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STRANGE AEONS

PLAYER'S GUIDE



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Monster Codex</i>	MC
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Advanced Race Guide</i>	ARG	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM
<i>Harrow Handbook</i>	HH		

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The Strange Aeons Adventure Path begins with your characters waking up in an asylum with no memory of how they arrived there or who they are. Your first glimpse of the asylum is like a snapshot of nightmarish chaos. Things are certainly not what they seem, and carnage fills the grim stone halls of the sanitarium. You must face the challenges of the asylum and your own foggy memories if you hope to survive.

Strange Aeons embraces numerous themes of Lovecraftian horror to present an entire campaign that pits Golarion's latest batch of heroes against maddening menaces from beyond time and space. In this Adventure Path, you'll find encounters focusing on locales such as insane asylums, creepy old houses, musty libraries, forgotten desert cities, and far stranger locations. At the same time, Strange Aeons remains fundamentally a Pathfinder game. Your characters will continue to gain power as they rise in level, and the expectation is that they will survive and persevere against seemingly insurmountable horrors. There may be casualties along the way, but in the end, Strange Aeons is not meant to give ruthless GMs a blank check to kill off the party in every

other encounter. As with all Adventure Paths, the story presented in Strange Aeons unfolds best when there is a continuing thread of characters from start to end. They may emerge with scars (both mental and physical) when all is said and done, but overall, the encounters in this campaign aren't designed to be insurmountable.

COMING TOGETHER

The Adventure Path opens with the PCs awakening in the basement of an asylum and witnessing a frightening and gruesome scene. Regaining their senses, the PCs feel as if they are emerging from a fog or a dream, but have trouble remembering who they are and how they got into their current situation. The only memories that remain are but vague hints and gut feelings—hardly clear recollections. A PC may recall only bits of an early childhood in a merchant family, while another might remember being born in Oppara, but nothing else. It is up to you to determine how little or much you can recall. Feel free to begin the campaign as a complete blank slate. However, this campaign assumes that the player characters can't recall anything about the past few

FUGUE STATE

You don't know how this happened, who or what did this to you, or why it occurred. This may distress some players, but rest assured that you will find the answers during the course of the Adventure Path. When the Adventure Path begins, you have no memory of who you are, but you have a vague recollection of your childhood and a hazy grasp on your early memories. What's most disconcerting is that the last few years of your life are beyond your ability to recall, as if they never happened. Over time, as you discover more clues, you learn more about yourself and those responsible for your condition and eventually restore your locked-away memories (along with any ugly revelations that may bring).

Despite this condition, you are still capable of performing all tasks normally. You discover that you still know how to use your class abilities. Access to your skills and feats are not hindered in the slightest, and you can inexplicably recall trivial information about the world that you knew before this condition took hold of you.

You might be initially inclined to forsake all other tasks in order to heal yourself of this state, but any attempts are in vain. Due to the unusual and powerful circumstances of your memory loss, nothing short of a *wish* or *miracle* can repair this damage, though your actions in future adventures may restore your fractured mind.

years. Over the course of the adventures, the characters begin to piece together what happened to them, and they regain their full memories midway through the Adventure Path.

Upon waking, your character senses the presence of the other amnesiacs, each with the same lingering doubts, occupying the same cell. Your character feels a vague kinship to these people for unknown reasons. The first thing your character likely realizes is that they are all trapped together in a terrifying situation and that these others might make the difference between escape and perishing in an asylum that has erupted into chaos.

A lingering sense of servitude also nags at your character's memories upon awakening. It's hazy, but some recollection tugs at the back of your character's mind of having been captured, along with a sense of dread that he or she had committed some dark deeds in the past, perhaps under duress. Your character might even consider this blank slate a blessing in disguise.

Beginning a campaign on such unsteady footing requires groups to trust one another. The players need to give up some control over their character's past in order to let this story of uncertain dread play out during

the course of this Adventure Path. Players in Strange Aeon should trust the GM and know that the latter has additional information about their characters' past and future beyond what they may have envisioned. In the hands of a good GM, this slow reveal of characters' histories adds an exciting element to the campaign, but this kind of narrative device also has the potential to feel exclusionary or antagonistic. If at any point during this Adventure Path you feel like your character's agency has been taken away, talk with the GM and the group about ways that the story can be amended or changed to restore a comfortable level of personal control. Remember, uncertainty can be fun, and consensually surrendering some control is a crucial element of the horror genre.

As the Strange Aeon Adventure Path is steeped in Lovecraftian themes, occult elements, and otherworldly mysteries, it might seem like a good idea to make a character familiar with those forces. However, it might prove fun to play someone completely ignorant of the Elder Mythos instead of one steeped in the occult. It's up to you and your group to determine a preferred approach this Adventure Path, and there are few wrong ways to play through Strange Aeon. It's more important for players to be interested in cosmic horror or the Lovecraftian Mythos than it is for their characters to be aware of the things both terrible and unknown. Furthermore, players don't need to be experts on Lovecraftian lore to find frightening enjoyment from this campaign.

BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE IN A FUGUE STATE!

Not all groups are going to want to start the campaign with their memories impaired. Some might not like the implications that they can't determine certain events that happened to their characters in the past. Fear not! You can still play through the Strange Aeon Adventure Path. You and your GM will certainly have to make changes and will miss out on one disturbing element of the campaign, but the lack of memories isn't the only driving factor in this Adventure Path.

If you remove the fugue state element in this campaign, you will need to provide an alternative explanation for why your character ended up in the asylum as it descended into chaos. Perhaps your character was visiting a friend or loved one in the asylum. Maybe your character was committed by a friend or family member (or perhaps even self-committed). It could be that your character worked at the asylum as an orderly, or was a scholar of sorts that heard about weird goings-on at the asylum and decided to investigate. All of these present viable options for beginning Strange Aeon without memory loss, but keep in mind that going this route does alter many plot events in the first half of this campaign.

It's also possible to play Strange Aeon with only some of the PCs affected by the fugue state. This requires the

unaffected characters to help drive the story by wanting to see their companions' minds restored—or potential sins undone. There is always the chance that a character might not survive an encounter early on in this campaign and a new character unaffected by the fugue state would come in to replace the fallen character. In this case, the player and the GM should work together to find the best way to integrate a new character, depending on where the party is in the campaign, as many of the stakes in Strange Aeons are more personal than in other Adventure Paths.

CHARACTER TIPS

You're starting the Strange Aeons Adventure Path, but what kind of character should you play? How much should you develop your character's backstory, knowing that the characters can't remember much of their past? What are the best options for fighting against cosmic horrors from beyond time and space? The following tips and suggestions can help you create characters perfectly suited to conquering the threats and challenges in store for you and your party. These ideas are not exhaustive, and there are thousands of viable character concepts that can excel in this campaign. For more discussions of characters in the Strange Aeons Adventure Path, visit the messageboards at paizo.com.

When making a character intended for the Strange Aeons Adventure Path, simply proceed as you would for any other character for any other campaign. Choose your race, class, feats, skills, traits, and starting equipment. Your GM will let you know what you have on your person at the start of the campaign, but the remainder of your starting gear will eventually be recovered.

To heighten the horror elements in this Adventure Path, consider making a character that has an obvious weakness or vulnerability. This requires an element of trust between you and the GM that the latter not abuse this vulnerability, so talk with your GM about your concept ahead of time.

The suggestions found in the remainder of this document are presented as good choices for fitting the flavor and tone of the Strange Aeons Adventure Path.

CLASSES, ARCHETYPES, AND PRESTIGE CLASSES

While many of the same options that make great characters in any Adventure Path work well for this campaign, a few class options are especially suited to a campaign where the characters struggle against indescribable horrors.

Lovecraftian horror touches upon the disquieting aspects of the unknown and the insignificance of mortal life in the vast cosmos. This idea of peeling back the layers of reality to find unknowable truths fits well with the occult classes introduced in *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*, but players might also relish playing someone ignorant of these hidden truths. That said, while psychic casters tie in well thematically to this Adventure Path, they might also encounter more difficulties with this campaign than usual, since there is a greater chance to run into fear effects and effects with the emotion descriptor. Keep this in mind when making a psychic caster for this campaign. It should also be noted that any character classes that excel at removing negative conditions from themselves and other characters would be useful in this campaign.

The following suggestions are for archetypes that could prove both useful and thematically fitting throughout the Strange Aeons Adventure Path.

