such abilities as any clueless prime. But generally speaking, we are no more feared or distrusted than anyone else; we aren't burnt at the stake or regulated against as we are on some paranoid prime worlds (though some realms are less tolerant than others, to be sure). We also don't get nearly enough respect, at least no more than a basher who's equally as good with a blade or pretty words. Well, the spellcasters who commune with the divine get more notice, perhaps. With the realms of the powers themselves sitting close by, divine spellslingers get shown respect, awe, and fear, depending on the religious affiliations of whoever they're talking to.

If you're looking for a good, solid source for arcane knowledge in the multiverse, talk to the Guvners; many mages do, and have come to share their interpretation of arcane magic. Because of that, the wide belief is that magic is simply an underlying system of rules and laws that alter the normal order of reality. There's indeed quite a bit of truth in that, and it certainly makes it easier to get things done. Magical talent may be an individual matter, but those who can learn magic are not inherently special. Likewise, while the deities of magic may hold more sway over it than anyone else, they are neither the source nor the arbiters of magical power. Educated planars don't believe in the Weave that those from the prime world Toril harp on about, and they think less of the dependency of spellslingers from worlds like Athas and Krynn on natural channels, such as the moons, useless constrictions contrived by ignorant primes that they are. Why make extra trouble when there's enough to be found on the planes?

Likewise, psionic powers are considered by most to be another form of arcane magic; it works differently than arcane or divine magic, but the results are similar enough. The fact that magic and psionics interact to a certain extent only reinforces this notion. Thus, a lot of berks confuse psionics with arcane spellcasters, but bloods know the difference. Any cutter taking the time to really understand how psionics operate sees such manifesters in a completely new light; the ability to affect the multiverse by will alone reminds them of how belief shapes the multiverse, rightly enough. Some even hold the theory that psionics are the next step in mastering the natural ability all beings have to shape reality to some degree. The Astral Plane in particular is a likely place to run into planars who have psionic powers, both those with naturally occurring abilities and those who make the study of the powers of the mind their life's work. That plane is able to be molded by the thoughts of cutters skilled in psionics. Too bad that the plane's lousy with the vile githyanki; if you want to manipulate the fabric of a plane, go to Limbo. My people may not be the friendliest out there, I'll admit, but we're a damn sight better than our twisted cousins.

And there be the basic chant, and I could go on even further, but I know most of your listeners will be unable to keep up with me, so I shan't waste my breath.

Since the Weave extends to the planes, then Mystra controls all planar magic!

Nope. When using prime characters from different Campaign Settings there are bound to be some inconsistencies with how magic functions, particularly with worlds where magic has unique restrictions and practices. How such magic works on the planes is up to the DM, but as a default rule magic should function normally so long as the spellcaster follows the normal system of magic for their world. This does not mean other people need follow the same system or placate the same gods, which may invite all sorts of questions as to the nature of magic, how their magic functions, and whether the way the characters were taught magic is even necessary. Players are encouraged to take such opportunities to explore their own paradigm of magic and use it as a path to evolve their characters.

Walliford Goldenwrench

Technology

[Editor's note: The gnome Walliford Goldenwrench of Tvashtri's Workshop was one of our most hospitable hosts, as well as being a well of wisdom when it comes to the industrious arts.]

Ah, you wanna know about all the devices the planes have to offer a cutter, eh? 'Suppose I'm as good as any to ask, seeing as how I know my way around a workshop, and am always on the lookout for new gadgets and techniques. Have yourself a seat and rest, whiles I pontificate on the many technological wonders of the planes.

Now, the technological knowledge of planar society ain't much different than what a body finds on prime worlds like Toril or Oerth. However, the staggering amount of cultures that make their homes on the planes bring with them an equally staggering variety of devices, tools, and implements. Even I'm continuously struck dumb by the amazing things planars come up with. In some realms there live craftsmen, tinkers, and architects whose skills simply shame their Clueless cousins. It's not just that they might have technology decades before it reaches the primes, they often have several life spans to master a trade, making prime masterwork items look like trinkets. Magic can also help create and power spectacular devices, and the followers of the powers of invention are always coming up with something unique, though such wonders may never be replicated again. Which is too bad, I suppose, but sometimes a thing's singular beauty is its best quality, Tvashtri knows.

Some places appear at first glance to have a much higher level of technology than can be found on prime worlds, but the dark of it is that magic and divine power are often needed to run things. Even lawful Mechanus, with its gears, modrons, inevitables, and other wondrous devices, is fueled by supernatural power. Then again, perhaps the dark of it really is that these marvels of science function because of the belief put into their design and the powers that uphold such laws. Whatever principles keep it going, it's all the same to most planewalkers. Sure, someone like me is always curious about the hows and whys of such things, but I hope I never do lann the dark of it all. Much better to retain a bit of mystery, I says, then to rip the veil away altogether.

Of course, there are also plenty of races out there without much in their brain-boxes, or little interest in working with tools. Then there are realms that seem a bit backwards, like the home of the Olympian pantheon, or the lands of tribal powers. The bashers there aren't leatherheads, though. Certainly, they could trade for iron weapons, or learn to forge themselves. Their own ideas of culture keep them using archaic tools, though. And if Zeus

wanted his petitioners to have steel and clocks, he'd give 'em those things. Best not to get your patron piked off, berk, or mess with the edicts of another over their followers for that matter. And as hard as it may be to believe, there are cultures out there that don't have much contact with others, hiding out on the Inner Planes or wandering the distant expanses of other planes. Scrounging for what materials they can, and rarely in a position to learn from others, such folk often remain in a comparatively primitive state. But that might be the point, after all.

PLANAR SOCIETY

The word that truly defines planar society is diversity. Unlike the view of many primes that each plane is isolated and secluded from the others, all planes interact with one another regularly, and travel between them is a normal part of life. Moreover, every race in existence can be found on the planes; all of their different cultures come together in the planar cities, developing one of the most mixed, unusual, and exotic societies possible. Fey live next door to half-dragons, celestials drink in taverns with githzerai, dwarves work the forges next to elven merchants. Every race contributes a part of their society to that of the planes, and in the process gains a little something from the way of life of other races. This diversity teaches skills and ideas that one could not normally learn from their own people, and at the same time spreads racial tolerance on a level that many prime cities fail to achieve.

Ezzekial Tarash

[Editor's note: Ezzekial Tarash was an obvious choice speak with regarding planar society, as one who has experienced the highest pinnacles and the lowest nadirs. Was a time when the bright and shining aasimar (skin like burnished gold, I heard one lady admiringly put it) lived a life of elegance and comfort. What made him give all that up to tend to the dregs and castoffs of society is unknown to us, but one can occasionally see a glint of that gold beneath the grime and despair.]

You ask me of planar society? Well, I suppose I can speak of such things. I can spare some brief moments, but I have much work ahead of me before I sleep tonight. There are the starving to fed and the naked to be clothed. Forgive me, for while I understand the importance of knowledge, sometimes we must start with the basics. Yes, in my youth I flew as high in planar society as those of my father's bloodline do in the clouds above the Upper Planes. But know this: Not all who fall are pushed. There came a time when I could not bear to look on the suffering below me any longer. There are those who call me barmy for doing so, and not least because I have worn the badge of the Bleak Cabal. But I have walked with the high and the low, and have seen all walks of life in my time, and understood something of them all.

Professions

Throughout the planes, communities must be self-sufficient. If they do not have the resources under their direct control, they know where to get them, by barter or force. Within their communities, they are bound to have members who follow the common trades, such as blacksmithing, scribing, animal husbandry, religious service, and combat training. More exotic professions, those that are not as essential to the most basic community, such as alchemists, lawyers, and wizards, are still likely to be found in most regions unless the inhabitants have a particular dislike of them. Large cities, even on planes with extraordinary characteristics, tend to draw specialists from a wide variety of fields, making even exotic arts and crafts available to those who know how to find them.

While trade specialists may demand quite a bit more jink than the average trade house, it is usually easy to start a business even in the most competitive areas simply by knowing people (and in many cases, setting up shop where useful portals are). And there's normally open

positions among the town's defenders, whether they be the local adventuring party or an organized militia. Of course it'd be impossible to break down every burg's society, but there are some fields that are relatively universal.

Marila Tendershoot

Merchants

[Editor's note: The halfling Marila Tendershoot gave us a bit of information regarding her profession (or *former* profession, as it were). Anyone who spends time with her will certainly be impressed by her undamped spirit. We had meant to speak with her further for the Coin and Commerce section, but she had some other engagement to get to, and we were unable to reschedule another interview.]

Oh, you want to talk, eh? I suppose I'm not doing anything better right now, though why you'd want to talk about the trader's life with a failure like me is, I don't know. Yeah, that's right — a failure. Sure, not too long ago, I was riding high, with more coins than my best accountant could keep track of. I moved goods back and forth across the planes, and made a good living at it. Especially on the produce from Green Fields, friend. No one grows juicier fruits and veggies than the halflings. Then that damned Planar Trade Consortium tried to muscle in on it all, and I told them to pike it. Well, maybe I should've just sold my business to 'em, 'cause they took it anyway. It burns me something fierce to see the farmers of Green Fields selling to those knights of the post. It's a shame when you can't even trust your own kind. Ah well, I suppose that's business. Enough of my complainin'. I'll get back in the game soon enough, believe me. You haven't seen the last of this little lady. So, anyway, let me give you the benefit of my knowledge.

Trade is truly what keeps the cogs of planar society turning. As much as regional rulers or highups may try to deny it, without merchants the planes would surely grind to a halt. Indeed, most of Sigil's golden lords have made their fortunes entirely on trafficking commerce, and even those who didn't can more often than not trace inherited wealth back to a merchant in the family. Trade is the lifeblood of the planes; it's why Planar Trade, the common language used by most planar races, was developed. It keeps the rich rich and entire planar cities running.

As you should expect then, the merchant profession is one of the most widespread on the planes, with everyone wantin' a piece of the action, if only they can grab hold. And why not, when merchants have so much power and influence? If all trade with the City of Doors stopped (and it has before, basher), the inhabitants would starve, as food production is almost impossible there. Because of that important fact, even the simplest, most seemingly inconsequential merchant is part of a larger web of trade that keeps the planes, as they are today, intact. And that means competition. With all the wealth and power that a cutter can grab with trade, and with larger organizations selfishly guarding routes and portals, they're bound to cross swords, sometimes literally. I tell you this, at times the conflicts between traders rival that expected of the powers themselves. Get out of the way if you're smart, berk.

Well, as important as trade is, some places are less welcoming to merchants than others. Visitors to Curst have a tough time leaving again; the gate guards interrogate all who try to leave about their reasons for doing so to determine who gets to go. The githzerai ain't warm to strangers; visitors to their homes in Limbo have to stay in the foreign districts, and can only travel elsewhere with a guide. Their cousins, the githyanki, are even less friendly, but some astral fortresses have foreign districts for those times when they'd rather parlay than take by force. The demon lord Graz'zt is more welcoming of merchants than most of his kind, even mercilessly punishing those who harm traders. But then, the goristro at the gate makes traders hand over the better part of their profits on exiting. But sometimes a raw deal is better than no deal at all, so figure out your margin and take what you can.

Ezzekial Tarash

Clergy

The planes are the homes of the powers themselves, the deific beings worshiped by the inhabitants of the multiverse, sometimes as the almighty creators of not only life, but of existence itself. The closest servants of these divine figures travel the planes, from the darkest, most depraved fiends of the Lower Planes, to the angelic proxies of the Upper Planar deities. In the Outer Planes, the powers have a great deal of control over the planes' terrain and properties; within their own realms, their whims are absolute. While most primes would think that the Great Wheel is the place where the gods are most strongly supported, and although it is true that the powers' closest servants dwell here, the attitude of the average planar is somewhat different.

In general, the gods and their followers are treated with a certain level of awe and suspicion by most of the inhabitants of the planes. Maybe it's the simple fact that a wrong word in the wrong place can result in an unpleasant demise at the hands of a proxy, but it may be because in a place where *everything* is possible, the powers aren't as mystifying. Yes, they are immensely powerful, and many still pay lip service to them, but when living on a plane that the gods actually inhabit, their limitations become all too obvious in time. In the end, though the gods may assist us, we are the ones who make our destiny. The choices are ours, to make of this present life what we will. That is what morality is for, not for fear of what awaits us when we're dead.

The two most obvious cases of the powers' apparent weakness are Sigil and the Spire. The Lady of Pain has barred all powers from Sigil, and none have succeeded in coming close to taking the city from Her (the name of the Maimed God is actively avoided in polite conversation in, and around those from, Sigil). The second location, the Spire, appears to drain all magical and deific powers the closer one travels to its base, much to the discomfort of the powers, who actively avoid going there if it can be helped, though they are known to meet there on occasion, since it provides a truly neutral ground.

