

## EMPOWERED FAMILIARS

The lock was a simple one, Nightwind had no problems in picking it. The old wizard, Teflour, must be going senile; why else would he use such a childish lock to hold tight the window of his shop? Nightwind had expected to find glyphs and sigils barring his entry, but their were none. Perhaps after he had been properly robbed Teflour would go about the process of creating proper magical wards...but by then it would be too late.

The window opened without a sound. Nightwind slipped in. The shop was unlighted, but Nightwind's eyes saw well in the dark, and he knew exactly what he wanted, and where it was hidden. In seconds he was behind the counter. His hands gently probed the ground, fingers pressing lightly on each floorboard until he heard a gentle squeak. Prying with his fingers, a loose board came off in his hands. Nightwind peered cautiously into the dark hole, would there be traps? Surely no wizard was foolish enough to leave his source of power unguarded? Nightwind reached into his pocket and drew forth a small iron globe. Muttering a command word under his breath he invoked the globe's magic. An arrow-thin beam of bright white light burst from it's side. Nightwind examined the hole carefully. His heart began to beat faster, there was the object of his desire! A worn leather book, massive in size, Teflour's book of spells. It was worth an absolute fortune. The light from the globe winked out, Nightwind placed it in his pocket. He reached down to grab the tome.

A low hiss of warning washed across Nightwind like winter breeze. He reacted like lightning. His right hand snaked to his side, grabbing his dagger, while his eyes darted upwards, seeking the source of the noise. He sighed in relief. There, on the counter top, was Teflour's cat. It's hackles were raised, its claws bared, it snarled like a demon.

"Sorry old puss," said Nightwind softly, "but I can't have you raising the alarm. They say its bad luck to kill a wizard's familiar, but I say its worse luck to be caught stealing his spellbook." Nightwind's hand whipped out, grasping Teflour's familiar by the throat. He raised the hissing, scratching beast into the air and drew his dagger.

He didn't have time to scream.

One instant his hands held five pounds of angry fur and claws, then suddenly his fingers were pried apart by a force he could not resist. The cat grew, explosive, so rapidly his eyes could not follow the change. Claws became talons, teeth became fangs, it was bigger than a man now! And then it was on him, pressing him to the floor, crushing him with its great weight. White teeth were on his neck. Razor claws dragged across his belly. Piercing. Tearing. Blood.

And then there was nothing.

Familiars make a fascinating addition to any campaign; unfortunately the rules for familiars in AD&D do little to encourage their inclusion. If a mage is going to summon a familiar, he usually makes his decision to do so at first level. If the player is ambitious, and hopes to see his wizard advance to a high experience level, his decision will almost always be to \*not\* summon a familiar. While mages, and their opponents, advance greatly in power as campaigns progress, the statistics of familiars hardly change. This virtually non existent progression means that, as opponents gain power, it becomes more and more likely that a familiar will be killed in combat. Even avoiding physical confrontation can not save familiars from area affect weapons.

When a familiar does die the consequences are severe: constitution loss and possible death. These are strong incentives for any wizard to avoid summoning a familiar. The bonuses of slightly enhanced sensory powers, and a +1 bonus to initiative, do not outweigh (or even balance) these dangerous penalties.

\*Empower Familiar\* is a third level magic-user spell (detailed below) which attempts to make having a familiar worthwhile. \*Empower \* \*Familiar\* allows a mage to grant his familiar certain powers, which are described in detail after the spell description. These powers enhance the usefulness of familiars, and act as catalysts to a wide variety of interesting role-playing opportunities.

### EMPOWER FAMILIAR (CONJURATION/SUMMONING)

Level: 3

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 13 hours

Area of Effect: One familiar

Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster to summon a benevolent magical force, and place it within the body of his familiar. This force grants the familiar certain magical powers which enable it to serve its master more effectively. A familiar so enhanced is referred to as an empowered familiar. This spell can only affect standard familiars, as summoned by the 1st level magic-user spell \*find familiar\*. Imps, gen, and other special familiars all have their own unique magical powers, which can not be further enhanced by this spell. Familiars must be empowered by their owners, and their owners must be at least of the 5th experience level, or this spell will have no affect. Evokers can not cast \*empower familiar\* (as it is a Conjuraction spell), but several evokers have avoided this problem by invoking the spell from a \*ring of spell storing\*. When casting this spell, the caster may choose to grant one of four powers to his familiar. Only one such enhancement is possible per familiar, and repeated castings of this spell have no affect. The four types of forces are detailed below.