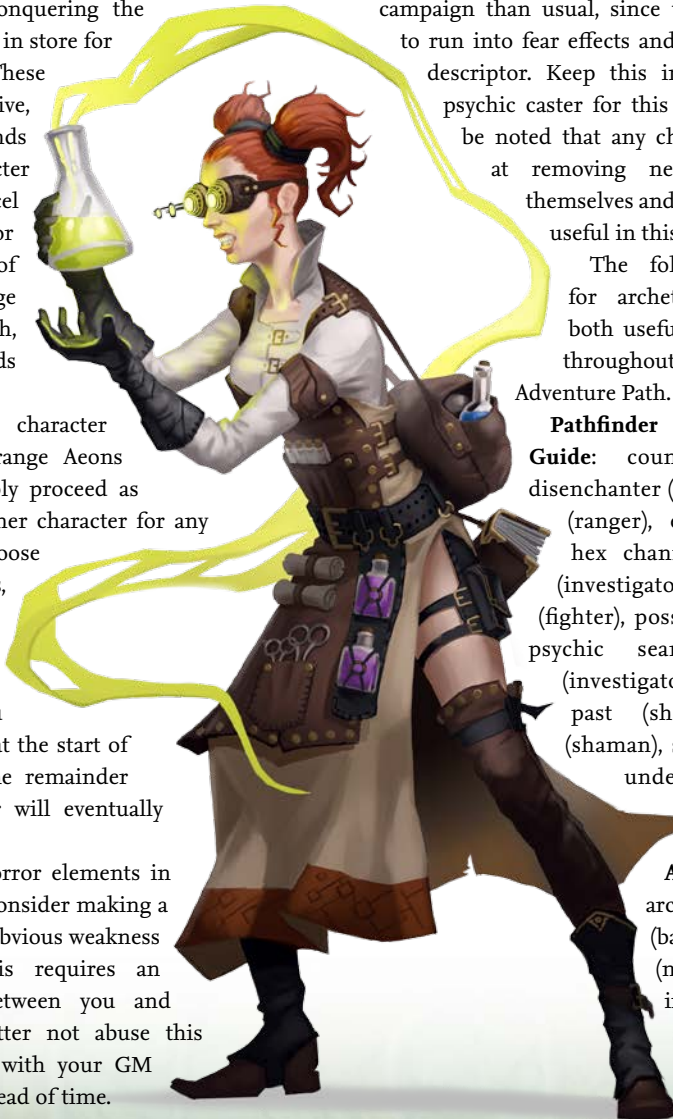
Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class

Guide: counterfeit mage (rogue), disenchanter (warpriest), divine tracker (ranger), empiricist (investigator), hex channeler (witch), infiltrator (investigator), mutation warrior (fighter), possessed shaman (shaman), psychic searcher (oracle), sleuth (investigator), speaker for the past (shaman), spirit warden (shaman), spiritualist (investigator), underground chemist (rogue), visionary (shaman).

Pathfinder RPG

Advanced Player's Guide:

archivist (bard), detective (bard), hungry ghost monk (monk), infiltrator (ranger), investigator (rogue), superstitious (barbarian), urban druid (druid), urban ranger (ranger).



WANT TO READ MORE?

A number of other books can help complement your Strange Aeons Adventure Path experience. Listed below are various sources that, while not necessary, can greatly enhance the experience of playing through this campaign.

FOR GAME MASTERS

To explore exciting new mechanics and try out some optional rules subsystems that fit well with this campaign, check out *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*. When using the research rules in this campaign, make sure to reference *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue*, and keep *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* handy for experiences with dreaming. If you want to learn more about the Elder Mythos and have some additional Lovecraftian monsters to throw at your players, check out *Pathfinder Adventure Path #46: Wake of the Watcher*. Finally, if you want to learn more about Ustalav, look to *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Rule of Fear*.

FOR PLAYERS

If you're interested in finding flavorful character options for your Strange Aeons characters, pick up *Pathfinder Player Companion: Occult Origins* and *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*.

Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures: cult hunter (investigator), elder mythos scholar (wizard), gravedigger (investigator), haunt collector (occultist), hexenhammer (inquisitor), living grimoire (inquisitor), mad scientist (alchemist), soul sentinel (paladin), talisman crafter (occultist), witch killer (slayer).

Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures: esoteric (magus), false medium (rogue), psychic detective (investigator).

Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat: spellbreaker (inquisitor), witch hunter (inquisitor).

Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue: conspirator (investigator), enigma (mesmerist), eyebiter (mesmerist), faith hunter (inquisitor), forensic physician (investigator), hallucinist (investigator), phantom thief (rogue), secret seeker (inquisitor), sharper (rogue), snoop (rogue), warlock (vigilante), zealot (vigilante).

Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic: surgeon (alchemist), infiltrator (inquisitor), mindchemist (alchemist), oathbound paladin (paladin [oath against corruption]), psychonaut (alchemist), vivisectionist (alchemist).

Pathfinder Player Companion: Arcane Anthology: eldritch scoundrel (rogue).

Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the Streets: urban bloodrager (bloodrager), urban hunter (hunter), urban skald (skald).

Pathfinder Player Companion: Magic Tactics Toolbox: cryptid scholar (investigator).

Pathfinder Player Companion: Occult Origins: Harrowed Society student (arcanist), fate guide (spiritualist), id rager (bloodrager), reliquarian (occultist), supernaturalist (druid), true silvered throne (shaman).

If you plan to take a prestige class, down the line consider some of the following options. As your character will be delving into books full of dangerous knowledge, the loremaster prestige class in the *Core Rulebook* might provide an enticing option. If you plan to have a religious character, take a look at the evangelist, exalted, and sentinel prestige classes in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods*. If you intend on creating a sleuth as a character, consider looking into joining the ranks of the sleepless detectives by taking the sleepless detective prestige class in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Paths of Prestige*. The riftwarden prestige class also appears in *Paths of Prestige* and works well for characters devoted to shutting down dangerous portals and fighting against the horrors that emerge from unstable boundaries.