Despite the apparent lack of love for the powers, some of the most majestic and awe-inspiring temples have been constructed on planar territory. It is indeed the case that we love our gods passionately still. The clergy of the planes have a level of devotion that puts the Prime to shame, another affect of the double-edged sword that is the powers' proximity. Clerics and priests are still shown an obvious level of respect when near, though at the same time many a peery glance is thrown their way. As for the common planar, rather than worshipping a deity for their claim of creating the cosmos, bashers choose their faith based on the beliefs the deity upholds and how its followers go about living their cause.

Adventuring

Adventuring on the planes is less a chosen profession, and more a part of life for most planars. Any extended travel across the planes could be regarded by a prime as an extraordinary adventure on par with the strange occurrences described in legend, as battles with fiends or even stranger creatures are common even on minor journeys. As a result, almost all planar inhabitants have some training in adventuring, including those who would prefer sticking to their own homes. My own past includes training in such, though perhaps my skills are rusty now that I have dedicated myself to the needs of others.

Those that do decide to take up adventuring fulltime are known as planewalkers. Planewalkers devote their lives to exploring the planes for a variety of reasons, whether it be for a cause, personal enlightenment, wealth, or in an attempt to discover as much as they can about the planes. A planewalker is widely versed in the lore of the planes, and must learn about the

conditions and effects of each plane if they are to survive for long. As such, those that survive tend to gain a large amount of respect from common folk.

Adventuring Companies/Guilds

The adventuring companies and guilds of the planes are almost limitless in numbers. Ranging from the likes of the Illuminated, a now deceased group of prime mercenaries based around the former gate-town Plague-mort, to influential and powerful groups such as the Planewalker's Guild. Most adventuring companies are simply an unofficial gathering of like-minded individuals who realize that together they stand a better chance of surviving the hazards of life on the planes. Such groups often hire themselves out as mercenaries in between adventures, though many find the restrictions of long-term contract work too limiting.

Other adventuring groups are contractually bound to larger organizations for greater periods of time. For example, the ruling council of the City of Glass on the Elemental Plane of Water regularly sponsors adventuring groups to patrol the waters surrounding the city, supplementing the official guards. Similarly, some groups may also work under the patronage of sects or even one of the factions. Sects from the Planarists to the Godslayers have been known to use adventuring groups to further their goals, and several parties are known to have the favor of the factions such as the Mind's Eye or Sons of Mercy.

Mercenaries

Mercenary work is a near integral part of planar society, particularly around the major planar cities. Often the line between adventurers and mercenaries is hazy, as guarding supplies or escorting employers across the planes is probably the easiest way to gain prestige, a bit of jink, and see some of the planes while you're at it. Mercenaries are regularly employed to guard the numerous trade caravans as they trail from one city to another, and considering the khaasta raiders of the Outlands, the tanar'ri hunting groups of the Abyss, and the barbarian war parties of Ysgard, it is understandable that a large proportion of spending by traders is in securing protection for their wares. That is sometimes the way of things: holding on to what you have, from those who would steal or kill for it. A miserable state of affairs, to say the least.

Though many mercenaries work in small teams, there are still several large-scale groups dedicated to mercenary work throughout the planes, foremost of these being the Sodkillers. If you have anything needing to be done, no matter how dubious, you can guarantee there is a Sodkiller willing to do it, for the right price of course. Although Sodkillers operate primarily in Sigil, under the guise of the Minders Guild, it is well known that their organization spreads further, and it is not uncommon to find them operating headquarters on most planes (though they are generally unpopular amongst inhabitants of the Upper Planes).

Aside from the Sellswords, the yugoloth are the most well-known mercenaries for their integral part in the Blood War. While the baatezu and tanar'ri are their most popular clientele, they're willing to sell their services to anyone that catches their interest. Chant has it that a hundred gold is the standard rate, with an extra ten thousand to keep them from betraying you in the next few days. Not that they take any job they can't work to their advantage anyways. Always be peery of whom you deal with, for there are many out there who will think nothing of bobbing you.

Social Class

Unfortunately, social class on the planes is even more of a factor than on the Prime. The rich are wealthy beyond imagination, capable of buying entire prime worlds, requiring extensive teams of clerks simply to keep record of their ever-expanding wealth. The poorest are the

lowest of the low, miserable wretches who are not even regarded as sentient by the aloof, arrogant nobility, their existences so far removed from each other. Despite outward appearances, physical wealth is not all that defines the social hierarchy of the planes, but influence as well. Although wealth is almost always a product of influence, the nobility have so much money available to them that it becomes meaningless. As a result, control of those around you is the social 'currency' of the planes, and it is what truly separates the nobility from those beneath them.

Peasantry

In the Upper Planes, peasants usually live reasonably enjoyable, yet simple lives. They work the fields, tend to flocks, or work as simple craftsmen. Though their understanding of the workings of the planes would be considered highly advanced by prime terms, they generally know little of the hidden politics of the planes, and most live out reasonably normal and peaceful lives. This existence is not perfect, but it has a quiet beauty about it. But the poor of the Lower Planes are not nearly so lucky. Most regard their existence as a living hell, the lucky forced into slavery by their fiendish lords, the less fortunate brutally slaughtered for entertainment. Many are reduced to an animalistic state simply to survive; those that do survive sport horrific physical and mental scars.

It is far harder to define a rule of how the cities of the Border and Inner Planes treat their peasantry, depending mostly on the attitudes of the city rulers and nobility. For example, the genie cities of the Elemental Planes actively encourage slavery, though such workers lead much more humane lives than their counterparts on the Lower Planes.

Working Class

The working class usually makes up the ranks of the trained craftsmen on the Upper Planes, such as blacksmiths or carpenters. The boundaries between working class and the peasantry are far less defined on the Upper Planes, as suffering is kept to a minimum. On the Lower Planes, the working class lives a slightly better life than that of a slave, as at least the illusion of freedom is maintained. Although a member of this class may think they have control of their life, they are usually subtly manipulated by their superiors to some other end.

In most other areas of the planes members of the working class maintain similar roles; they are usually the owners of small properties, such as shops or taverns, and their wealth generally provides their children with a reasonable level of education. The life of a working class citizen of the planes is generally decent by planar standards, though they usually know, and have seen, much more of the planes than a prime ever will in a lifetime. And of course, those in this class often strive to ascend to greater heights through their work or through manipulation. Some indeed make it, though many others fall from their precarious position to one even lower.

Nobility

The planar nobility live their lives in the lap of luxury, expending their wealth in grand displays of power and affluence. No expenses are spared, and nobles are pampered, waited on hand and foot by the hundreds of servants who fulfill their every desire. This is the aristocracy of the planes, their skill at manipulation and sheer wealth making almost anything possible for them to accomplish. It is all so miserably hollow, but so enticing. Who would not want to live in this fashion? Why live in drudgery and filth when you can buy and sell your lesser? The lifestyle of a noble may seem serene and blissful to those beneath them, but in truth, they are locked in a constant war of subtlety with their competitors. As money has little value to members of this class, pure power is what drives them. The nobility are ruthless in their manipulation of the lower classes to harm and discredit competitors, knowing that if they ever make a mistake their enemies will tear them down before they even realize what has happened. And that's just

in the Cage. I have seen them at their worst, for once I was one of them. Most will never realize the horrors they visit on others so easily, or the emptiness in their own souls.

Truth is, the nobility of the planes can vary just as much as any other class, but all in all most are feared and hated. While some kings and lords of the Upper Planes might rule openly with justice and goodwill, most are too removed from their people for either side to understand or respect the other.

Wealth and Privilege

Wealth and privilege go hand-in-hand on the planes; those who have it can do almost anything, while those who don't are manipulated by those above them. The lower classes generally defer to the nobility, as on most prime worlds, though there is much more potential to move between the ranks of society than on the Prime. The planes are an infinite place where anything can happen, and there is many a tale of a simple peasant who managed to crawl their way up to the ranks of the aristocracy. Generally there are far more opportunities available to people, with most of the working class and some of the peasantry deciding to make their own path and becoming planewalkers of a sort. This often sounds easier than it is, and many will never look up from the dirt in front of them.

Education

The form of education that a young planar receives is almost entirely based on the plane on which they grow up and the class to which they belong. On the lawful planes, an education system open to all classes is far more likely, particularly on good-aligned planes such as Arcadia. The evil-aligned lawful planes like Baator are much less likely to have an established system for education, the poor being abandoned to a life of ignorance, while the rich nobles employ the best tutors for their children at great expense.

On the planes of Chaos, a defined education system is almost unheard of. Most learn purely from the instruction of their parents or guardians, and although educated individuals such as spellcasters dwell on the chaotic planes no less than on the lawful ones, the chances are that most education will be far more practical and applicable to everyday life, rather than subtle, cerebral pursuits. Education on good-aligned chaotic planes is usually limited to the knowledge of the parents, who generally teach a craft that has been in their family for generations, such as farming in the case of Arborea, or the skills of a warrior on Ysgard. The chaotic Lower Planes often have a fend-for-yourself attitude, with only the bare essentials on survival being taught to any but the most powerful of nobles.

The Outlands generally follow no specific pattern, the levels and style of education often being based around that of the nearest gate-town and its corresponding plane. Although this pattern generally applies, there are still a few exceptions. The settlements in Thoth's estate are known for a much higher level of education than surrounding realms, mainly due to Thoth's interest in knowledge and therefore education. The fact that the Great Library is located at the heart of Thoth's estate also facilitates education in the area greatly.

The Inner Planes are usually considered far more remote than the Outer Planes, and so many assume that the inhabitants are much less knowledgeable. This is most likely inaccurate, as although these planes are indeed remote and hazardous, the populations are usually congregated into tight, closely-knit clusters. As a result of this close attitude, education is as much as not a community-based issue.

Although standards of education vary drastically, the type of knowledge that a cutter will have is dramatically different from their counterparts on the Prime. The clearest case of this is the issue of planar lore. Information such as planar cosmology is common knowledge, with most

children being taught topics as soon as they can speak, which even a prime archmage may not fully understand. Every planar understands the difference between a gate, a vortex, or an astral conduit, which does not help the image of primes, who seem to find even the simplest of planar concepts challenging to comprehend.

Linguistic skills are also common in planar cities. Considering the near infinite number of life forms found throughout the planes, it is the norm to have a good understanding of several planar tongues, from the whispering, wind-like qualities of Auran, to the runic symbolism of Dabic Rebus, even if an individual is physically incapable of actually speaking the language. While on a prime world the mere notion of a commoner understanding the infernal language of Baator could spark suspicions of a fiend-worshipping cult, on the planes few would bat an eyelid, the chances even being that it is the commoner's first language.

Libraries and Other Sources

The planes are known to house some of the most expansive houses of learning, many of which are even spoken of in legends on distant prime worlds, such as the Great Library of Thebestys or Boccob's Library of Lore. While many such structures exist, libraries are not usually seen as a vital institution in most planar cities, and although at least one will undoubtedly exist there, most knowledge is actually taught by word of mouth. Practically any piece of information will filter to a planar city in time, so it is often a lot less work to simply attend a local tavern and listen to what newcomers have to say rather than spend hours poring through old tomes and manuscripts. Maybe you will learn what you look for, maybe you won't, but either way you're normally guaranteed an eye-opening tale or two, just when you think you've seen all that the planes can throw at you.

Health and Living

As with everything else, health and living standards are entirely based upon social class on the planes. The rich have access to the most powerful forms of healing, meaning that the chances are that they will only die from old age, and considering the lifespan of some of the planar races, such lives can span several centuries or millenia. The poor suffer for their lack of wealth and opportunity, and it is neither a happy nor a long life for most of them. Those who live in the most impoverished parts of planar cities often have no healthcare available to them whatsoever. Even the slightest illness can seal the fate of a peasant, and what would be seen as a simple annoyance to the upper classes could easily be life-threatening with the squalor that some are forced to live in. There are those of us who do what they can, but we are few in number, and the ranks of the poor so vast.

Of course, clerics and druids have a part in the issue of health on the planes. In the Upper Planes, clerical healing is much more commonly available for the less privileged classes, as the priests try to do the best for the community. As a result the health of the inhabitants of the poorer societies of such planes is overall of a higher level than it would be elsewhere. By contrast, on the Lower Planes only the powerful have any access to magical healing, and considering the often lethal conditions of planes such as the Abyss, few who cannot afford healing do not show the scars of their suffering.

Another issue that must be taken into account when considering health on the planes is the fact that many planar creatures have a physiological makeup that would be completely alien to most prime worlds. Beings such as celestials are considerably more resilient to the cold than a human, while gehreleths are known to have natural immunities to poisons. Unlike on the Prime, such creatures are as accepted in the society of most planar cities as the 'common' races, and in many cases are actually regarded with higher levels of respect. This means that medical training is a much more complicated field, but the knowledge gained from studying such races always pays itself off.