Guardian: Enhances the familiar's combat powers greatly, giving it the ability to defend its master, his household, and possessions.

Thaumaturgical: Enhances the intelligence and magical prowess of the familiar. This allows the familiar to aid in magical research and experimentation. Thaumaturgical familiars also possess limited spell casting abilities.

Sensory: The bond between familiar and master is strong; this power enhances this link to undreamed of levels. Both mage and familiar gain the ability to share each other's senses. As both familiar and master gain experience, this bond allows them to develop the ability to perceive things normally undetectable by either man or beast.

Focusing: All familiars are innately magical in nature; this power enhances a familiar's magical affinity, allowing it to generate fields of concentrated or diffuse magic. Focusing familiars are limited in what magic they can focus, but their abilities increase as they gain experience.

The material component of this spell depends on the type of force the mage wishes to summon. The higher quality the material component, the greater the chance the spell will succeed. The GM should rate the material component chosen as being of excellent, adequate, or poor quality. All material components are consumed in the casting of the spell.

In summoning a guardian force, the material component is a body part from a physically powerful creature. This creature must be structurally similar to the familiar, though this similarity need only be tertiary. For example, the tentacle of a displacer beast (a feline creature) would be an excellent component to empower a black cat. A lion's mane would be an adequate component. The tail of a bobcat would be a poor component.

The material component necessary to summon a Thaumaturgical force is an item of magical power related to the casting of spells. A ring of spell storing would be an excellent component. The spellbook of a fledgling wizard would be adequate. A scroll of invisibility would be poor.

The required component to summon a sensory force is the eye (or other sensory organ) of a magical creature. A beholder eyestalk would be an excellent component. The eye of a blink dog would be adequate. If no magical creature's eyes can be found, the eye of any creature with excellent eyesight (such as a hawk) could function as a poor replacement.

To conjure a magical focusing force, the wizard must use a magic item as the material component. The magic item in question must be enchanted with the same type of magic as the mage wishes his familiar to be able to focus. To enhance enchantment magic, for example, a rod of command would be an excellent component. A scroll carrying a \*charm \* \*monster\* spell would be adequate. A robe under the temporary effects of a \*deep pockets\* spell would be poor.

When summoning a magical force, roll on the following table. Modify the die roll by +2 for excellent components, and -1 for poor components. If the mage has ever empowered a familiar before, who has died, modify the roll on this table by a penalty of -2. If the familiar to be empowered was not summoned when the mage was first level,

modify the die roll by an additional penalty of -2.

d20

0 : The mystical forces reject the familiar. The familiar is slain by the strains put on it by the spell.

1-3 : The mystical forces reject the familiar. The spell may be re-attempted once the mage has gained an experience level.

4 : The familiar is empowered with magical guardian forces.

5 : The familiar is empowered with magical thaumaturgical forces.

6 : The familiar is empowered with magical sensory forces.

7 : The familiar is empowered by magical focusing forces.

8+ : The familiar is empowered with the magical force of the caster's choice.

Immediately after casting this spell the caster must spend a minimum of one week training his familiar per experience level he possesses. Until this training period is complete, the familiar can not make use of any of its powers. Higher level mages must train their familiar for longer times because their familiar wield more powerful magical forces.

#### EMPOWERED FAMILIARS

Empowered familiars are similar in many ways to normal familiars, but possess unique characteristics and abilities which set them apart. The abilities of all empowered familiars are explained below.

Empowered familiars, like their masters, possess experience levels. Empowered familiars do not gain experience points, instead their progression is intrinsically linked to that of their masters. For this reason, an empowered familiar will always remain at the same experience level as its master. If their master is energy drained, the familiar will also lose experience levels. If the familiar is drained, it will not lose experience levels, but will instead lose 2hp permanently per level drained. These lost hp can be restored in the same way which lost experience levels are restored.

Because the advancement of empowered familiars is linked with that of their master, and since no mage under 5th level can cast \*empower \*familiar\*, empowered familiar will always be at least 5th level. As their masters gain levels, the familiars likewise gain power. Once a familiar reaches 18th level its progression halts.

While normal familiars possess an armor class of seven, the magical forces inside empowered familiars offer them further protection. For every three experience levels of an empowered familiar, rounded down, the familiar receives a bonus of 1 to their armor class. A 5th-level familiar thus will receive a bonus of 1, reducing its armor class to six.

Empowered familiars are more physically hardy than their normal counterparts. Because of this, empowered familiars possess  $d3hp + 2$  per experience level. A fifth level familiar will thus have 11-13hp.