BLOODLINES, MYSTERIES, PATRONS, AND PSYCHIC DISCIPLINES

While nearly any bloodline is a good choice, sorcerers who are wishing to mesh well with the themes of Strange Aeons Adventure Path should consider the following bloodlines: aberrant, accursed^{UM}, destined, dreamspun^{APG}, ectoplasm^{OA}, ghoul^{MC}, harrow^{HH}, imperious^{ARG}, and psychic^{OA}.

Bloodragers have fewer options, but their most thematic choices of bloodline are aberrant^{ACG}, arcane^{ACG}, and destined^{ACG}.

The oracle mysteries that have the strongest ties to the themes of the Strange Aeons Adventure Path include the dark tapestry and time mysteries found in *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic*, the lore mystery from *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*, and the streets mystery found in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the Streets*.

There are a number of witch patrons well suited to the themes of Strange Aeons. *Pathfinder Player Companion: Champions of Purity* has the boundaries patron, which works well for characters fighting against otherworldly evils. *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* contains the ethereal and mind patrons, both apt thematic choices for this campaign. *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* includes the insanity, occult, portents, spirits, stars, and time patrons, and *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures* has the conspiracies, decadence, and space patrons.

The following psychic disciplines found in *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* make good thematic fits for this campaign: abomination, dream, lore, and psychedelia.

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ANIMAL COMPANIONS, FAMILIARS, AND OTHERS

The fugue state that afflicts the player characters also extends to any animal companions, eidolons, familiars, phantoms, or spirit animals, who likewise find themselves unable to recall or relay any recent memories. Your kinship with such a creature remains strong and true, even if your character may not remember ever having it as a companion!

Even though the campaign begins in Ustalav, your character can hail from anywhere and can begin with any animal companion or familiar option your GM allows. Your character could have picked up an exotic pet long before arriving in Ustalav.

Since much of *Strange Aeons* takes place inside cluttered estates, mystical libraries, and haunted laboratories, characters with mounts are not suggested. Likewise, characters with exceptionally large animal companions might have trouble getting their companion into some (but by no means all) of the adventure locations in this campaign.

FAVORED ENEMIES AND FAVORED TERRAINS

Solid favored enemy choices in *Strange Aeons* include aberration and humanoid (human). Good secondary choices are outsider (evil) and undead, and useful tertiary choices include magical beast and ooze. These don't cover all the monsters and challenges your character will face, but they appear frequently as opponents in the campaign.

A fair portion of this adventure path does take place in urban environments, so an urban favored terrain will prove useful. However, the PCs also experience a lot of boat travel, and later desert climes, making aquatic and desert favored terrains useful secondary choices.

LANGUAGES

Common is the most prevalent tongue spoken by enemies and allies in this campaign. The majority of the texts your characters will read will be in Common as well. To communicate with some of the stranger enemies in this campaign, learning Aklo might help, but the language of aberrations and dark fey is an unusual skill for beginning characters and requires a solid justification.

RACES

Since your character can theoretically come from anywhere on Golarion, all races in the *Core Rulebook* can offer good choices for this campaign. If your character is from Ustalav, where the campaign begins, that character's likely to be human, since humans make up most of the nation's populace. Humans in Ustalav are most commonly of the Varisian or Kellid ethnicities.

Races rarer than those found in the *Core Rulebook* are possible options, but take care in your selection, because odd races can distract from the atmosphere of horror. A changeling might be a flavorful choice of race for this campaign, but a nagaji would feel out of place.