Politics

And of course there are the political wranglings of planar society. Political wars are waged between those of differing beliefs, using every advantage possible, in a silent conflict with unimaginable consequences. As a result of carefully planned strategies, the very planar layers can shift from one plane to another, dead gods can be reborn, and demon lords can be replaced by the power of raw belief.

The most obvious conflicts are those of the gods themselves, as good and evil, lawful and chaotic, or simply those of opposing ideologies plot against one another, in their attempts to gain supporters to bolster their power. These are often epic conflicts spanning over many mortal lifetimes, as time has little meaning to an immortal. Mortals may or may not realize it when they are being made part of some grander scheme, but most can at least point on a couple of significant events in their lifetime.

The next layer of political conflict on the planes is the plans of the near-godlike beings, such as the slaad lords and archfiends, and their exemplar servants. The fiends are constantly locked in their genocidal Blood War, devils against demons, and yugoloths working for the highest bidder. The Baatorian Lords of the Nine and the Demon Princes watch over this eternal conflict, using every advantage to sway the war to their side, while making sure they personally benefit as much as possible. At the same time the celestials battle all forces of evil, led by such powerful figures as the rulers of the guardinals known as the Five Companions.

But the political conflicts of mortals often have more of an immediate effect. The factions have been at the center of planar politics for some, no less since they have been exiled from Sigil. Many of us remain here, but no longer hold the power we once did, which is hardly a bad thing. The members of what was once the Bleak Cabal still administer to the less fortunate, and gladly welcome the aid of others, even if they do not share our specific beliefs. But the wind seems to be changing. Many have seen signs that a conflict that will make Sigil's Faction War look like a child's squabble could be slowly brewing.

CØIN AND CØMMERCE

Taras Habbinger

[Editor's note: Our first contributor, Taras Habbinger of the Merkhant sect, hails from the gate-town of Glorium where he operates a trading house dealing in most everything under the sun; so he claims. He also claimed repeatedly that 'regardless of the rumors, he did not under any circumstances work in the employ of Zadara the Titan. I won't comment on that, nor would the Titan.]

Trade is the grease that keeps the Great Ring spinning, my friend. You wouldn't want everything to come to a dead stop, now would you? The planes may be infinite and bursting with possibility, but one of the most surprising things to newcomers is how similar they are to home in the end. Some Clueless find this fact reassuring, while others have never seen anything so depressing. To come to the legendary homes of their gods and to find us same greedy merchants and the same poor berks straining their backs in the mines and fields is downright heartbreaking to them. These folks are especially dismayed by the rumors of a realm in Olympus where the sun never sets; the leatherheads there use the extra time sweating in their fields, since they no longer need to sleep.

Me? I like it all the same. So long as the coin keeps flowing the scenery doesn't much matter. Trade at least has common meaning wherever you are and the fact that it and the flow of coin is seemingly ubiquitous across the planes speaks to me of a deeper meaning to it all.

Why do the peoples of the planes still work and buy things in the lands of plenty? Well, one thing to note is that although the planes are infinite, that don't mean that all pieces of the pie are equal. Most berks still have to carve out their own niche, and there's often someone else more than happy to bob you for it, or bust your head in and grab it. Every profession a body's ever heard of can be found in the planes, though many of them have adapted to the different conditions of the planes. There are ample opportunities for the smart and the brave to make something of themselves; luck doesn't hurt, either.

Aldreth Imshenviir

Trade

[Editor's Note: Our next contributor is one I was surprised to have spoken to us, not that he, or she, or it, actually spoke. A mercane, Aldreth Imshenviir of House Imshenviir, formerly operating within the 'Astromundi cluster' and currently working in Tradegate, he spoke to us by telepathy rather than actual words. However, that aside, his information here and elsewhere was well said.]

Traders, peddlers, and powerful merchants ply the portals of the Great Road, sail the rivers of the Styx and Oceanus, and even skip between the spheres of the prime material, selling and buying the fruits of the planes. In the Outlands, running into strangers usually means coming across a caravan. Some trade routes are jealously guarded, since they usually make use of portals to circumvent large swathes of land and barriers, both natural and unnatural. However the major ones are used by any who care to, though squabbles and fighting are not unknown.

Trade is vitally important to some areas. On the Ethereal Plane, most materials need to be brought in from elsewhere. Sigil's portals bring much of what it needs; for example, very little food is grown there. Some things are traded across the planes because they're desired, rather than needed, and that is where profit hangs heavily in the air, and on the palm. Sometimes a planar wants a little piece of home. Others have developed a taste for exotic fare from fields beyond the ones they know.

Burgs like Sigil and Tradegate see goods from all over the Great Ring, and they boast some of the finest marketplaces anywhere, again though I only know the former my reputation. The joyous sound of haggling and merchants hawking their wares in the bazaars of those cities fill the air. Sigil's portals make it a natural place for trade, while Tradegate has dedicated its existence to the glory of the deal. Plenty of other towns have set themselves up in favorable locations, either along the Great Road or the planar pathways, or in remote areas where they can take advantage of the lack of competition. The Madhouse in Pandemonium isn't known for great craftsmen or resources; but for those souls who have no other options, the cast-off goods that accumulate there will suffice, though the prices and availability are always changing.

No single group controls trade in the planes; there's just too much to be had. Certain groups do better at it than others, though. The Free League doesn't control the bazaars in Sigil and Tradegate outright, but they have a strong presence in both, and are often relied upon to help resolve disputes. The Fated have always numbered a fair amount of traders in their faction. Many of them have worked to secure certain portals for the use of the Takers. Other faction members have begun hiring themselves out as guides and bodyguards for caravans of all sorts. The Merkhant sect is devoted to making money; they're interested in trade as a means to an end, the accumulation of vast wealth. They hate spending money to make money, but realize it's needed sometimes. As for my own kind, we're a race of itinerant merchants, forever wandering the planes. We're arrangers and speculators rather than manufacturers or the

purveyors of bulk goods. Of course since we're both good at what we do, and we don't speak much outside of our own kind a fair bit of speculation arises about us. Some speculate that perhaps we're cursed, or in the service of a power of trading. Others whisper about some dark secret behind us and our reluctance to enter the City of Doors, or other scree relating to our trade between the spheres of the prime in wildspace. I won't comment on those rumors here one-way or the other. But continuing on, the Planar Trade Consortium has been involved in many of the important deals of the last few years, as they work to become the preeminent merchant coster in the planes and they have moved heavily into Tradegate in the past few years; some trouble with Sigil's portals or so I hear.

Most of these groups have been involved in shady deals at one time or another, though the Indeps are regarded as decent enough cutters most of the time, and my own people are nothing if not reliable, rumors aside.

Arvateth Pash'mat

Coinage

[Editor's note: an Asura, Arvateth Pash'mat, in the employ of an obscure power of luck and pride brings us this next short section on wages for the common berk. His exact line or employ he wouldn't say, but given his dealings with the Asura Koe in Sigil, I think it rather obvious.]

Many transactions across the planes are made with coin, just as they are in the Prime Material Plane. Especially in the burgs that see a lot of traffic, exchange rates tend to be fair: a gold piece is a gold piece, no matter its origin. As long as the coin itself isn't literally tainted, most merchants and innkeepers aren't that choosy. But this really only applies to platinum, gold, and silver coins. Many places refuse to take copper coins (though they tend to be accepted by bronze-working societies like Olympus and Marduk). Other metals like tin and steel are frowned upon, but you might be able to pass them off to a goblin in Acheron, much to the general lament of primes from Krynn. Exotic coins like electrum may impress collectors, but rarely merchants.

People in some areas don't care about coins, so barter or service is required to complete a deal. Azuth's realm sells magical items, but the price is usually some form of service or quest, deeds being more valued than commodities, and usually a lesson is involved in the payment. In the Golden Hills, the gnomish realm of Bytopia, the petitioners offer healing and places to stay to good folk, but require bashers to work it off, by woodcutting and mining, or going on an adventure, if they're that type. The gate-town of Plague-Mort welcomes visitors, but barter is the common mode of transaction, with indentured servitude the most favored currency unfortunately. Istvarhan, the nomadic town on the cubes of Acheron, uses similar transactions. Glitterhell, the realm of Abbathor, dwarven god of greed, is a place where nothing may be bought. The denizens have no coins, for those are all in Abbathor's treasure hoards, as are all fine items. His subjects must barter what little they have.

In the Lower Planes, larvae are used as currency, those evil souls that sprout like weeds from the poisoned soil of the planes themselves. They both grow from and feed their native planes, and they can serve as money, food, and raw recruits for the Blood War. On the Plain of Infinite Portals, the first layer of the Abyss, weapons and rations not fit for most palates can be purchased, and slaves, weapons, magic, and blood are the preferred method of payment. It all supports the war effort, you see. Coins are good for the merchants who tramp through the Abyss in their heavily guarded caravans, selling anvils, whetstones, and other war materials. But sometimes they just take what they want. The baatezu are more interested in having someone in their debt than closing a quick and easy deal, as those unfortunates who have dealt with them may often attest. They don't need to buy things; their masters provide for their needs. But they use gems as currency with other races, though they prefer larvae, magic, knowledge, and favors. If you want to deal with a night hag, it's much the same; they want knowledge, magic, and spirits. They can get their own larvae easily enough, though. Similar to

the Hags the 'loths have no need or desire for larvae either, unlike the other two fiend races they seem to have little need of them, and when they do they don't have to look far to find them. The yugoloths tend to be more interested in selling than in buying, and most of their lesser castes are rented wholesale as mercenaries and fodder for the hunger of the Blood War. Only a desperate or foolish man deals with the fiends, but alas, there are necessary evils in this world that we can only deal with and minimize but perhaps not eliminate.

Each cutter needs to figure out the price he or she is willing to pay. Some of the darker entities out there charge a mighty high price. You can always get more coins; losing a portion of your mind to the god of the illithid in exchange for its secrets, or your soul to a greedy shadow-fiend, are both more permanent deals.

Aldreth Imshenviir

Labor

The common laborer toils on the Outer Planes much like his or her counterpart on the Prime. For whatever reason, the crops rarely grow themselves. The grain may be better than that found in the mortal realms (though sometimes it's worse, depending on your tastes), but it still took some poor berk to sow and reap it. Same goes for building things, or carving them, or whatever. Stuff doesn't just appear. Well, sometimes it does, depending on where you are.

Many laborers are petitioners, doing service to their powers in the hopes of merging with the realm they've toiled on. Petitioners do all that work because they don't know any better. Occasionally, mortals have to do physical labor as well. Sometimes they're forced to, and sometimes they do it just to get by. Those mortals who resort to making a living off of physical labor usually do so in a city outside of the gods' realms. The powers already have a work force, and mortals usually feel more comfortable around other mortals, even if that means living in squalor.

Now, from what I've been told by associates, Sigil can't rely on petitioners, though it does have the dabus to take care of general maintenance. I've never been to Sigil you see, but that's... beside the point. The gate-towns that spring up near the portals from the Outlands to various Outer Planes don't have petitioners or dabus; some mortal sod has to clean the gutters and replace the cobblestones. There are other burgs amongst the planes in the same situation.

Many people are born into their positions, inheriting their lot in life from their parents. If pappy was a rat catcher, don't expect to be a lawyer when you grow up. In a lot of places, children should expect to learn their parents' trade around puberty. This will become their sole education at this point, as they begin to help the family bring in jink. If their parents can afford it, they may give them over to a master as an apprentice. If they do well, they can break out of their social class. Repairing shoes is always better than digging ditches.

When does a laborer get a day off? That depends. Some places don't keep track of time all that well, so a day off comes irregularly and with little pattern. Other places may keep track of time, but if a laborer is tilling the fields of Heliopolis, he may not see much free time. But, aren't most of the gods there good? Sure are, and for the most part they're righteous and just, but that doesn't mean they're paying attention to how many hours a berk is working.

Most planars or primes try their best to find some other way to make a living. Leave the hard, dull work to the petitioners, and find a way to make your own fortune. Of course, most of them discover that the work's just as hard and stressful, and sometimes has a better chance of getting them killed. But it is certainly more exciting.

Arvateth Pash'mat

Common Wages

Work is a curious thing, being sometimes a joy and sometimes a harsh necessity, but it is always needed in one form or another. Even if we toil under another, it still allows us to feed ourselves so some good comes of even the worse situations. Certainly if you're working for someone else, you shouldn't expect to see much money. A laborer who's working for more than the love of his or her god can expect to see a silver piece a day most places. Most other jobs don't involve set wages. If you're a merchant or provide a service, you may have a set price, or you may haggle and barter. All depends on the situation, or personal choice.