When in contact with their mage, empowered familiars have the same special saving throws that normal familiars do. When not in contact they save as a mage of the same experience level. All empowered familiars can send telepathic messages to their masters when they are in physical contact with them. This communication is one way only.

Empowered familiars are highly intelligent. The intelligence and wisdom of an empowered familiar is equal to its current experience level. Regardless of experience level, however, the intelligence and wisdom of a familiar will always be at least two points less than that of its master.

If an empowered familiar is separated from its master, or its master dies, it loses one experience level per day. Once its experience level drops below 5th the magical forces contained with its body are lost, causing it to become a normal familiar. \*Empower \*familiar\* may be recast to regain this lost magical force. When used in this way, \*empower familiar\* will always grant the same magical force which was summoned before (or fail completely).

Empowered familiars do not necessarily grant their masters the same benefits as normal familiars do. Sensory bonuses, empathy, and initiative bonuses (if any) are listed under the individual headings of each familiar type.

When an empowered familiar dies, the same penalties apply to the mage as when a normal familiar dies. Additional

penalties are also assigned to the mage, as defined under individual familiar headings.

## GUARDIAN FAMILIARS

Guardian familiars possess the power to transform themselves, instantly, into more physically powerful versions of their natural forms. While in their guardian forms the fighting potential of a familiar is greatly increased. Guardian forms are very large, and slightly warped, versions of the familiar's natural form. Teeth lengthen, claws become huge and razor sharp, the overall effect is quite disconcerting. Powerful guardian familiars are often mistaken for demonic creatures.

Guardian familiars grant their masters a bonus of +1 on all combat initiative rolls. Guardian familiars are only surprised on a d10 roll of 1. Guardian familiars and their mages share very limited empathic communication with a range of one mile. Either party can send the other an empathic request for help, or an empathic warning of danger. This empathic sense also allows the familiar and master to track each other unerringly.

When in their normal forms, guardian familiars have the statistics of a normal empowered familiar. When in their guardian-form, however, empowered familiar immediately gain d3 extra hp per experience level they possess. This hp total should be rolled for once, not every time the familiar transforms. A 5th level guardian familiar, for example, might possess 12hp in its normal form, and 22hp in its battle form.

As guardian familiars gain experience levels they also gain the power to transform into larger guardian forms. Guardian familiars may chose to take any sized guardian form that is within their level range. Even if a high level guardian familiar chooses to assume a small guardian form, it still receives full bonus hit points.

Hit points of damage taken are removed from the guardian form first. If our 22hp familiar listed above took 9hp of damage, when it returned to its normal 12hp form it would have full hp. If it assumed guardian form again, the wounds would also reappear. Guardian familiars use the armor class rating listed with their guardian form when transformed. Guardian familiars attack and make saving throws as monsters of hit dice equal to their current experience level.

Guardian familiars are completely immune to all spells that would physically transform them (enlarge, polymorph, etc.) This immunity is involuntary and may not be dropped to allow "friendly" spells to pass through.

When a guardian familiar dies, their mage immediately experiences a mind shattering wave of paranoia. All saves versus fear magic are now taken at a penalty of -4. In addition, the player must now role play his mage's extreme paranoia in all situations. For every adventure successfully completed, not including the one in which the familiar dies, the mage regains some self confidence (reducing the penalty by 1). Eventually (after the fourth successful adventure), the mage will no longer be paranoid but will still possess a permanent penalty of -1 on saves versus fear magic. The mage is also still subject to the standard penalties for losing one's familiar.

A mage who gains a new guardian familiar will immediately be cured of his paranoia, but will still suffer from the permanent penalty of - 1 on saves versus fear magic.

Below are listed the statistics for battle forms of several common familiar types.

Cat: Transformed black cats become powerful panther-like creatures. If

both forepaw attacks from a guardian cat hit, it may rake with its rear

claws for the listed damage. Many mages choose to make cats their guardian

familiars. Guardian cats are patient guards, powerful fighters, excellent

hunters, and can silently stalk those who flee from them. Guardian cats

can hide in shadows and move silently 85% of the time.

### Level Stats

5-7 AC 5; MV 12; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA Rear claws 1d4 each;

SZ M (4'-4'5 feet long).

8-10 AC 4; MV 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-10; SA Rear claws 2d4 each;

SZ M (4.5'-6' feet long).

11-13 AC 3; MV 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/2-12; SA Rear claws 3d4 each;

SZ L (6' to 9' long).