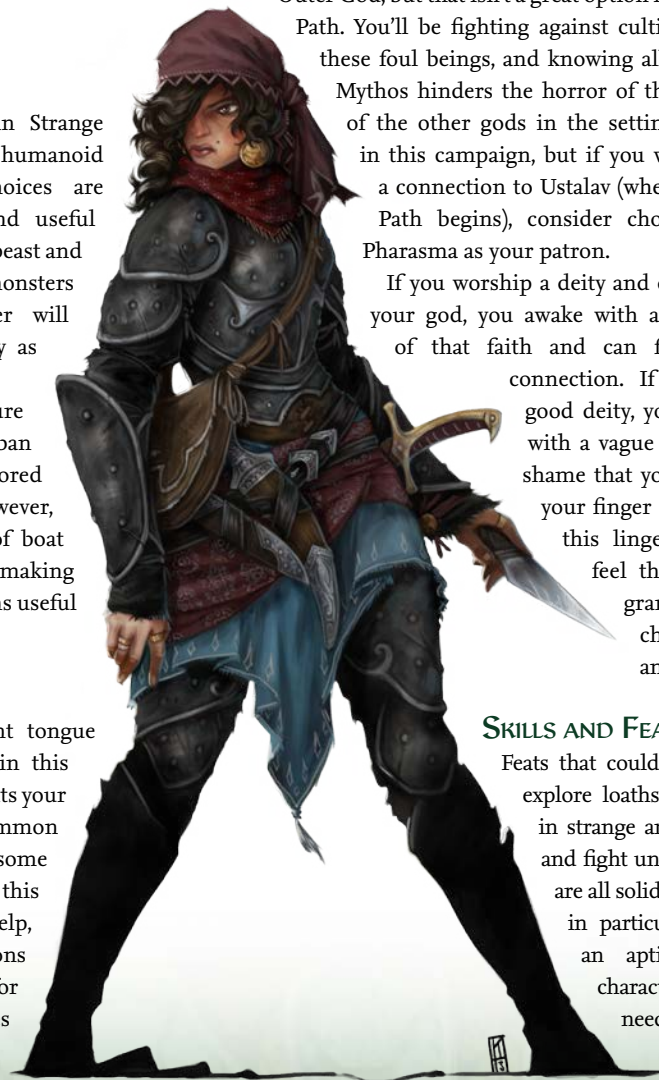
RELIGION

Even though religion isn't a primary focus in this Adventure Path, your group will still need a cleric or a similar character to provide treatment for the inevitable wounds collected along the way. You might be tempted to play a character that venerates a Great Old One or an Outer God, but that isn't a great option for this Adventure Path. You'll be fighting against cultists who worship these foul beings, and knowing all about the Elder Mythos hinders the horror of the unknown. Any of the other gods in the setting work just fine in this campaign, but if you want a deity with a connection to Ustalav (where the Adventure Path begins), consider choosing Desna or Pharasma as your patron.

If you worship a deity and draw power from your god, you awake with an understanding of that faith and can feel your divine connection. If you venerate a good deity, you might awaken with a vague sense of guilt or shame that you can't quite put your finger on. Regardless of this lingering doubt, you feel that your god has granted you a second chance to redeem any misdeeds.

SKILLS AND FEATS

Feats that could help a character explore loathsome lore, survive in strange and distant locales, and fight unspeakable horrors are all solid choices, but none in particular stand out as an aptitude that your character will absolutely need to complete the campaign.



The Strange Aeons Adventure Path contains a number of encounters and events where the PCs must use their wits to achieve success. Research plays a part in a few of the campaign adventures. While the players don't need to have expertise in research mechanics, it would be an excellent idea to have at least one party member with access to a number of Knowledge skills. The most useful among these are Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (planes), and Knowledge (religion).

There are also plenty of social interactions throughout, so having a player character in the group who is skilled in Bluff and Diplomacy is a good idea. As the party starts off in an asylum and later delves into mysterious libraries, creepy estates, and forgotten places, including a party member with ranks in Disable Device will prove useful for many challenges.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

In addition to the previous advice regarding character creation and the earlier explanation of how the PCs begin the campaign, here are a few more matters to consider when you're playing through the Strange Aeons Adventure Path.

Trust Your GM: Since this Adventure Path presents a nonstandard opening, it requires a high element of trust between the GM and the players in order to work smoothly. Your character begins the campaign with little control over the past but still retains agency in the present. Your character's strongest drive at the start of this campaign is likely surviving and escaping the asylum, as well as piecing together those missing years. Over time, as your character uncovers more clues, new facts you learn about the past might prove uncomfortable or frustrating since you as the player didn't get to make those decisions. Roll with these events and explore your character more deeply in order to justify what has happened. To enjoy the story to its fullest, use whatever frustrations arise from this outside control and corruption to fuel your ire toward the antagonists of the campaign instead of turning them on your GM or fellow players. The GM should not hold this trust in light regard, and maintaining positive communication with your GM about

your character's motivations and your own personal boundaries will hopefully keep everyone on the same page and having fun.

Don't Be Afraid to Be Cautious: There are a few times during the course of the Strange Aeons Adventure Path where your character might face exceptionally challenging foes. Remember that it's occasionally smarter to retreat than to keep fighting, and that sometimes it's best not to rouse the wrath of a potential threat. Holding these caveats in mind will help keep your character alive, and it can enhance the fear-saturated atmosphere of the campaign.

