

Stormbringer®

Excitement!

DEMON MAGIC is the second companion for Stormbringer®, the roleplaying game of action and adventure in the Young Kingdoms.

Authorized by fantasy author Michael Moorcock, **DEMON MAGIC** includes all necessary statistics, maps, and plans, and contains many original illustrations. Among its contents are:

- The Velvet Circle:** a scenario in seven chapters, which takes many sessions of play to conclude. The adventure includes a complete red-light district, with business notes and a plan of the Circle.
- Sorcerer's Isle:** a shorter, more intense scenario to fill one or two evenings.
- Runes of Rathdor:** analyzes and describes the properties of six magical runes discovered during the reign of the 42nd Emperor of Melnibone.
- Sanity for Stormbringer®:** introduces the optional characteristic of SAN into Young Kingdoms play.
- Six new creatures, six nationalities, seven new Demon abilities, and five new magic items.**

More Adventures. Creatures, and Magic



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DEMON MAGIC

The Second Stormbringer Companion

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Adventures, Creatures, and Magic

introduction

*Welcome to the second in the Stormbringer Companion series. This volume has been put together with eyes toward filling in a few chinks in the official rules (like the "Seeing in the Dark" module on page 22), to extending the rules (the introduction of sample runes and their effects), and to showing off the flexibility and **fun** inherent in the system (the redoubtable demonship Habnikav in the "Sorcerer's Isle" scenario, for instance). Also in that scenario are the first Stormbringer rules for ghosts. Mark L. Gambler's Sanity rules offer a way to make heavy-metal-style adventurers a bit more 'sensitive.' Arno Lipfert contributes optional rules of several types - new Demon special abilities which are rather less crooked, the useful runes of Rathdor, magic items which begin to illustrate just how powerful a Young Kingdoms sorcerer could become, and a nice bundle of new races. Larry DiTillio's scenario rounds out the book, and it is filled with his special humor; the bawdy-town of the Velvet Circle can (and deserves to be) visited many times.*

As always, we'll be interested in your comments and questions.

Lynn, Sandy, and all of Chaosium



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Sanity for Stormbringer

by Mark L. Gambler

“... now wounding Yyrkoon in the right side with a blow strong enough to have killed any other man. Yyrkoon laughed then - laughed like a gibbering demon from the foulest depths of Hell. His sanity had broken at last and Elric now had the advantage.”
- The Weird of the White Wolf

This article introduces the optional characteristic of Sanity (SAN) into the world of the Young Kingdoms.

The intent of these mechanics is to characterize the way that Chaos warps and shocks the mind, spirit, and soul, as portrayed in Moorcock's writings. For instance, Theleb K'aarna delved deep into the blackarts to wreak vengeance upon Elric. But when at last the Prince of Ruins caught up with Theleb at Nikorn's villa, the Pan Tangian is described as half-gibbering, hunched and twisted, tittering to itself, and as having once been a man, Again, when the magic mirror in Dhoz-Kam was broken, the escaping souls killed or drove most of the citizens insane. Yet again, when the minor heroes were incorporated into the stuff of the fourwho-are-one and they took the shape of Gagak in fighting Agak, the minor heroes were greatly affected - and some went insane.

These optional rules also limit sorcerers who summon demons for every occasion. For example, Stargrim is an Eshmirian warrior-priest in my campaign. He released all his demons after each adventure and then summoned new ones. A powerful sorcerer, Stargrim had **no** worries about losing binding attempts, and releasing demons gave him ELAN since his patron god was Arioch. Since incorporating Sanity into the game, Stargrim must consider the effects **of**: consorting with entities which can slowly drive him insane - he can no longer take demon-summoning so lightly!

These rules are adapted from mechanics originating in *Call of Cthulhu*. Unlike that game, however, Young Kingdoms characters do not suffer SAN rolls for stumbling over corpses or for witnessing frightening events. After all, Chaos is normal in the Young Kingdoms, and personal combat is there a way of life.

Further, characters in *Stormbringer* do not experience temporary insanity as often as in *Cthulhu*. There the average investigator is much less robust and powerful than the average *Stormbringer* playercharacter - the latter is more likely to be slowly worn down to permanent insanity than

he is to snap into and out of temporary insanity as a defense mechanism. Sanity should not become overriding in *Stormbringer*, because that would not be true to the stories and their reliance upon physical action.

Sanity Mechanics

Each character receives a new characteristic, Sanity, which is abbreviated SAN. A character's SAN equals his POW x5, plus or minus relevant nationality modifiers. A character's SAN does not change because his POW later changes. Write down half of the character's starting SAN as his Temporary Insanity Score (TIS); the character's TIS never changes.