14-16 AC 2; MV 18; #AT 3; Dmg 2-7/2-7/2-16; SA Rear claws 4d4 each;  
SZ L (11' long).

17+ AC 2; MV 24; #AT 3; Dmg 3-10/3-10/3-24; SA Rear claws 5d4 each;  
SZ L (12' long).

Canine: Though not common familiar types, canine familiars can be obtained if the mage casts his \*find familiar\* spell in a region where canines abound. Small dogs are common canine familiars, wolves and other large canines (with more than 4hp) can not be bound by a find familiar spell. Transformed guardian canines become huge, evil- looking, wolf like creatures.

Guardian canines possess the ability to bark and howl in a most terrifying way, when in guardian form. The affect of this barking/howling is twofold: Creatures who are in combat with the guardian canine, and have hit dice which are equal to or less than half the experience level of the guardian canine, must save versus spells or become overcome by fear (as the spell). In addition, any creature which is exposed to the howling for an extended period of time (at least one turn) will become spooked and frightened automatically. Until the howling stops, they will take all actions with a penalty of -1, and will save at -4 vs fear inducing magic. This penalty only affects those creatures who have equal or less hit dice than the guardian canine. The effects of the howling are cumulative. If a guardian canine were to hide outside a orc camp, and howl for one turn, it could then attack the camp with the knowledge that all orcs it must face will have to save vs spells at -4 or fear it. Note, the canine's barking/howling is only effective if the canine is allowed to bark and howl continually. Magical silence, or the need for stealth, will render this power useless.

Guardian canines are said to be the most loyal of all familiars, and will selflessly sacrifice themselves to protect their masters. Guardian canines save at +4 vs any type magic which would require them to desert or attack their masters.

#### Level Stats

5-7 AC 6; MV 12; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA bark/howl; SZ M (4'-6' long).

8-10 AC 5; MV 12; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA bark/howl; SZ M (6'-7' long).

11-13 AC 4; MV 15; #AT 1; Dmg 4-16; SA bark/howl; SZ L (7'-9' long).

14-16 AC 3; MV 18; #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA bark/howl; SZ L (9'-12' long).

17+ AC 3; MV 24; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA bark/howl; SZ H (15' long).

Crow/Hawk/Owl: All avian familiars possess similar statistics in their guardian forms. Transformed avian familiars possess long sharp beaks, and huge talons far beyond the scope of normal birds. The effect is quite disconcerting, leading the giant birds to often be mistaken for monsters rather than mere giant counterparts of their smaller selves.

Guardian aves in small guardian forms possess the ability to blind their foes. Any beak wound caused has a 25% chance of blinding a foe in one eye (permanently 10% of the time). All guardian aves possess the ability to make diving attacks. These attacks from the sky are at a bonus of +2 to hit, causing double normal talon damage (but no beak attack is allowed).

Guardian aves are prized by many mages as the most versatile of guardians. Their ability to fly makes them able to pursue thieves and assailants almost anywhere.

#### Level Stats

5-7 AC 6; MV 2, Fl 24 (B); #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-3; SA dive, blind; SZ S(3'-4').

8-10 AC 5; MV 3, Fl 24 (B); #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA dive, blind; SZ M(4'-6').

11-13 AC 4; MV 3, Fl 24 (C); #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-8; SA dive; SZ L(6'-9').

14-16 AC 3; MV 6, Fl 36 (C); #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/3-12; SA dive; SZ L (12' long).

17+ AC 3; MV 9, Fl 48 (D); #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/4-16; SA dive; SZ H (15' long)

Frog/Toad: Frogs and toads are not commonly chosen as guardian familiars, but they do possess certain unique abilities that make them very effective ones.

Guardian toads of all sizes possess long accurate sticky tongues. Unless ordered otherwise, toads always attack with these tongues before making bite attacks. Attacks made with tongues are at +4 to hit. Successful hits cause no damage, but the target will become ensnared. Next round the toad will draw the ensnared creature into its mouth. Ensnared creatures have one chance to attack the toad before it devours them; if this attack hits

the guardian toad must save vs spells or it release its assailant.

Ensnared creatures which are larger than the guardian toad take two rounds to draw in, and thus foes have one additional attack round before they are bitten.

Creatures being eaten by guardian toads receive bite attacks. The first attack which hits will cause maximum damage, additional attacks cause normal damage. Attacked creatures can not flee the guardian toad while ensnared by its tongue. On a natural attack roll of 20, the familiar can swallow whole any ensnared creature that is smaller than itself. Swallowed creatures have three attack rounds inside the frog before they asphyxiate.