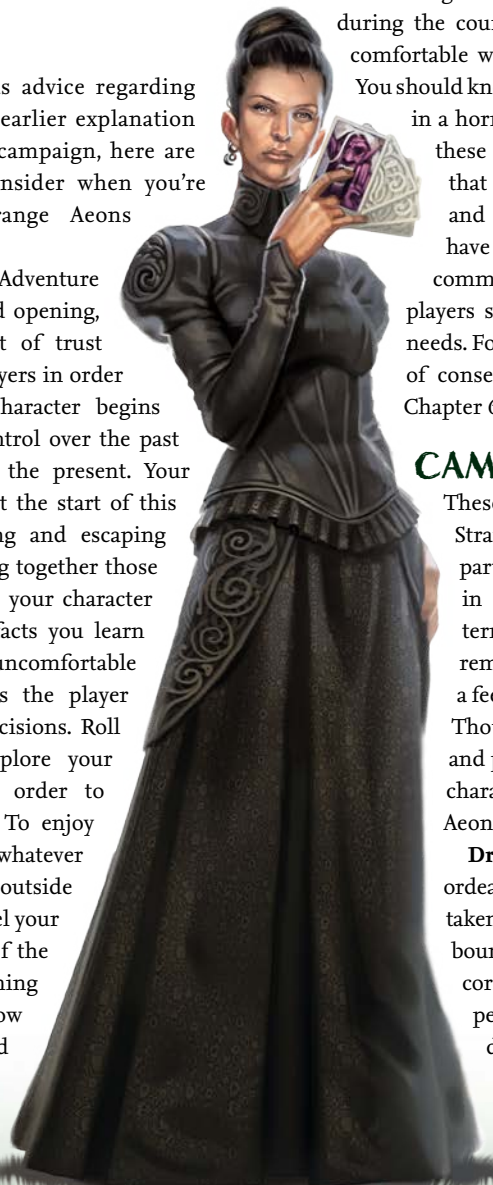
Talk to the Group: The Strange Aeons Adventure Path is a cosmic horror campaign. While cosmic horror doesn't carry some of the frightening and gory elements of slasher horror or body horror, there are still plenty of disturbing elements your character will encounter during the course of this story. Some players aren't comfortable with all components of a horror story.

You should know up front what it means to participate in a horror adventure and prepare yourself for these contingencies. There will be events that are unsettling, as well as characters and creatures that are disquieting. If you have any particular sensitivity, make sure to communicate that with your GM and fellow players so that they can be conscious of your needs. For more information on the importance of consent in horror-themed adventures, see Chapter 6 of *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

These campaign traits tie characters to the Strange Aeons Adventure Path, where the party wakes up in a nightmare—trapped in an asylum and confronted with a terrifying scene. Though the PCs don't remember their past, these traits provide a feeling of who they are or may have been. Though these just consist of vague feelings and personality elements, they can help the character better integrate with a Strange Aeons campaign.

Driven By Guilt: You awake after your ordeal with a lingering feeling that you have taken part in something outside the normal bounds of your morals. Whether you were corrupted at one point or compelled to perform some forgotten actions, this guilt drives you to fight against those forces in the world that prey upon the good. You see your present condition as a chance to redeem yourself and banish this unsettling emotion.



You gain a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against any spells or spell-like abilities cast by evil creatures. In addition, once per day as a swift action, you can add your Charisma bonus to your attack rolls and deal 1 additional point of damage for each class level you have against evil creatures for 1 round. You must have a good alignment to take this trait.

Enduring Stoicism: Even though your pulse is pounding in your ears when you awake in the asylum, you feel strangely nonplussed. You can recognize that the situation you find yourself in is horrific, but you refuse to let that fear control you. It doesn't feel like it's worth worrying over too much. You know that when you face unspeakable forces, keeping your cool will keep you alive.

You gain a +2 trait bonus on all saving throws against spells or effects with the fear or emotion descriptors. In addition, you gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks due to your intimidating presence, as people don't know what to expect from you.

Foe of the Strange: You awake feeling emboldened after a terrifying nightmare. Instead of being frightened by the bizarre creatures from your nightmares, these experiences have steeled you against these startling alien beings. You know that you fell victim to strange circumstances and loathsome forces, but you refuse to give in to a creeping sense of helplessness. Instead, you vow to fight back against whoever or whatever is responsible for your current situation. The creatures of your nightmares won't hold fear over your head. You'll take the fight to them.

You gain a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against extraordinary, spell-like, and supernatural abilities of aberrations (for example, a gibbering moulder's gibbering or an intellect devourer's *confusion*). In addition, whenever you're confused and roll to determine behavior in a given round, subtract 10 from the result.

Formerly Mind-Swapped: You awake with a strange sensation beyond the frightening experience of extensive memory loss. Full recollections of the experience—like so many others—have been wiped from your mind, but at some point in your past your mind was swapped with that of a yithian, an alien being from beyond time and space. You don't remember details of your experiences wandering the yithians' peculiar city in a foreign body—and even worry whether this might be some strange hallucination—but every so often, a flash of insight strikes you as a result of this experience. You know that you can rely on these alien flashbacks during your investigation into your current situation, as it gives you greater perspective into an otherwise confusing world.



Once per day, you can reroll one Knowledge check that you have just failed. In addition, you can attempt untrained Knowledge checks with DCs up to 20 instead of 10.