In the cities and gate-towns, some folks draw a wage from the government. Clerks, government lawyers, and watchmen usually receive a set amount of jink every day or week. Household servants often earn a wage, though some just do it for room and board.

In lawful realms and cities, this is all usually well regulated, and a body can expect to be paid on time (and taxed very efficiently, as well). In the more chaotic areas, getting paid can be more erratic, and it may not be the same amount each time, but of course neither is there the same exact burden of taxes, regulations and, well, order.

The self-employed can typically set their own rates, and certainly in the area of sellswords and mercenaries they can rely on their reputation as leverage in contract negotiations. Sadly though, many of these hearty souls are inevitably sucked down to the lower planes with dreams of easy coin and glorious battle. Most of them die or suffer fates far worse under the thumb of the fiends. But, like work, the War Eternal is a harsh necessity it seems.

Alphis and Apteris

Slavery

[Editor's note: The following was written by one of my scribes in collaboration with two all too smiling fiends, arcanaloths to be specific. Alphis and Apteris, aides to 'Her sublime excellency Cholerix' on the layer of Othrys in Carceri, they claim to be well versed in the darker sides of planar trade, as well as having the distinction of being siblings, born of the uncommon self fertilization of an Ultraloth. The two are almost identical except in slight variations of their coat patterns, and those are mirror opposites on the pair.]

Alphis: Trust us when we say that we are *quite* well versed with this topic.

Apteris: Trust us indeed.

Alphis: It seems almost every day that we find ourselves brokering deals between our masters in Carceri and one or another slave dealer from most anywhere from Limbo down through the lower planes all the way to Mechanus.

Apteris: Of course it's much easier on the paperwork when you don't pay for the slaves in the first place.

Alphis: And much more satisfying to the senses, yes.

Apteris: Indeed. But on with the show, we mustn't keep the mimir waiting...

Slavery is all too common in certain parts of the Great Ring, especially on our end. In the Upper Planes, outright slavery is considered an abomination. The servants and laborers there do it for jink or love; no one's forcing them to do anything, the little drones. In some parts of the neutral planes and in the Lower Planes, most labor is done much more efficiently by force. Those who resist can expect a beating, if not horrendous torture and death. Thralls, petitioner and mortal alike, work themselves for that brief moment of rest and crust of bread. Most have no hope of ever being free.

Apteris: Hope? Hope is an illusion.

Alpthis: Divest yourself of it. We have.

Some races have a special relationship to the institution of slavery. One of the most famous is the gith. This ancient race was enslaved millennia ago by the illithid, and finally staged a successful revolt against their cruel masters long ago. Since then, the race has split in twain, developing as the githzerai and the githyanki. The githzerai find slavery an abomination, and would never subject another to it. Any servants they keep are treated fairly. The githyanki have no such moral qualms about slavery. Slaves perform much of the lesser work in githyanki society, while the githyanki hone their magical and martial skills. They force the captured members of other races into servitude much as their Illithid masters of old did to them. They see doing so as their right and their way to ensure that they themselves will never again be enslaved.

Apteris: And of course when most of them die, well...

Alpthis: ... the joke's on them...

Apteris: The look on the faces of their petitioners is most priceless you must realize.

Alpthis: Most priceless brother, most priceless.

Other slave keeping races include the orcs and goblins that infest the cubes of Acheron, the khaasta who roam the outlands and the chaotic planes, the spidery tso who travel the lawful planes (except for Arcadia and Mount Celestia), and their prime material cousins the neogi who occasionally prowl the outlands and Sigil when they depart the material plane. The Khaasta, tso and the neogi are raiders, smugglers, and slave traders. The orcs and goblins don't mind selling the occasional slave, though they keep most for themselves.

In the Lower Planes, slavery is everywhere. Considering how the lesser tanar'ri and baatezu are treated by the greater, the lot of a mortal in those stygian realms is beyond miserable. Deep in the Abyss, visitors to Naratyr, the City of the Dead in Thanatos, can purchase the services of a docile undead slave for as little as a copper a day.

Alpthis: Work ceases to be work when you're enjoying yourself.

Apteris: It doesn't matter if it's a petitioner or a mortal or a fiend...

Alpthis: Except that the former tend to scream more since they don't black out from the pain

Apteris: Did we mention how we do love our work?

Outside of these societies, those who desire to keep slaves usually find it difficult. In most cities, while indentured servitude is acceptable, true slavery is not. Social censure is the least result; in some instances someone who keeps slaves may find themselves on trial (this is likely only in the gate-towns of the Upper Planes). Of course, there's plenty of countryside in the Outlands where no one will ever notice how a slave is treated.

Alpthis: But the place is also crawling with Indeps on the upper side of the ring of gate towns, and they don't care for it at all.

Apteris: But in any event, that largely covers the topic.

Alpthis: Indeed, it has been a pleasure.

Apteris: ... and where do you think you're going?

Alpthis: What better way to instruct that to illustrate it as it happens, we'll have the mimir delivered to your fellows...

Corin the Imbiber

Planar Services

[Editor's Note: Our last section of this document is provided to us by Corin the Imbiber, a member of the Sensates out of Arborea's Gilded Hall. Having seen quite a stretch of the planes in his youth, he gives us an account of the planes and what can be purchased across their breadth since, as he claims, he's seen it all, and heard, and touched, and tasted.

So what do the planes have to offer? Quite a bit. While Sigil and Tradegate see a lot of the best things in their bazaars, a cutter can often acquire even more wonderful things by going to out of the way spots in the Great Ring. Why wait for a merchant to bring it to you in the marketplace for a higher price when you can go out and experience everything there and back and find it at the source I say.

The gate-towns can be great places to make a deal, as well. Automata's perfect grid of streets is bewildering, because the different housing, warehouse, administrative, and market blocks are scattered about with no *apparent* pattern. But those that take the time find markets where the prices are carefully regulated and goods from Mechanus can be bought (Mechanus itself is notoriously low on goods and services (though Mycelia, realm of the myconids, sells a variety of fungal derivatives), so bloods looking for a deal settle with Automata). Life is wilder in Automata's under city. Hokee Thridun, an amoral tiefling merchant, sells and buys exotic goods with a clientele of the rich and powerful. Glorium's the gate-town to go to if in the market for a new ship to sail down the Oceanus. The Freki twins make some of the finest long ships out there, and they charge accordingly. Plague-Mort has a great shop, The Poisoner's Phial, where the tiefling Laran Susspurus sells acids and toxins, and for twice the price of a poison, its antidote may also be purchased. In Xaos, smiths craft magical items with karach, the transmuting metal that leaks into the burg from the portal to Limbo.

There are numberless locales dotting the planes that offer up unique fare. Tvashti's Laboratory in the Outlands is a great place to go for strange mechanical devices of all sorts, built by the human and gnome petitioners of the god of artifice and science. Grandfather's Oak in Arborea is the home of the grey elves. Because of the proscriptions on fire usage, it's not the place to go for services that require it. But it does boast exceptional woodcarvings, including the masterworks in black walnut by the ancient Morellian. He only creates one piece a year now, auctioned off at midsummer. In Breidablik ("Broad Splendor"), the hall of Baldur in Ysgard, the dwarves sell fine clothes, rich jewelry, and gem-encrusted goblets. Nearby Alfheim is known for its wines, such as Kervakkis red, glacial blue, and Firestone brandy. The elves rarely sell them to outsiders, however, and supposedly only another elf has the refined senses to truly appreciate them anyway, and to that I say they never met the senses of one of my faction. Glacial blue is said to give visions to those who drain an entire cup; there's rotgut in Sigil that'll do the same for cheaper. Svartalheim also sells wine, made from mushrooms. They also carve gemstones and weave the best cloth in Ysgard, soft and warm. Green Fields, the realm of the halflings pantheon, exports fine tea and tobacco leaves. Rempha, the City of the Sands of Time on Mount Celestia, sells a variety of timekeeping devices: sundials, marked candles, and water and mechanical clocks. They also sell other goods, and all are renowned for aging well, making wonderful heirlooms. Resounding Thunder, the realm of Lei Kung, sells all sorts of noisemakers: firecrackers, gongs and drums. Those who want the best chain possible can brave Jangling Hiter, city of the kytons. The Ethereal Plane is not known for its shopping potential, but the Freehold City of the Etherfarers' Society hosts an Agora where imports can be bought at high price. They also sell some unique items: strands of stable protomatter from phase spiders, exotic pets and fruits from the demiplanes, and items from collapsed dreamscapes.

Arborea is known as the "breadbasket" of the Outer Planes, and the best grains and vegetables come from there and find their way onto the plates of those who can afford them. Olive oil from Thrassos and elven honey mead and venison are prized. Other goods come from Arborea: elven musical instruments and magical items, and furniture and fine cloth and dyes from Thrassos. The island town of Elshava, situated in a trade position between the sea and land

elves, is a great place to stop if you're traveling to the Elemental Plane of Water. The Sealskin Slicker, a tannery shop run by Amarillis Silverthorn, can waterproof most anything. If not, she can provide a watertight container for it.

Also, a number of other services are available in the vastness of the planes. Many backwaters are full of bodies looking to hire themselves out as mercenaries and the like. And it's nice to find a place to sleep and get a meal and a drink, no matter how much you like the open road. Guides are always a good idea on the first visit to a hostile plane; don't try navigating Limbo by yourself, addle-cove. Many gate-towns and burgs have guides that can be hired to help with travel and mixing with the locals. Stop in Ribcage for a guide with a warrant of safe passage if you find yourself visiting Baator. Guides to the Abyss, however, should never gain your full trust. The price for hiring a guide depends on factors such as possible danger and length of service. A tout hired in Sigil to show a newcomer around will cost around 2 silver pieces per hour. A guide taking you into the Transitive Planes or the Lower Planes may cost around 5 gold pieces a day or part thereof if the hirer can negotiate a good deal. Don't expect a guide to do much more than help with general directions. They're likely to scarper at the first sign of fighting.

The gate-town of Bedlam doesn't offer much in the way of shops, but the mishmash of barmies attracts a small number of artists. They can be found in Weylund's Inn, where the dwarven proprietor gives the downtrodden and sensitive a clean room for one silver piece a night. Also in Bedlam can be found the Sanatorium, a combination asylum, spa, and boarding house. If you want to hire an expert torturer, travel to Ondtland in Gehenna. Loviatar's servants know their way with a whip, it must be said.

Some places are more welcoming to merchants than others. Curst is known for its bitter, vengeful mercenaries, shops specializing in traps and deadly devices, and heartwine (made from razorvine by the Cilenei brothers, two prime elven wizards who have seen too much of my jink over the years I will admit). Visitors to Curst have a tough time leaving again; the gate guards interrogate all who try to leave about their reasons for doing so to determine who gets to go. The githzerai aren't warm to strangers; visitors to their homes in Limbo must remain in the foreign districts, and can only travel elsewhere with a guide. Their cousins, the githyanki, are even unfriendlier, but some astral fortresses have foreign districts for those times when they'd rather parlay than take by force. As long as you're not a prime, dwarf or of an opposed alignment, you can visit Hammergrim to purchase the duergars' magic. The demon lord Graz'zt is more welcoming of merchants than most of his kind, even mercilessly punishing those who harm traders. But then the gorigistro at the gate makes traders hand over the better part of their profits on exiting.

One of the most important commodities on the planes is information. The brokers of secrets do a brisk business. Want to know where the next portal out of Carceri is going to appear? Want to know a demon's true name? Want to get the dark on your enemies and make them pay? Want to find out the short cut to the seventh heaven of Mount Celestia? Of course, finding out who the most reputable information brokers are is a task in and of itself; you don't want to get the wrong piece of information on how to survive in the City of Brass.

Another important aspect of planar society is the use of portals. The portals that make Sigil the "hub" of the multiverse are accessible by what's known as portal keys. Some portals are controlled by individuals or groups, and they decide who has access and who doesn't. Even "public" portals still bar those who don't bear the proper portal key. Still others sell the actual portal keys such as the Guild of Doorsnoops, though often this doesn't mean selling the physical key itself, but selling the knowledge of what the key is. A portal that requires a sprig of razorvine is easily used; razorvine's everywhere. But a sod who doesn't know that a sprig is the key isn't going anywhere. The cost of a portal key can vary wildly. How expensive is the physical key itself? How rare are portals to the location in question? How much does the

operator of the portal want to restrict usage? How much is it worth to you, berk? For portals that see common use, a portal key (whether an object, action, or mental concept) will generally cost from 5 to 100 gold pieces.