NATIONALITY SAN MODIFIERS

Meiniboneans +20	Oinans -10
Pan Tangians +10	Yuans -10
Eshmirians +5	Orgians -20
Myrryns +5	

Occasionally, a character must receive a successful SAN roll or lose some of his SAN. The roll is made using percentile dice; a successful roll is equal to or less than the character's SAN at the time of the roll. Any loss of SAN is probably permanent.

EXAMPLE: *Pan Tangian sorcerer Tan has POW 16; his SAN is therefore figured as 16 x5 = 80. As a Pan Tangian, his nationality modifier of +10 makes his starting SAN 90.*

Tarz's SAN never will be higher than 90, his starting score, but later experiences may cause his SAN to go below 90. Tarz's TIS is one-half of 90, or 45; that reference number will never change. Even after years of study and summonings raise Tarz's POW to 20, his maximum SAN is 90, and his TIS remains 45.

Use the Notes box in the skills portion of the character sheet to record current SAN. Character starting SAN and TIS should be written in ink; current SAN should be written in pencil.

If a character ever loses SAN greater than or equal to his TIS in a ten-minute (SO melee turn) period, he then goes temporarily insane. Roll for the character once on the Temporary Insanity Form table and once on the Temporary Insanity Time table. The Form table shows how the character is affected, and the Time table shows for

how long the character is affected. Time, potent drugs, or godly intervention might heal the temporary insanity, though making a drug for calming the mind requires a Plant Lore skill of at least 91%, and such a drug will be hard to find ready-made.

FORM OF TEMPORARY INSANITY	
roll 1D6	resulting insanity
1	catatonia; assume fetal position
2	stupefaction; babble incessantly
3	paranoia; unreasoning suspicion
4	phobia; take on great fear of that which caused the insanity
5	amnesia
6	attempt suicide; but note that the attempt should be easy to foil

TIME OF TEMPORARY INSANITY	
roll 1D8	time temporarily insane
1	10 minutes
2	1 hour
3	2 hours
4	10 hours
5	1 day
6	2 days
7	7 days
8	14 days

When a character's SAN reaches zero, he becomes permanently and completely insane, and he is now played by the gamemaster as a pawn of Chaos. The only cure for permanent insanity is an act of a god; gods may prefer that a character remain insane, or they may not care enough to act, or the character's insanity may be part of a vast scheme toward unfathomable ends. Whatever the reason that a god does anything, players should understand that gods always drive hard bargains.

Restoring Sanity Points

A character can regain Sanity points, but never to an amount exceeding his starting Sanity. As a rule of thumb, SAN points return when characters defeat a god or thwart a god's plan. Defeating a god as Elric did, and perhaps as only Elric could, should bring a large Sanity gain. Banishing a god might be worth 30 SAN points. Foiling the plan of a god could be worth as much as 20 SAN points, depending on how hard the god was trying. All Sanity gains are entirely at the discretion of the gamemaster, the sole judge of the situation and of what is appropriate.

Sanity Costs by Situation

The following entries discuss those Sanity-shaking situations which can be expected especially during *Stormbringer* play. Most of the examples are drawn directly from the stories and novels. Gamemasters will be able to think up additional situations.

Honible Natural Deaths

Some natural deaths may be so awful that characters witnessing the situation or the disfigured body must accept

the results of a SAN roll. If the SAN roll succeeds, the character loses no Sanity; if it fails, the character loses 1D6 SAN. For example, Tarz the sorcerer calls on a longtime friend. Even though servants say the friend is at home, Tarz can't find him. A thorough search finally locates the friend in the hunting-tiger's cage, with the tiger busily gnawing on the remains of its former master. Tarz's player must make a SAN roll for his character. He rolls 74, under Tarz's current SAN of 90, and Tarz is grief-stricken for his friend, but loses no SAN because of the manner of death. On another occasion, Tarz sees a person dead from a terrible disease - the body is bloated and grotesquely distorted, and the stench is shocking. The gamemaster requires another Sanity roll; this time Tarz's player rolls a 93, indicating that Tarz is greatly upset by the scene. The SAN loss roll is 1D6, and the player rolls a 4; Tarz's SAN is now 86. Gamemasters may want to exempt Melniboneans from this particular category - some of the most gruesome deaths of all times were engineered by the lords of Imrryr!

Horrible Unnatural Deaths

Sorcerous or Chaotic deaths can be more mind-shaking than natural deaths. In such a situation, a successful Sanity roll still costs 1 SAN point; an unsuccessful Sanity roll costs 1D6 SAN. Remember that when Theleb K'aarna summoned the Elenoin to fight the warriors of Tanelorn, they



Tarz loses some SAN points

first killed and ate Carkan of Pan Tang. After seeing this, Moorcock describes the warriors of Tanelorn as hysterical with fear and disgust, and they fling themselves at the Elenoin. Another example might be witnessing Stormbringer sucking the soul from a victim as the unfortunate dies. Again, Melniboneans might be exempted from Sanity loss in this category.