Methodical Mind: When you awake with nothing but hazy memories, you begin carefully cataloging your thoughts to determine the reasons for your condition and where you might be. This comforts you, and you know deep down that you have always relied on your ordered mind and pragmatic approach to face challenges. You use this focus and sensibility to your advantage as you investigate your current dire situation.

Choose three Knowledge skills. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge checks of these kinds and on concentration checks. In addition, choose one Knowledge skill. When researching, you are considered to have Skill Focus for that Knowledge skill when determining what die you roll to reduce a library's knowledge points (kp). See *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* for more information on research rules.

Pugnacious: You awake in the asylum with sore muscles and bloody knuckles, as if you were recently in a fight. You even have a vague feeling that you won. You can't explain it, but you know that you've always been easy to set off, and your first instinct when pressed into a corner is to lash out. Stuck in the asylum sets you on edge, and you not only want to figure out what happened to you, you want to free yourself and find whoever did this to you—and make them pay.

You gain a +1 trait bonus on attack rolls when threatened by two or more enemies. In addition, once per day you can gain one of the following effects as an immediate action: You can increase the reach of your melee attacks by 5 feet for 1 round, or you can treat your weapon as one size category larger than it actually is for purposes of determining damage for 1 round.

Ritualistic: You awake with a sense of purpose and a tingle of magical power. Though it's unsettling that you can't recall your past, you have a hunch that if you and your companions do everything just right—follow the correct steps and order—the answers will reveal themselves and you will be free of your condition. You get the feeling that you've always fallen back on careful planning and time-tested evidence in the past, but a nagging sensation also tells you that you used these skills in less-than-kind ways all too recently.

Choose one o-level spell. You can cast this spell once per day as a spell-like ability with a caster level equal to your character level. The spell-like ability's save DC is

Charisma-based. In addition, you gain a +2 trait bonus on all skill checks when performing occult rituals.

Sensitive Mind: You awake in the asylum horribly aware of dangers lurking nearby. While your memories are hazy and indistinct, everything around you looks vibrant and clear. You have an inkling that you have always been perceptive and can tell a lot about a person even in a quick meeting. This sensitivity can overwhelm you at times, especially in your current situation.

You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise, Perception, and Sense Motive checks, and one of these (your choice) is a class skill for you. In addition, once per week you can use the psychometry occult skill unlock even if you are not capable of casting psychic spells or have the Psychic Sensitivity feat. See *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* for more information on psychometry and other relevant occult skill unlocks.

True Devotion: You wake from your recent ordeal with a sense of shame, as if you had sinned deeply against your morals and beliefs. However, you feel a bit of relief as well, as if your god had granted you a second chance. You not only have a drive to figure out what happened to you, but an urge to fight back against the unspeakable forces of evil. If, during the course of your investigation, you discover that you took part in unsavory activities that would normally be opposed to your faith or alignment, this event no longer has any impact with your standing in the eyes of your god due to your renewed righteous convictions.

Once per day when casting a divine spell, you can attempt to cast the spell without losing the spell from its spell slot or using one of your allotted spells per day. There is a 20% chance that this attempt is successful. In addition, select one domain or inquisition you have. You can use the first granted power of that domain or inquisition one additional time per day. You must have a good alignment and be class capable of casting divine spells in order to select this trait.

Twitchy: Your first thought upon awaking in the asylum isn't confusion over why you can't remember anything clearly—it's

a sudden urge to find safety. You feel like everything around you, aside from your companions, might threaten you and you're always ready to react. You have a hard time staying still, and you're constantly surveying your surroundings. Maybe you are paranoid, or maybe it's just an overactive imagination, but whatever it is, you know that keeping these feelings honed will help you stay alive.

You gain a +2 trait bonus on initiative checks and a +1 trait bonus on Reflex saves