Anything can be found in the planes, for the right price. Brave cutters can find what they're looking for, either for themselves or to trade for something else. Of course, someone else is bound to be looking for it, too, but the experience is worth it by my measure regardless.

Jeremy deLeas

Spells and Magical Items

[Editor's Note: Mr. deLease is one of the self-made businessmen who rose after the factions left Sigil. Apparently recovering from the Tempest of Doors with remarkable speed, this gentleman and two other companions bought a failing merchant house out from under the previous owner's noses and have since made quite a profitable little business since under the name 'Ventures Gained'.]

And you want to interview me instead of A'kin? Well yes, admittedly I'm a great deal more human if not any friendlier so I can see why you're here but... ok. If I can help a few of the clueless that I see stumbling across my doorstep in advance, I certainly will. Makes it easier in the long run to just hand them a book instead of sitting them down over tea to explain it all. Magic, items and spells. You'd think in the planes - the great mystical seat of godlike powers, that magic would be just... a finger snap away. Unfortunately it's just not the case really. I mean think about it, the powers, fiends, celestials - they're like that big rich kid you saw in your neighborhood while growing up, giving all the other kids a bad name with their antics.

While magic is everywhere on the planes, the ordinary sod doesn't have any more access to it than a prime does. Which means, planars don't just walk around with *vorpals* or *staves of wonder*. The one's that do, well - they do because they can defend it. And magic shop owners... well. Let's just say I invest considerably in my security here. Magic is just as expensive, if not more so, than on various prime worlds. Spellslingers know their services are in high demand, and some of the particular situations you find yourself in out here require some very specific training.

Which is not to say you can't find what you need! Oh no, if a cutter has the jink, they can usually find what they're looking for in one of the bazaars, or in a shop like this one.

Most magical (and the more bizarre mechanical) devices are acquired through trade and adventuring. Few spellslingers choose to devote their skills to crafting new magical items unless that's their business. Those that do it part time are likely to make a fine amount of jink, but such work often gets in the way of their own progression and makes them targets for competition from other merchants or cony-catchers. The largest cities on the planes will have one or two such skilled mages, but the majority of burghs, I'd exclude Bytopia from that, rely completely on merchants for their supplies. A lot of items come in from artificers scattered about, craftsmen in Bytopia who just get off on that sort of thing, or primes who know it's an easy way to make money and no one's going to jinx them on their deal.

Spells, on the other hand, are a whole different story. Magic is often necessary for accessing the more hazardous parts of the multiverse, and portal-workers are in high demand. Fortunately, competition keeps the price of such services in check, but spell work still isn't cheap. Spellslingers that make a habit of their services are often prepared to identify magical items, check portals for their necessary keys, and shield customers from planar dangers. Getting other spells cast, with the exception of healing, usually requires more searching and a bit more jink. Myself, I'd recommend picking up a few wands of utility spells like that if you can afford them and you have an idea how to use such things. It makes it a damn sight easier to

just point a wand than to try to recruit a wizzardling out to a portal to check it out. Keeps 'em from asking for a cut of profits too if it's a good portal.

Healing spells can be trickier, you can get those from a faction or your religion. While those on the verge of death will likely be healed at no charge, assuming those in question aren't of opposing sides, anything else will often require a healthy donation to the church or caster. I mean folks gotta eat, that's just a part of life. Most priests would rather save their spells for paying folk, better for the cause and all. A blood might barter a discount if they follow the same order or can prove that being at their peak is beneficial to the priest or organization providing the service, but it's a rare day you'll get a free ride. When you do, be nice if you will?

Magical Training

Planars wishing to study the magical arts have several options. The temples of the various powers are the most likely place to find teaching in the divine arts, though of course one is expected to join the order. Becoming a member of a faction that prizes arcane knowledge is the most common way to find instruction in spellslinging, and such service is normally either part of the faction's basic training or at a decent price. The realms of certain powers of knowledge and magic are another good place to turn for magical teachings as well, with the realms of Isis and Azuth being two of the more likely places to find such teaching. Thoth isn't too bad while you're at it either, come to think of it. Many of the larger burgs on the Great Wheel have some sort of college of magic, some of which accept anyone willing to devote the necessary time and work, others having very strict (and political) guidelines for who they will accept. Such schools are often extremely strenuous, and may be more concerned with competing for money and fame than their students' careers. Always shop around.

Most young mages choose to search out masters who might be willing to take on an apprentice. Of course, such relations range in their nature, and not every basher is willing to do someone's drudgery for the chance to learn a few spells. Apprenticeship agreements are usual arranged through faction mediators, local authorities, or other institutions. Enlistment terms for apprentices are typically for one or two months per level of a spell taught, but most cutters prefer exchanges of favors and quests to earn a master's tutoring and copies of spells. Masters working on magical research are the most likely to enter such deals, either in hopes of obtaining assistance in their work on in order to obtain rare components. For the most part you find teaching going on one on one. I've met a very very small handful of mages who feel up to teaching a whole handful or more. And they're as often teaching non magical things like reading and mathematics as teaching spells.

Those who wish to learn the mental discipline of psionics might have to look harder, as it's said to be a more difficult path to follow and thus teachers are a true rarity. I have only the smallest selection of items from the Art, it's not something that ever caught my attention really. Factions again are a body's best chance here, though potent candidates are sometimes admitted to the githzerai monasteries of Limbo. Their githyanki cousins would make great teachers as well if they didn't despise everyone else. Most set out to master their abilities on their own through adventuring or meditation, which often seems to work better for psionics than it does for other types of magic. If you're really interested in that you may also want to drop by the New Tyr district in Sigil - if you can get them to open up, and you aren't an elf. In fact. If you're an elf - just... avoid the whole place, I got mistaken there once and ruined a whole set of clothes by the time the fight was over. Bug juice does **not** come out.

MERCHANDISE OF THE PLANES

If you have the jink and the desire, someone out there is willing to help you. With a little bit of searching you can find just about anything for sale. Merchants set up shop in the Grand Bazaars

of Sigil and Tradegate, or travel from place to place, selling their wares. While prices may fluctuate wildly in some areas, they tend to follow the same patterns in the markets of the cities; with the availability of portals, scarcity or abundance for one area is the same for almost everywhere else. The pricing information given in the following sections can be considered the standard for Sigil, the gate-towns of the Outlands, and many of the population centers of the Outer Planes. The Transitive and Inner Planes, and the less accessible areas of the Outer Planes, usually have higher prices, unless the material in question is in abundance there.

Equipment

Weapons, armor, supplies, and services of various sorts can be purchased in many areas of the planes. While a lantern from Baator and one from Arcadia may have superficial differences, they are basically the same, and can be purchased for around the same price. The origins of masterwork items are usually more obvious; a sword forged in the Dwarven Mountain is easily recognizable to those familiar with such things. Almost all merchandise that can be found for sale in the planes is of planar manufacture, rather than imported from the Prime; planars don't go there unless they absolutely have to. On the other hand, those who know where to look and who to ask can find even rare antiquities from the Prime that turn up on the market.

Armor Type/ Name	Cost	Armor/Shield Maximum		Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell	Speed		Weight
		Bonus	Dex Bonus		Failure Chance	(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	
<i>Light armor</i>								
Padded, bariaur	6 gp	+1	+8	0	5%	---	---	20 lb.
Leather, bariaur	12 gp	+2	+6	0	10%	---	---	25 lb.
Robes, Amun-thysian	1,000 gp	+2	+6	0	5%	30 ft.	20 ft.	20 lb.
Sealskin	50 gp	+2	+6	0	10%	30 ft.	20 ft.	8 lb.
Studded leather, bariaur	30 gp	+3	+5	-1	15%	---	---	40 lb.
<i>Medium armor</i>								
Modron	120 gp	+4	+4	-3	15%	20 ft.	15 ft.	40 lb.
Chainmail, bariaur	180 gp	+5	+2	-5	30%	---	---	55 lb.
<i>Heavy armor</i>								
Splint mail, bariaur		+6	+0	-7	40%	---	---	60 lb.
Banded mail, bariaur	300 gp	+6	+1	-6	35%	---	---	50 lb.
Half-plate, bariaur	720 gp	+7	+0	-7	40%	---	---	65 lb.
Full plate, bariaur	1,800 gp	+8	+1	-8	35%	---	---	75 lb.
Extras								
Horned helm, bariaur	45 gp	--	--	--	--	---	---	10 lb.

Armor Description

Bariaur Armor: Most armor, even magical ones, won't fit bariaur and thus many instead use barding instead. Of course the planes host a variety of exotic races, and bariaur are hardly a rare sight on the planes, so many smiths carry armor specially crafted to fit their quadruped form. Such armor provides the same amount of protection as humanoid armor, but costs and weights a good deal more. Most bariaur prefer to wear light armor since it doesn't limit their natural speed. Medium and heavy armor reduce their speed to 30 ft.

Modron Armor: Modrons are unable to wear normal armor due to their non-humanoid form. They may, however, have special plating made for them, consisting of flat sheets of metal with holes for the modron's face and arms either strapped on by leather or bolted into the metallic parts of the modron's body. Because modron outcasts are all the same size the fitting process is simple, though such bashers are too rare for anyone to have premade armor in stock. Adding or removing the armor requires about two hours and someone with at least basic knowledge of modron anatomy. Modrons do not suffer from fatigue when sleeping in their armor.

Robes, Amun-thysian: These gem-encrusted robes are highly prized by Sensates. They are sewn in the desert realm of Amun-thys on the third layer of Arborea, stitched with fine gold and dyed a royal purple. While the gems and stones certainly weigh the robes down, the sleeves have only the smallest, lightest gems sewn in, allowing arcane spellcasting without much trouble.

Sealskin: A waterproof armor consisting of tanned and stitched sealskins. Perfect for cutters who are visiting watery locales and don't want to worry about being weighed down or getting metal armor rusty.

Weapon Type/Name	Cost	Dmg	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Simple Weapons						
<i>Light Melee Weapons</i>						
Horned helm, bariaur	45 gp	2d6	x3	---	10 lb.	Piercing
Exotic Weapons						
<i>Two-Handed Melee Weapons</i>						
Kooth	250 gp	1d8/1d8	19-20/x2	---	16 lb.	Slashing

Weapon Description

Bariaur Horned Helm: Bariaurs that don horned helms are able to make charge attacks capable of inflicting grievous wounds. The helms can also be enchanted as magical weapons, and enable bariaur that do not have a horn for some reason to make charge attacks.

Kooth: The kooth is the khaasta's ritual weapon, two crescent blades in a 45° angle to each other on a 10-foot pole. The length of the kooth gives it a reach of 10 feet, and those proficient with the weapon are able to swing the blades and slide their hands along the shaft in order to seamlessly strike adjacent foes. The kooth is a double weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one handed weapon and a light weapon. A creature wielding a kooth in one hand cannot use it as a double weapon. Due to the size of the pole and the weight of the blades, anyone with a Strength score 15 or lower is unable to wield the kooth without dropping it or accidentally hitting themselves.

Planar Armor Material

Industrious cutters of all races create and build with most any material that comes to hand. From the forges of dwarven petitioners to the arsenals of the Blood War, from the armories of the celestials to the laboratories of the githzerai, the spirit of invention and the thirst for battle come together in a hundred ways.

Acheronian Clearsteel: This transparent metal is found on certain cubes on Acheron, and is forged into weapons of war, just as everything else there is. Clearsteel is no harder than ordinary steel, but weapons forged from it are virtually transparent and Spot checks to notice

them have a base DC 20, making them quite handy as concealed weaponry. Those who can get their hands on large quantities even use clearsteel instead of glass for windows, doors, tank screens...and other such applications. The market price modifier for clearsteel weapons is +1,000 gp.

Astral Driftmetal: A rare mineral mined from the floating corpses of the powers found on the Astral Plane, astral driftmetal is similar to iron. It is not very malleable, however, and only shields, breastplates, and heavy armors may be forged from it. Such equipment has the unique property of being effective against incorporeal attacks 25% of the time, as if it had the *ghost touch* property. Astral driftmetal armor weighs 5 pounds more than ordinary armor but is otherwise the same. Many planars find the thought of digging into the bodies of deities to be a heinous act and will confront anyone discovered to be wielding or selling the material. The Athar, on the other hand, actively encourage their members to make use of the metal as a sign of their disdain for the powers and proof of their failings. The market price modifier for armor made of driftmetal is +1,000 gp.