The Stuff of Chaos

It is reasonable to call for a Sanity roll when adventurers see the stuff of Chaos. In this case a successful Sanity roll should cost no SAN, but a failure costs 1 D8 SAN. Remember that when Earl Aubec first visited Castle Kaneloon and saw the churning power of Chaos, he commented that it would take a truly robust mind to withstand the presence of the swirling Chaos-stuff. Surely some of the adventurers in your campaign need testing! Another illustration is the tower of Voilodion Ghagnasdiak, also called the vanishing tower. Seeing a tower shimmer and wink out of existence should force adventurers to the very edges of their minds.

Chaotic Changes

If a character knows that something odd or Chaotic is happening to him, his player must make a Sanity roll for him. Minor incidents call for no loss of Sanity if the roll succeeds, and a loss of 1D6 SAN if the roll fails: suppose Tarz finds a Demon of Knowledge in the form of a small black cat. Before the cat answers a question, it bites Tarz on the arm and sucks a little blood. Every time this takes place, Tarz must receive a successful Sanity roll or lose 1D6 SAN. A major incident requires the loss of 2 SAN points if the roll succeeded, and 1D8+2 if it failed. In the fiction, a good example occurs when Elric enters Balo's citadel. In that strange place, Elric was terrified when he saw that he had been turned into a ghost. An adventurer might be affected similarly when he feels a Demon weapon sucking strength from him.

Special cases occur when incredible things happen to a character, such as being turned into an ooze creature by the "Spell of Life" in the Crystal of Daerdaerdarth adventure in the *Stormbringer Companion*. In that case, a gamemaster could fairly ask a player to make a Sanity roll against a tenth of his adventurer's current SAN; failing that, the adventurer should lose 50 SAN. These very powerful and very strange Chaotic changes should be handled by the gamemaster as he sees fit.

As befits them, Melniboneans should be exempt from all but the most powerful Chaotic changes.

Horrible Monsters

Initial encounters with certain creatures should require Sanity rolls, but later viewings of the same creature should not require additional SAN loss. In *The Weird of the White Wolf*, for example, the Dragons swoop for vengeance against the escaping reaver fleet. Count Smiorgan, who had never known fear, is described as having horror in his eyes. The Sanity-altering effects of Dragons and other creatures can be found on the table at the top of the next column.

Gamemasters may want to later charge Sanity costs for viewing the same creature if considerable time has passed, or if the first encounter went badly for the adventurers.

SANITY LOSS: HORRIBLE MONSTERS TABLE		
<i>creature</i>	<i>SAN roll succeeds</i>	<i>SAN roll fails</i>
Dragon	1D4	1D8+1
Kyrenee	1D4	1D10+1
Oonai	1D4	1D8+1
Mist Giant	1D4	1D8+1
Sea Serpent	1	1D6
Viridian Shrieker	1	1D6
Air Shark	0	1D4
Beetle of Kaleef	0	1D4
Bronze Gryph	0	1D4
Chaos Butterfly	0	1D4
Clakar	0	1D4
Creature of Matik	0	1D4
Crimson Xoar	0	1D4
Elenoin	0	1D4
Golden Ice Hound	0	1D4
Grahluk	0	1D4
Olab	0	1D4
Hunting Dogs of the Dharzi	0	1D4

As an example of using this table, suppose that Tarz and companions are attacked by an Oonai. The Pan Tangian's player must make a Sanity roll against Tarz's SAN of 86. The player rolls 43, a success but only a relative success, since the table rules that 1D4 SAN must be lost even after a successful roll. The player rolls 1D4 for Tarz's actual SAN-point loss; the result is 2. Tarz's current Sanity is adjusted to 84, but Tarz will never suffer another Sanity loss just for seeing an Oonai.

Exempt Melniboneans from Sanity loss in this category.

Seeing Demons

Judging by Moorcock's writings, viewing elementals does not affect a character's Sanity, but seeing the real form of a demon does. After the visage of a particular demon causes a Sanity roll for a character, that character's Sanity is no longer vulnerable to that demon's natural appearance.

If the demon is bound into something like a weapon or a door, then no Sanity roll should be requested, since the character is not seeing the demon in all of its glory. Shapechangers should not prompt more than one Sanity roll.

Note that a summoning sorcerer must make a SAN roll for each demon summoned - even demons which end bound into objects. The table below describes the effects upon Sanity of seeing a demon.

SANITY LOSS: THE DEMON TABLE		
<i>type of demon</i>	<i>Sanity roll succeeds</i>	<i>Sanity roll fails</i>
Combat	1	1D8
Protection	1	1D6
Possession	1	1D8
Desire	0	1D6
Knowledge	0	1D4
Travel	0	1D4