Due to the difficulty of fighting from inside a frog, a roll of 18 or better is require to hit regardless of THAC0. Damage inflicted to a guardian toad which has swallowed someone has a 1 in 3 chance of damaging the swallowed creature also.

Guardian toads may hop their full movement distance to launch an attack.

The range of their tongue attack is equal to the length of the toad's body.

The bite of guardian toads of 8th level or greater is poisonous. The poison is not very toxic, but it gains strength as the guardian toad gains levels.

The save bonus for the poison is listed in the description of the toad.

Those who fail their saves die in 2-5 rounds.

Level

5-7 AC 6; MV 6 (hop 6); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA tongue, swallow;

SZ M (4'-4.5' long).

8-10 AC 5; MV 6 (hop 6); #AT 1; Dmg 2-7; SA poison(+4), tongue, swallow;

SZ M (4.5'-6' long).

11-13 AC 4; MV 9 (hop 9); #AT 1; Dmg 3-10; SA poison(+3), tongue,

swallow; SZ L (6'-8' long).

14-16 AC 3; MV 12 (hop 12); #AT 1; Dmg 4-13; SA poison(+2), tongue,

swallow; SZ L (10' long).

17+ AC 2; MV 15 (hop 15); #AT 1; Dmg 5-16; SA poison(+0), tongue,

swallow; SZ L (12' long)

Weasel: Guardian weasels have the most frightening appearance of all guardian familiars. When transformed their claws grow larger, as do those of all guardian familiars, but their teeth do not change in the standard way. Rather than having the same number of teeth, only larger, the teeth

of guardian weasels increase in length and number as their size increases.

A 17th-level guardian weasel could easily have one thousand foot long razor sharp needle-teeth with which it makes its bite attacks.

When a guardian weasel strikes a successful hit in combat it immediately begins to drain off blood (if the target has blood). A powerful magical enzyme exists in the guardian weasel's saliva which encourages this blood flow to reach incredible rates. The round after it strikes in combat the guardian weasel will begin to suck this blood, drinking the listed hp value each combat round. This will continue until the weasel, or its opponent, is dead.

Guardian weasels are, unquestionably, the most vicious of all guardian familiars. For this reason many wizards regard them as the best type of guardian familiar to use offensively. Unfortunately, the guardian weasel's use is greatly limited when facing opponents without blood.

#### Level Stats

5-7 AC 5; MV 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA Blood drain (d4);

SZ M (4'-4.5' long).

8-10 AC 4; MV 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA Blood drain (2d4);

SZ M (4.5'-6' long).

11-13 AC 3; MV 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA Blood drain (3d4); SD;

SZ L (6'-8' long).

14-16 AC 2; MV 18; #AT 1; Dmg 4-16; SA Blood drain (4d4); SD;

SZ L (9' long).

17+ AC 2; MV 24; #AT 1; Dmg 5-20; SA Blood drain (5d4); SD;

SZ L (11' long).

#### THAUMATURGICAL FAMILIARS

Thaumaturgical familiars are highly intelligent and magically skilled familiars which possess minor spell powers. The main purpose of a thaumaturgical familiar is to aid his master in research, but in adventuring situations they often prove very useful as a backup source of spell power.

Thaumaturgical familiars grant no initiative or sensory bonus to their masters. Thaumaturgical familiars may communicate with their masters empathically, as do normal familiars, but the range of this ability is a mere 100 feet. Beyond this range, mage and familiar can not even sense each other's presence.

Thaumaturgical familiars possess the same statistics as normal empowered familiars, but they are more intelligent. This increased intelligence is noted under their spell progression chart. The intelligence of a thaumaturgical familiar will always be at least two points lower than that of its master. The wisdom of thaumaturgical familiars is not enhanced.

Spells cast by thaumaturgical familiars do not require somatic components. Verbal components are still required, but are given as barks, yowls and screeches. Any material components required for a spell are still necessary. It is important for the game master to judge as to whether or not a thaumaturgical familiar can carry and manipulate these components. Due to the difficulty in using material components, most thaumaturgical familiars choose to

primarily make use of spells which do not require them.

Spells cast by a thaumaturgical familiar affect opponents as if they were cast by a mage of half the familiar's experience level. Thaumaturgical familiars need not roll to see if they can learn spells, they can cast all spells available to their master (and no others). Thaumaturgical familiars must memorize from their master's spellbooks when studying spells.