Astral driftmetal has a hardness of 12 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

Baatorian Green Steel: This metal comes from the wastelands of Avernus, the first layer of Baator, and has seen much use during the eons of fighting in the Lower Planes. Green steel is lighter than normal steel, and is readily worked into razor sharp edges. The yugoloths have taken the opportunity to spread the weapons they've acquired throughout the planes, though they are still rare outside the baatezu armies. Piercing or slashing weapons crafted with the green-flecked ore have an increased damage range, as if they were one level lower on Table 7-4: Tiny and Large Weapon Damage on pg. 114 of the *Player's Handbook*. Banded mail, chain mail, plate mail, and scale mail are the only types of armor that can be made of green steel, and such armor has an increased armor bonus of +1. The market price modifier for such armor is +3,000 gp; weapons made of green steel have a price modifier of +2,000 gp. Baatorian green steel has a hardness of 12 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

Bronze: This metal hardly unique to the planes, as most prime worlds discover the secret of bronze working at some point, and eventually find it is decidedly inferior to iron and steel. It still sees use, however, in the realms of certain pantheons such as the Greek, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Sumerian. These cultures certainly know that better technologies exist, but choose to remain a bit backwards, perhaps because artisans are able to sculpt the bronze into pleasing designs embossed on the armor. Bronze is softer than steel, and weapons made with the metal have a -1 penalty to attack and damage (with a minimum damage of 1). Bronze has a hardness of 9 and 20 hit points per inch of thickness. Weapons with wooden hafts, such as axes and spears have the hardness and hit point values listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Entropium: Crafted in the laboratories of the githzerai, entropium is created in a process that alloys iron with the chaos-stuff of Limbo. It is heavier than ordinary iron, but can be used to create armor that shifts with the movements of its wearer, allowing for greater flexibility. Light entropium armor is considered medium, weighs 2 pounds more than normal, medium armor is considered heavy, weighs 5 pounds more than normal, and heavy armor weighs 10 pounds more than normal. Shields made of entropium weigh 2 more pounds than usual. The armor check penalty increases by 2 for Strength-related skill checks (Climb, Jump, Swim, etc.), while it decreases by 2 for Dexterity-related skill checks (Balance, Hide, Tumble, etc.).

Arcane spell failure for entropium armor is decreased by 10%, to a minimum of 5%, and the maximum Dexterity bonus increases by +2. Only armor and shields crafted of metal may be created with entropium. Entropium has a hardness of 15 and 40 hit points per inch of

Item	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	+750 gp
Medium Armor	+2,000 gp
Heavy Armor	+8,000 gp
Shield	+750 gp

thickness.

Gehennan Morghuth-Iron: The yugoloths mine this metal from the volcanic reaches of Gehenna. It is difficult to forge, and creates shoddy, pocked, and pitted weapons that have a -1 penalty to attack and damage. However, morguth-iron is highly toxic, and when made into slashing or piercing weapons the metal poisons its victims with every strike. The target must make a Fortitude save at DC 12. The initial damage is 1 point of temporary Dexterity; the secondary damage is 1d4 points of temporary Dexterity. Rumors abound of particularly potent samplings of morguth-iron, though such weapons are confined to the ranks of higher yugoloth. Such weapons are very rare beyond Gehenna, though some are being sold to the baatezu and the tanar'ri. The market price modifier for a weapon made of morguth-iron is +4,000 gp. Gehennan morguth-iron has a hardness of 9 and 20 hit points per inch of thickness.

Karach: This is a shifting metal used by smiths in Limbo and its gate-town of Xaos to create magical and psionic items of various sorts. It is notoriously unstable and difficult to work with. The githzerai are the undisputed masters of the strange chaos-stuff, using it to create objects of mysterious power wieldable by the most dedicated warriors of that race. Lesser blacksmiths, those that get their hands on it anyway, are only able to create weapons and armor that make use of some of the transmuting properties of the metal. Karach is considered a masterwork material for crafting purposes, and the blacksmith must have ranks in Craft (karach weaponsmith), Craft (karach armorsmith), and so forth.

Weapons forged with karach are deadlier in the hands of wielders with strong wills. If the user of a karach weapon has psionic abilities or a Wisdom score of 16 or more, the weapon has a natural enhancement bonus to attack and damage as well as the ability to change shape. As a free action once a round the wielder may change the type of damage dealt by the weapon to piercing, slashing, or bludgeoning. In the hands of anyone else, the weapon functions normally and retains its current form. Karach armor functions similarly, providing a natural enhancement bonus to AC and shifting to better deflect certain types of attacks. As a free action once a round the wielder can choose piercing, slashing, or bludgeoning damage and gain damage reduction against that attack. These bonuses do not stack with any other enhancement bonuses. Thus, a karach (+2) sword enchanted with a +3 enhancement bonus effectively has a +3 enhancement bonus. In an area where magic does not function, it still retains its natural +2 enhancement bonus.

Weapons and armor fashioned from karach are treated as masterwork items with regard to creation times, but the masterwork quality does not affect the enhancement bonus of weapons or the armor check penalty of armor. Karach has a hardness of 15 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

Item	Enhancement Bonus	Damage Reduction	Market Price Modifier
Light Armor	+1	1/-	+2,000 gp
Medium Armor	+2	2/-	+5,000 gp
Heavy Armor	+3	3/-	+10,000 gp
Shield	+1	1/-	+2,000 gp
Weapon damage is 1d4 or 1d6	+1	-	+3,000 gp
Weapon damage is 18d, 1d10, or 1d12 or higher	+2	-	+9,000 gp

Solanian Truesteel: Manufactured by dwarves under the watchful eyes of Moradin on the fourth layer of Mount Celestia, this iron shines with a pure silver gleam and does not need an alloy. Weapons forged of truesteel are commonly awarded to those who have proven

themselves brave and just, and have a natural enhancement bonus of +1 on the confirmation of a critical hit. The market price modifier for a weapon made of truesteel is +1,000 gp. Solanian truesteel has a hardness of 11 and 25 hit points per inch of thickness.

Ysgardian Heartwire: This metal is mined by the dwarves of Nidavellir in Ysgard. It is a fine, flexible metal, unsuited for creating armor itself, but small sections of heartwire mail can be added to chain shirts, chain mail, and heavy armor to reinforce vital areas. This gives the armor a +2 bonus to AC solely for the purposes of the roll to confirm a critical hit. The market price modifier is +1,500 gp for a suit incorporating heartwire.

ADVENTURING GEAR			TOOLS AND SKILL KITS		
Item	Cost	Weight	Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack, waterproof (empty)	45 gp	2 lb.	Lute, Baatorian	450 gp	2lb.
Bottle, Bytopian	15 gp	-	Mechanical clocak	2,000 gp	10 lb.
Chain, Hiter (10 ft.)	100 gp	1 lb.	Msical instrument, Arvandorian	200 gp.	2 lb.
Chest, waterproof	50 gp	25 lb.			
Harness, bariaur	3 gp	4 lb.			
Harness, bariaur (waterproof)	50 gp	4 lb.			
Myconid spores	100 gp	¼ lb.			
Rope, Celestian (50 ft.)	50 gp	5 lb.			
Saddle, bariaur	10 gp	10 lb.			
Storage container, Modron	5 gp	10 lb.			
Storage container, modron (waterproof)	60 gp	10 lb.			
Voidlens	5 gp	-			
Voidmark, 1 piece	8 sp	-			

CLOTHING

Item	Cost	Weight
Belt, modron	3 gp	-
Fishskin suit	225 gp	3 lb.
Living cloak	60 gp	1 b.
Sealskin outfit	30 go	5 lb.
Sealskin outfit	30 go	5 lb.

Adventuring Gear

Backpack, Waterproof: A backpack made from specially treated sealskin. While closed, water and other non-caustic liquids will not damage its contents. It is crafted by Amarillis Silverthorn of the island of Elshava in Arborea, though merchants often export them across the planes. Such backpacks made for small creatures weigh ½ a pound.

Bottle, Bytopian: By the unique properties of the plane where these bottles are created, Bytopian bottles are capable of storing two liquids at once without them ever mixing. The gnomes create bottles in a variety of shapes and sizes capable of storing 1 pint of each liquid.

Chain, Hiter: A finely wrought chain from the city of Jangling Hiter in Baator. It may be delicate and gleaming, massive and cold, or fashioned any number of other ways, but regardless, it has a hardness of 12, 10 hit points, and can be burst with a DC 30 Strength check.

Chest, Waterproof: Distributed by the Sealskin Slicker of Arborea, this chest stores the same amount of goods as an ordinary chest (2 cubic feet), but is specially constructed and lined with tanned sealskin, preventing non-caustic moisture from entering it while sealed.

Harness, Bariaur: A specially designed frame backpack for bariaur. It can carry up to 90 pounds worth of weight and has a volume of 3.5 feet x 3 feet x 1 foot.

Harness, Bariaur (Waterproof): A bariaur harness that has been created from sealskin.

Myconid Spores: The myconid mushroom folk of Mechanus sell their pacification spores to outsiders. They come in tubes that can be blown upon a target as a touch attack with a range

of 10 feet. The victim must make a Fortitude against DC 14 or be pacified for one minute. Pacification is similar to being dazed, but the target can make partial actions that do not involve attacking. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Rope, Celestian: Woven from translucent silk produced by metallic spiders of Mount Celestia. This nigh-invisible rope has a hardness of 10 and 5 hit points, and can be burst with a DC 26 Strength check. It provides a +4 circumstance bonus to Use Rope checks.

Saddle, Bariaur: This undignified device is based on the bariaur harness. Though bariaurs do not like to be mounted, some carry them in case they have to transport a two-legged creature quickly, such as when carrying a wounded companion from danger. It functions as a packsaddle, allowing the bariaur to carry possessions as well as companions.

Storage Container, Modron: A device commonly used by modron outcasts to carry things consisting of a metal and leather box affixed or strapped to the modron's back. It can carry 100 pounds of weight and has a volume of 1.5 feet x 3 feet x 1 foot.

Storage Container, Modron (Waterproof): This is a waterproof version of a modron's container, using sealskin instead of ordinary leather.

Voidlens: This handheld lens measures three inches by three inches. Their only use is in revealing the product of voidmarks.

Voidmarks: Chalk-like sticks that can be used to make invisible markings. Such writing can only be seen by voidlenses or by any magical effects that reveal invisibility. Many vendors claim they come from the Plane of Vacuum, but in actuality they originate from Tir na Og in the Outlands, where they are known as marker bits.

Class Tools and Skill Kits

Lute, Baatorian: These lutes create sounds rarely heard by mortals, and are highly prized by collectors of both instruments and devilish knickknacks. Playing one gives a +3 circumstance bonus to Perform checks on natives of Baator, and a -3 circumstance penalty if the listener is a native of the Abyss. Their rarity increases the market value.

Mechanical Clock: For those who need to keep precise time or enjoy the novelty of doing so, there is no better device for timekeeping than a mechanical clock from Rempha on Mount Celestia. Once set and wound, it will keep perfect time for longer than the lifetime of many creatures. It signals the hour with a delicate chiming.

Musical Instrument, Arvandorian: These finely crafted musical instruments (mandolins, flutes, hand chimes, and so forth) are masterwork items, giving a +2 circumstance bonus to Perform checks. The instruments are especially appealing to elven ears; the circumstance bonus to Perform checks is increased to +3 when played for elven listeners. Instruments created for small creatures weigh half the normal weight.

Clothing

Belt, Modron: This is an ordinary belt, but fitted for the modron outcasts' large cube frame.

Fishskin Suit: Stitched together from the skins of underwater creatures and coming with webbed gloves and fins for the feet. This increases the wearer's swimming speed to one-half their normal walking speed as a move action or three-quarters their walking speed as a full-round action. The suit also gives the swimmer a +2 circumstance bonus to Swim checks.

Living Cloak: This thick fur cloak is actually a living creature of some sort, supposedly from a prime world of little repute. The cloak clings tightly to the wearer when worn, but remains comfortable as it creates a symbiotic relationship between the body heats of the cloak and its wearer. Not only does it provide the benefits of cold weather outfits, it provides a +2 circumstance bonus to saves against cold effects.

Sealskin Outfit: If you're traveling underwater, and don't want to risk destroying your clothes and other possession, sealskin outfits will keep you modest. Particularly baggy outfits can be purchased to wear over another outfit or light armor, protecting them from moisture. The suits will not cover robes, cloaks, backpacks, and so on. Outfits for small creatures weigh 1 ¼ pounds.