ABOUT USTALAV

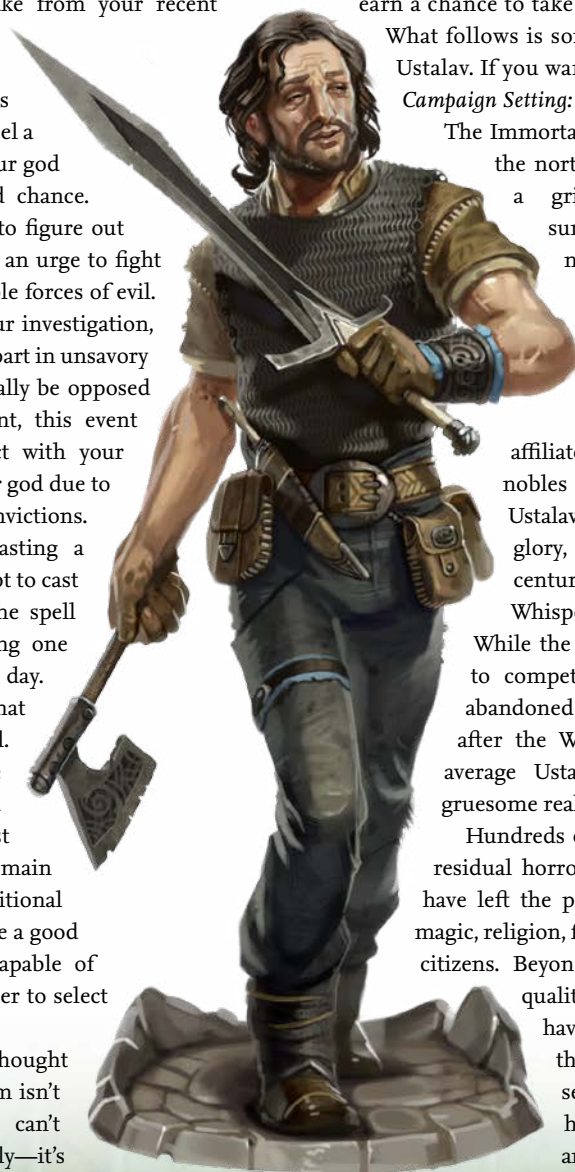
The storyline in the Strange Aeons Adventure Path takes the PCs from an asylum in Ustalav in the first adventure to a neighboring town in the second adventure, before leading them south through a number of other locations as the PCs attempt to uncover what events led to their being committed—and earn a chance to take revenge on those responsible.

What follows is some general information about Ustalav. If you want to know more, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Rule of Fear*.

The Immortal Principality of Ustalav lies on the northern shore of Lake Encarthan, a grim bastion of civilization surrounded by the barbarian north. A harsh landscape and a history rich in tragedies inspire a wary population to skepticism, religious devotion, and superstition.

A conglomeration of loosely affiliated counties run by feuding nobles vying for power and influence, Ustalav is a pitiful shell of its former glory, before it was subjected to centuries of slavery at the hands of the Whispering Tyrant's undead armies. While the nation's upper classes struggle to compete with the very nations that abandoned them to fend for themselves after the Whispering Tyrant's defeat, the average Ustalavic citizen faces far more gruesome realities.

Hundreds of years of subjugation and the residual horrors that plague the countryside have left the people of Ustalav suspicious of magic, religion, foreigners, and even their fellow citizens. Beyond their eccentric and insular qualities, the people of Ustalav often have a dour worldview. They resign themselves to lives of suffering, seeing nothing in their people's history to suggest there exists any hope for a better life. Despite





the physical and psychological strains upon its populace, Ustalav nevertheless fosters extremely hardy and tenacious stock: men and women who firmly believe that no matter how bad it gets, history shows it could always be worse.

Although Ustalav has little to offer its rural peasants, inhabitants of its many metropolitan areas fare somewhat better, and the centers of learning and culture they provide draw trade and travelers from throughout the Inner Sea region. The capital, Caliphas, stands on the banks of Lake Encarthan, and its fog-shrouded streets host some of the nation's most esteemed trade and academic establishments. In the north, the city of Karcau boasts a thriving culture of music, theater, and other fine arts, and its opulent architecture rivals the excesses of even the most exotic Taldan palace. Meanwhile, Ustalav's northwestern counties have broken from aristocratic rule and formed their own local, democratic government without nobles, calling themselves the Palatinates and providing a glimmer of hope for the downtrodden people of provincial Ustalav.

THRUSHMOOR

Though the characters won't actually reach the town of Thrushmoor until the second adventure, the asylum they find themselves in initially was built on Briarstone Isle. This island is situated in the Danver River, not that far from Thrushmoor.

Originally established by Kellid wanderers, a settlement has existed in some form at the mouth of the Danver River for nearly seven centuries. Early settlers found a bounty of clean water and abundant fishing here, though many felt that the area was cursed. Even though the people enjoyed all the resources they needed to survive, danger lurked behind every shadow, and something always seemed to go wrong with their efforts to tame the land.

Thrushmoor is the seat of power of the Ustalavic county of Versex and home to the region's ruling family, the Lowls. The town maintains a veneer of propriety despite its sinister underbelly. Count Haserton Lowls IV takes a largely hands-off approach to rule, leaving much of the county's governance to elected or appointed mayors. In the case of Thrushmoor, this bureaucrat is Magistrate Tillus Padgett. The count's reclusive tendencies rarely impact Thrushmoor's daily activities, as the noble spends most of his time holed up in his estate, Iris Hill, poring over arcane tomes and ancient grimoires on unknown topics.

Thrushmoor is primarily a fishing town, as the temperate climate and fecund waters of Avalon Bay provide the anglers with profitable activity all year long. The boats stop moving only for the few days on which the surface of the lake freezes, and even then, the tranquil inlet of the port provides an ideal spot for ice fishing.

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