Food and Drink

	Item	Cost	Weight
Fortitude save DCs have been provided for those using the optional intoxication rules from the <i>Arms and Equipment Guide</i> . Drinking an entire alcoholic beverage (a mug of ale, a glass of wine, a jigger of hard spirits) requires a Fortitude save. The second save within the same hour is at a -1 penalty, the third -2, the fourth -4, and so forth. Failing the save costs 1d2 points	Bytopian cheese, hunk of	5 sp	½ lb.
	Fire fruit	2 sp	¼ lb.
	Giant's wine	130 gp	1 ½ lb.
	Glacial blue wine	200 gp	1 ½ lb.
	Green Fields tea (kettle full)	3 sp	-
	Green Fields tobacco (pipe full)	5 sp	-
	Heartwine	100 gp	1 ½ lb.
	Mushroom Wine	15 gp	1 ½ lb.
	Rations, Arvandorian	1 gp	1 lb.
	Rations, undersea (per day)	8 sp	1 lb.
	Sheela's Gold cider, mug	5 cp	1 lb.

of temporary damage to Dexterity and Wisdom. If reduced to 0 Wisdom, the drunk slips into unconsciousness. Reduced to 0 Dexterity, the bubbler remains conscious, but is lying on the floor incoherently. If brought to both 0 Dexterity and 0 Wisdom, the sod may suffer from alcohol poisoning. In such a case the bubbler makes another Fortitude save, with a DC determined by the most potent drink he's had. If failed, they take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage every 10 minutes. The only way to stop it before the individual dies is to purge his stomach. The bubbler recovers 1 point of Dexterity and Wisdom damage each hour after the last drink. *Neutralize poison* will negate the damage alcohol causes, but the hangover lingers.

Bytopian Cheese: There are three varieties of Bytopian cheese: blue, red, and white, all made from goat's milk on the plane of Bytopia, and each has a delicious, unique flavor. The blue kind glows softly in the dark, and the flavor becomes spicier and tangier, encouraging merchants to double the price when selling it at night.

Fire Fruit: Grown on the Plane of Fire, a fire fruit burns with a soft flame while fresh and most vendors tend to serve them with tongs. If the flame is doused right before eating, the taste is unrivaled by other fruits. Even then, if eaten by someone without fire resistance 5 or more, the fruit is like poison. The eater must make a Fortitude save against DC 20 or take 1d10 points of Constitution damage. The eater must save again at DC 20 in another minute or lose another 1d10 points.

Giant's Wine: Made in Arborea with enormous grapes crushed by the feet of giants. Quite potent when drunk by smaller folks. (Fortitude save DC 15.)

Glacial Blue Wine: A bluish-white wine made by the elves of Alfheim. (Fortitude save DC 12 for elves; Fortitude save DC 16 for non-elves.)

Green Fields Tea: The halflings of Green Fields grow these famous tealeaves.

Green Fields Tobacco: This flavorful tobacco is a favorite of halflings and connoisseurs.

Heartwine: This is the slightly heady and sour wine brewed in Curst from razorvine. It is popular with gourmands in Sigil. (Fortitude save DC 12.)

Mushroom Wine: Made with fermented fungus by the dark elves in shadowy Svartalfheim, it is popular with many subterranean races, including dwarves and gnomes. (Fortitude save DC 12.)

Rations, Arvandorian: These delicious rations are produced by the elves of Arvandor. Dried venison cured with berries and herbs and flaky bread make up the largest portions. Rations for small creatures weigh ¼ of a pound.

Rations, Undersea: Undersea rations are similar to their terrestrial counterpart, consisting of dried undersea plants such as kelp, and dried fish, abalone, and the like. They are made in places such as the Elemental Plane of Water and the underwater farms of Tir fo Thuinn in the Outlands. They are mostly eaten by those who come from those places, or by those who are traveling through them. Rations for small creatures weigh ¼ of a pound.

Sheela's Gold Cider: A cider made with apples from Sheela Peryroyl's orchards in the Outlands. The fermented version is quite potent, although it is a favorite of the smaller sorts, like halflings and gnomes. The Greencage across from the Civic Feshall has a plentiful supply of it. (Fortitude save DC 13.)

Livestock and Related Gear

	Item	Cost	Weight
A variety of beasts roam the planes, and several have been domesticated by intelligent planars. Aside from ordinary horses, riding dogs, chickens, and so on, below are listed some of the more notable planar animals used in planar society.	Astral streaker	3 gp	-
	Boar, spittle	10 gp	-
	Cow, sand	17 gp	-
	Ethyk	150 gp	-
	Hound, Aoskian	150 gp	-
	Hound, spectral	6,500 gp	-
	Pony, Arcadian	60 gp	-

Astral Streaker: These astral birds have become common in Sigil and beyond. Their intelligence, homing instincts and loyalty make them great messengers.

Boar, Spittle: An amiable boar from the Outlands. While it can serve as a mount as well as a draft animal, the drooling beast is far too cowardly to be trained for war.

Cow, Sand: A lumbering cross between a bull and a camel. It can operate as draft animal or mount.

Ethyk: A lemur-like creature from Bytopia, it has the ability to increase the aggression of others. This aggression is always directed away from itself, as well as its mate and young. In the wild, it functions primarily to cause predators to seek other prey. When trained, ethyks can use its ability to increase aggressions at its master's commands. Trained ethyks regard their masters as a relative, so any aggression will be directed against others. They were barred from the Hall of Speakers long ago, and many other buildings and towns disallow them. An ethyk takes at least one week to acclimate to a new master. They also have some agility with their hands, and can be trained to retrieve objects or tie knots.

Hound, Aoskian: A trained, fully-grown Aoskian hound, perfect for guarding your case. As with all Aoskian hounds, they are only found in Sigil and cannot use portals.

Hound, Spectral: These vicious dogs of the Astral Plane are most famously bred and used by the githyanki, but some other planars with the jink keep them as well.

Pony, Arcadian: Arcadian ponies make useful draft animals, pulling carts, carriages, and cabs in Sigil and elsewhere. Unfortunately, they will not accept riders.

Magical Items

It comes as no surprise that magic and enchanted devices are integral to the planes. While magic items are hardly as common as dirt, and many inhabitants of the planes go their entire lives without handling one, they are more prevalent than they are on most worlds of the Prime. Many have their origins on the planes, and some are almost never found in the mortal realms of the Prime Material Plane.

Potion Descriptions

Oil of Stone Integration: This oil is applied to the user and their possessions. They are then able to pass through stone and earth as if they were air. In addition, stone weapons and creatures composed of earth (such as earth elementals) are unable to touch the oil-soaked user. Likewise, nothing coated with the oil may move or hold any stone or dirt objects (though clever individuals may pick up a non-stone object to manipulate stone objects). A creature coated with oil does not sink through stone and earth unless wishing to do so, and unattended objects will not sink unless pushed. One flask contains enough oil to coat one Medium-sized creature and its possessions or an equivalent area. The effects last for one hour and cannot be removed before that without the use of magic.

Caster Level: 5th; Prerequisite: Brew Potion, merge into stone; Market Price: 750 gp.

Ring Descriptions

Ring of the Bariaur: The ring of the bariaur resembles the ring of the ram, but functions quite differently, and is much rarer. It is only useable by a bariaur, and when worn allows the bariaur to wear any magical item usually prohibited by his or her shape. Shoes, boots, leggings, armor, and so forth are transformed into objects that fit on the bariaur. As long as the bariaur wears the ring and the items, the transformation stays in effect. If either is taken off, the items reverts to their original shape and falls from the bariaur, without causing harm to either the object or its wearer.

Caster Level: 7th; Prerequisite: Forge Ring, enlarge; Market Price: 8,000 gp.

Wondrous Item Descriptions

***Amulet of Superiority:** These amulets were created by fiends to allow their lesser members a fighting chance in the Blood War. When worn, an amulet gives the wearer's attacks (whether melee or ranged, armed or unarmed) the ability to bypass damage reduction as if they had a magical enhancement bonus.

Caster Level: 5th; Prerequisite: Craft Wondrous Item, greater magic weapon; Market Price: 8,000 gp.

Baku's Trumpet: Though not truly the instrument of the baku, or trumpet archon, these horns produced on Mount Celestia possess the ability to paralyze any who evil creature that them with it's piercing and beautiful notes. Evil creatures within 100 feet of the trumpet when it is sounded must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. This item can be used three times per day.

Anyone who is evil and attempts to play the trumpet not only fails to do so but must make a Fortitude save against the same DC or be struck mute for 1d4 days.

Caster Level: ; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, ; *Market Price:* ; *Weight:*

Boots, Chillfoot: These boots were created by a halfling cobbler in Sigil. Wearing them in a normal environment is uncomfortable, as they make a body's feet quite cold. If worn in an area where there is great heat, however, they provide excellent protection for the wearer's feet. The bearer can walk on burning coals or the hot surfaces of certain planes. They provide fire resistance 12 for the wearer's feet only, and they do not provide the wearer any protection from sinking in lava or the like. Of course if a sod's hit by a red dragon's breath or a *fireball*, the boots do absolutely nothing for the poor berk.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *resist elements*; *Market Price:* 500 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Bottled Breath: These clear bottles produce an infinite supply of clean fresh air. The user must simply uncork the bottle and drink from it as if it held liquid in order to take in the air, enabling someone to survive indefinitely in areas that otherwise lacks breathable air. The bottle must be corked again each round or it will lose its magical power.

Chains of Light: Originally created in Arcadia, some say these chains of pure light were first forged from sunlight by the power Reorx himself. When used to bind any creature of evil alignment, they glow with the intensity of a *daylight* spell. Any creature with a chaotic or evil alignment (including the bound victim) that looks upon the chains is affected as if by a *cause blindness* spell. All others may look at the chains and what they bind without penalty (unless otherwise susceptible to the effects of *daylight*).

If the bound creature attempts to escape the chains will either burn or freeze them, depending on which is more harmful. The chains cause 1d2 points of damage the first round, 1d4 the second round, 1d6 the third, and so on until they reach their maximum of 1d12 points per round. This damage ceases immediately once the creature stops struggling. Escape Artist checks and Break attempts are at a DC of 40. If broken, the chains become useless.

Caster Level: 17th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *daylight*, *holy smite*, *holy aura*, creator must be good and non-chaotic; *Market Price:* 36,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lb.

<p>Fiend Globe: Supposedly the creation of the baatezu lords, a <i>fiend globe</i> is a small hollow ceramic ball measuring no more than 3 inches in diameter. When shattered (which is easy to do), it summons a fiend from the Lower Planes to do the bidding of the one who broke the globe. The fiend issues forth from the remains of the globe, appearing as close to the shattered globe as possible. This works even on planes and in areas where summoning fiends would normally be forbidden (but not in areas where magic is not working, such as dead magic zones or an <i>antimagic field</i>). The fiend obediently serves its new master for one hour (doing literally anything in its power that is asked of it), at which point it is returned to its home plane. A globe may only be used once.</p> <p>When a globe is broken, roll on the following table to determine what fiend appears:</p> <p><i>Caster Level:</i> 17th; <i>Prerequisite:</i> Craft Wondrous Item, <i>gate</i>; <i>Market Price:</i> 7,650 gp.</p>	d%	Result
	01-15	Devil, Nupperibo
	16-25	Devil, Spinagon
	26-35	Demon, Manes
	36-45	Devil, Lemure
	46-50	Demon, Quasit
	51-55	Devil, Imp
	56-60	Devil, Barbazu
	61-65	Devil, Hamatula
	66-70	Hordling
	71-75	Demon, Bar-Igura
	76-80	Demon, Rutterkin
	81-85	Devil, Osyluth
	86-90	Devil, Abishai
	91-95	Yugoloth, Dergholoth
	96	Demon, Succubus
	97	Devil, Erinyes
	98	Yugoloth, Hydroloth
	99	Bodak
100	Night hag	

Horn Caps of Battering: These are 1-inch-long brass caps that fit on the end of a bariaur's horns. They add a +6 circumstance bonus to any attempt the bariaur makes to break an object by ramming it with his or her head. Both caps must be worn for the magic to be effective.

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *shatter*; *Market Price:* 5,000 gp.

Mark of Invisible Alignment: *Marks of invisible alignment* come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but the most common form is a simple gem shaped like a tear. When a mark is placed on the user's forehead, it adheres to their skin and becomes invisible. The mark masks the wearer's alignment; the various alignment detection spells reveal nothing, as if the wearer were neutral. Effects that rely on the wearer's true alignment, such as *holy smite*, still function normally however. *Detect magic* reveals the mark's aura, but the only way to see it is with a *true seeing* spell, which also reveals the wearer's true alignment. Only the wearer or a targeted *dispel magic* can remove the mark, which reappears and slides off the wearer's forehead.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *nondetection*; *Market Price:* 8,000 gp.

Mimir: Also called Wells of Knowledge or Speaking Skulls, mimirs are a minor magical device composed of a unknown silvery metal used by planewalkers and clueless alike because they answer questions spoken to them, assuming those answers have been recorded into the device. They are effectively encyclopedias that provide information quickly and without requiring any reading as the mimir will answer the question as best it can with its knowledge (which is about an hour's worth of talking), sounding much like an erudite lecturer. The device only works when left to float in the water or air, rather like an ioun stone, where it will remain until grabbed. Mimirs are commonly skull-shaped, but are also found as stars, disks, leaves, and other mundane shapes. For some reason the devices only work on the Outer Planes, and if brought elsewhere any answers comes out as gibberish. A *feblemind* spell cast on a mimir will cause it to do the same, and they are also stopped by *silence* spells.

While commonly found for sale in Sigil and the gate-towns, no one knows where mimirs originate. Attempts to recreate them without using the strange metal have yielded imperfect results, and to date no respectable blood has claimed responsibility. Standard mimirs are

programmed with information regarding the Outlands and will answer questions regarding that plane, even the asker's general distance from the Spire. Since a mimir can be purged of its original content and new information instilled, folk settle for using existing ones to record whatever information they'd like.

Market Price: 2,000 gp; *Weight:* -.

Planar Mancatcher: This device is a long pole with a set of spring-loaded, sharpened jaws at the end of it, designed to snare sods that can *plane shift* or *teleport*. The Mercykiller faction developed the mancatcher long ago, and watchmen in many planar towns keep these handy for catching gith and other slippery bashers.

To use one, the wielder makes a touch attack, which gains a +2 enhancement bonus. If successful, the jaws clamp tightly around the body of the target. While caught, the target loses any Dexterity bonus, though the trapped creature can make an Escape Artist check against DC 30, but suffers 1d2 points of damage with each attempt. Alternatively, the victim can attempt to break free with a Strength check against a DC of 30, which inflicts 1d4 damage per attempt, and destroys the device if successful.

While held the victim is affected as if by a *dimensional anchor* spell. If the victim attempts to use any effect involving planar travel they are jolted with a strong burst of magical energy which causes 1d10 points of damage, and they must make a Fortitude save against DC 30 or fall unconscious for 1d3 minutes.

Caster Level: 11th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *inflict moderate wounds*, *bull's strength*, *dimensional anchor*; *Market Price:* 40,000 gp; *Weight:* 20 lb.

Portal Trap: This device is in the shape of a small ball of lead ½ inch in diameter. If the command word is spoken (sometimes etched in tiny printing on the ball itself) and it is placed within the framework of a portal it will explode the next time a creature passes through that portal. The portal need not be active to set the trap. The ball explodes with the force of a *fireball* cast by a sixth-level caster, causing 6d6 points of fire damage on both sides of the portal, with half the diameter blasting each side and possibly destroying the portal frame. Should such a thing happen, those attempting to pass through the portal emerge from the side they entered.

Though the *portal trap* may not be disabled, it can be dispelled, and if removed from the portal where it has been planted while the portal is inactive it ceases to function until placed in that same portal.

Caster Level: 6th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *fireball*; *Market Price:* 4,000 gp;

Seeker Stones: These handy devices are a pair of perfectly clear peridot balls that can be used to guide their user to the corresponding stone. The bearer simply speaks the command word (which is invariably carved into the bottom of its matching stone) and a glowing arrow appears in the center of the ball pointing toward the other stone. The other stone does not need to be active for its mate to home in on it, though if they are more than 10 miles apart or on different planes nothing happens, and even after being activated the stones will deactivate after reaching this limit. The arrow grows larger and brighter the closer it gets to its companion stone, until finally when it gets within five feet of the other stone the effect ends. The stone can be deactivated by speaking its command word in reverse.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *locate object*; *Market Price:* 8,000 gp; *Weight:* 7 lb. per stone.

Thought Recorder: These flat copper plates are six inches on a side. If pressed to the user's temple for five minutes, the image of what they were thinking about at that time appears slowly on the plate. This image remains until someone else records an image. The origin of these plates is unknown, but they have appeared from time to time in Sigil.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *silent image*, *detect thoughts*; *Market Price:* 1,000 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Zadisband: A novelty item popular as a gift in Sigil. It is a simple leather headband or armband, but it continually hums a soft, melodic tune. Owners often tire of the humming after a while and find someone else to give it to. Tales of regifting zadisbands are a small joke among Cagers.

Caster Level: 1st; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *ghost sound*; *Market Price:* 8 sp;

Ships/Vehicles

Some planewalkers rarely step foot on a vehicle; where portals and spells can transport a body from place to place instantly, and on with planes that operate under different rules than the Prime, vehicles may seem more trouble than they're worth, especially when too large to fit through the average portal. Regardless, vehicles abound on the planes, used mainly by merchants who need to transport goods from town to town. Of course, every vehicle known on the Prime appears somewhere on the Great Ring; ships and boats sail the Oceanus and the Styx; caravans trek across the plains of the Outlands and the fields of Arcadia, and so on.

Some planes are more difficult to travel than others. Those who spend time on the Elemental Plane of Air need to find a way to get about, for instance. Some use spells and magical devices, while others ride winged beasts trained for such work. A few may utilize gliders of various sorts, such as the flying harness. The inhabitants of Carceri have developed ways to travel between the spheres of that plane, resulting in some unique vehicles not seen elsewhere.

Though few planewalkers ever own anything larger than a carriage, many learn the basics of how such devices operate in order to be prepared should anything go wrong. A rare few even aspire to own one or more vehicles, whether to form merchant caravans, carry legions of mercenaries, or commit the occasional act of piracy. The biggest difficulty such bashers face is defending their vessels while away, as they make good targets for knights of the post and very few vehicles can trek safely across an entire plane.

Vehicle Descriptions

Ethereal Cruiser: Huge vehicle; Profession (sailor) +2; Spd fly 70 ft. (average); Overall AC 3; Section hp 30 (hardness 5); Section AC 3; Rigging 40 hp (hardness 0); Ram 6d6; Face 30 ft. by 10 ft.; Height 10 ft.; Crew 4; Cargo 5 tons (Spd 60 ft. if 2 tons or more); cost 15,000 gp.

Ethereal cruisers are built and sold in the Shipworks of Freehold City in the Ethereal Plane by the Etherfarers' Society. They are a convenient way to transport cargo across the Deep Ethereal, and serve as a quick form of travel as well. Ethereal cruisers are built similarly to terrestrial water vessels, but because of the plane where they operate, they function similarly to airships. The ship is constructed mostly of Prime-harvested wood, with many key components crafted from stable etheric protomatter.

The cruiser can carry up to six passengers, in addition to its crew. There is a cabin at the stern, and a below-deck hold for cargo. Ethereal cruisers move by the power of glowing solid ether sails that are unfurled from masts situated along four axis points of the craft (both above and below the deck on either side of the ship). The cruiser trails out a 600-foot long strand of protomatter as an anchor. If the rigging takes damage equal to 50% or less of its total hit point value, the cruiser's movement is reduced to 35 feet. If the rigging is destroyed, the cruiser is no longer operational.

If an ethereal cruiser ever leaves the Ethereal Plane, its protomatter sails and anchor quickly evaporate.

Flying Harness: Large vehicle; Profession (pilot) +2; Spd fly wind 40 ft. (clumsy); Overall hp 20 (hardness 5); Overall AC 4; Ram 2d6; Face 5 ft. by 15 ft.; Height 5 ft.; Crew 1; cost 400 gp.

Flying harnesses are wing-like harnesses of light wood and stretched skins developed by the mages who sail the winds of the Elemental Plane of Air. They operate like other hang gliders, but the travelers on the Plane of Air need not worry about finding a good spot to cast off from due to the gravity traits of that plane.

Freki Brothers Longship: Colossal vehicle; Profession (sailor) +2; Spd wind x 15 ft. (nautical poor), oars 20 ft. (nautical average); Overall AC -3; Section hp 135 (hardness 7); Section AC -3; Rigging 40 hp (hardness 0); Ram 8d6; Face 70 ft. by 20 ft.; Height 10 ft. (draft 5 ft.); Crew 50 (40 rowers); Cargo 50 tons (Spd wind x 10 ft. or oars 15 ft. if 25 tons or more); cost 30,000 gp.

The Freki Brothers of Glorium are some of the finest shipwrights in the realms, even if the only things they build are longships, which are usually used to reach Ysgard. Their superior construction increases the handling, speed, and durability of the longship. The deck can hold two light catapults or ballistas.

Hot-Air Balloon: Huge vehicle; Profession (pilot) -4; Spd fly wind x 20 ft. (clumsy); Overall AC 3; Section hp 20 (hardness 5); Section AC 3; Rigging 20 hp (hardness 0); Ram 1d6; Face 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Height 5 ft.; Crew 1; cost 1,000 gp.

Hot-air balloons see use in a couple of places on the planes, most commonly the Elemental Plane of Air and on Carceri. The inhabitants of Bytopia also use hot-air balloons, typically to transport goods between the opposite layers of that plane. Balloons are filled with heated air, causing them to rise from the ground. The pilots of passenger balloons use a small flame to fill the balloon, and then the pilots use the winds to sail the balloon. Such balloons have room for one passenger in addition to a pilot.

The balloons of Carceri are made from the skins of various native creatures (or the skins of petitioners or hapless travelers, according to the whispers heard in certain pubs). The skin balloons offer a non-magical mode of travel between the orbs that float in that dread plane's atmosphere. The gnomes of Bytopia, on the other hand, fill balloons with heated air and then tie them up with stout ropes. These balloons are strapped to cargo spheres, made of either wood or steel. One ton of cargo is the maximum for one sphere. The balloons are let go, and when they reach the point where gravity reverses, the sphere descends to the surface, where it is retrieved. There is obviously no piloting of such a contraption, but barring outside interference, the balloon will reach its destination. Metal spheres are sometimes used in case something bursts the balloons prematurely, sending the sphere plummeting to the ground. Wooden spheres have 20 hit points and a hardness of 5, and travel at a speed of wind x 20 feet. Metal spheres have 60 hit points and a hardness of 10, and a speed of wind x 10 feet.

Fortifications/Buildings

From the astral fortresses of the githyanki to the redoubts of the powers themselves, the multiverse sees an endless variety of homes and strongholds, some of which exist in the most unusual locales and others that have survived from ages long forgotten. One of the most well-known and peculiar sights are the walking castles. These strongholds have legs shaped any number of ways (chicken legs, spider legs, and so on) fully capable of crossing large treks of land. This is a common feature of mage strongholds in the Outlands, enabling the spellcasters to move their kip with the shifting of the border rings that project from the spire, ensuring their magic continues to operate. To ensure that their castles can still walk in magically

suppressed areas around the Spire, some lucky sods have been able to get divine powers to bolster the effect, allowing some strongholds to continue moving as close as 200 miles from the spire. Of course, there's no listed cost for a god's grace, but powers have ways on collecting on debts.

Walking strongholds are a variation on the crawling stronghold detailed in *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. A cottage with chicken legs costs an extra 14,500 gold pieces and moves at two miles per hour, or 48 miles per day. To outfit your average-sized tower with enough legs to run around at the same speed costs 58,000 gold pieces. Without divine fiat, a walking stronghold has its magic impeded at about 500 miles away from the Spire. The magic ceases to function at all about 300 miles away from the spire. Mages suddenly finding themselves in an area where the magic is impeded should run their fortresses away from the spire quickly to prevent any chance that their home will tip over. The stronghold can also sit down and wait 'til the border rings shift in its favor again.

Fortification Descriptions

Planar Wards: This is a set of carved marble-like white stone blocks, from four to eight in number. The blocks are set up in sequence surrounding the area to be locked. A command word activates the wards, emanating invisible walls that prevent portals and gates of any kind from opening within their boundaries. Spells involving planar travel are likewise disabled as if by a *zone of respite*, though nothing prevents creatures from physically entering the warded area.

Each block is carved with two numbers, and is about one-foot wide on each side. The first tells the user where in the sequence of wards to activate it, and the second is the number of blocks in the set. Blocks from one set do not work with the blocks of another set, and if someone attempts to use blocks from different sets, the magic is drained from all sets involved. The placement of the blocks determines the overall shape and area of the ward; they can be arranged up to 60 yards apart, in any pattern desired. The wall extends 60 yards above and below ground while arcing over to create a dome.

Speaking the deactivation command while in the warded area dispels the wards permanently. The wards also dissipate and fail a month after activation. Once dispelled, the blocks are no longer magical.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *seal portal*, *zone of respite*; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb. per block.

Shift Snare: This magical wall augmentation operates similarly to *planar warding*, but with the added feature of sending any would-be interloper to another place entirely. When designed, the *shift snare* for the stronghold space is given a destination point within ten miles. The target may make a Will save against DC 24 to escape the snare; those who succeed are simply affected as if by *planar warding*. Those who fail the saving throw are whisked to the predetermined location, appearing there instantaneously (and probably with some surprise). *Caster Level:* 17th; *Prerequisite:* Craft Wondrous Item, *seal portal (MotP)*, *zone of respite (MotP)*, *gate*; *Market Price:* 45,000 gp per stronghold space or freestanding wall.

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