The thaumaturgical familiars of specialists do not gain specialist bonuses. These familiars still may not cast spells from their master's opposition spheres. Thaumaturgical familiars of wild mages may not make use of wild magic. Thaumaturgical familiars of elemental mages gain no bonuses when casting elemental spells.

Note that a thaumaturgical familiar can \*not\* summon its own familiar.

Mages who are assisted by thaumaturgical familiars in magical research (including spell research) cut all research time in half. The DM is encouraged to reduce the amount of time necessary to create magic items also, though not necessarily by half.

When a thaumaturgical familiar dies, its master immediately loses one experience level. This loss is immediate, permanent, and can not be cured by restorative magic, not even a wish. The mage is still subject to normal penalties for losing his familiar.

The spell-casting abilities of a thaumaturgical familiar are defined by the below chart.

Level Int 1 2 3 4 5

5 9 1

6 10 2

7 11 2 1

8 12 3 1

9 13 3 2

10 14 3 2 1

11 15 3 3 1

12 15 3 3 2

13 16 3 3 2 1

14 16 3 3 3 1

15 17 3 3 3 2

16 17 3 3 3 2 1

17 18 3 3 3 3 1

18 18 3 3 3 3 2

#### FOCUSING FAMILIARS

Focusing familiars possess the ability to warp magical fields, creating regions of both intense and weak magic. This magical field is always balanced: one magical effect is enhanced, while another is weakened.

Focusing familiars may communicate with their masters empathically at a range of up to one mile. No initiative or sensory bonuses are granted to mages who possess focusing familiars. The statistics of focusing familiars are identical to those of normal empowered familiars.

The magic item consumed in the casting of \*empower familiar\* determines what type of magic the familiar can focus. A wand of fireballs, for example, grants the empowered familiar the ability to focus evocation magic. If the material component used was not of excellent quality, however, the type of magic which can be focused is chosen semi-randomly. Adequate components have a 70% chance of granting a familiar the desired focusing power. Poor components only have a 30% chance. If the expected power is not granted, the power is determined randomly (on the below table). Familiars which are granted focusing powers accidentally have their focusing abilities determined randomly.

## RANDOM FOCUS TABLE

d100 Power

01-12 Focus illusion, dampen necromancy.

13-24 Focus necromancy, dampen illusion.

25-36 Focus alteration, dampen abjuration.

37-48 Focus abjuration, dampen alteration.

49-60 Focus divination, dampen conjuration/summoning.

61-72 Focus conjuration/summoning, dampen divination.

73-84 Focus invocation/evocation, dampen enchantment/charm.

85-96 Focus enchantment/charm, dampen invocation/evocation.

97-98 Focus wild magic.

99-00 Dampen wild magic.

To focus and dampen magic, a focusing familiar creates a magic field which surrounds its body. This field has a maximum radius of 5' per experience level the familiar has over 4th (and a minimum radius of 5'). Only one field can be maintained at any time. One type of magic in this field will be enhanced, while another will be dampened, as explained in the chart descriptions. For magic to be enhanced or dampened, the mage casting the spell must be in the area affect of the field. This enhancement/dampening is involuntary. Priest magic is unaffected by enhancing/dampening.

When a familiar enhances magic, its damage is increased by one point per die, and all saving throws against the magic are made with a penalty of -1. Likewise, dampened magic causes one less point of damage per die (minimum of one point of damage per die), and carries a save bonus of +1. Standard enhancing rules do not apply to wild magic.

For example, Silvanara (an 11th-level evoker) plans to cast \*magic \* \*missile\* (an evocation spell) at her opponent. Her familiar generates a field which enhances evocation (and dampens enchantment/charm) to aid in her attack. Silvanara casts \*magic missile\*, which is enhanced, each missile causing +2 points of damage per die (+1 due to specialist bonus, +1 due to focusing bonus). Simultaneously, another wizard casts \*charm person\* (an enchantment/charm spell) on Silvanara. As he is not, however, in the range of the familiar's dampening field, Silvanara's save vs spells is not with a bonus of +1.

As focusing familiars go up in experience levels they gain additional powers. These are summarized below.

5th: The familiar gains the ability to focus one type of magic.

7th: The familiar gains the ability to focus an additional type of magic.

This sphere is the opposition sphere of the sphere the familiar

learned to focus at level 5.

9th: The familiar learns to focus a new type of magic (chosen from the

Random Focus Table).

11th: The familiar learns to focus the opposition sphere of the sphere it

learned to focus at level 9.

13th: The familiar learns to focus a new sphere of magic (chosen from the

Random Focus Table).

15th: The familiar learns to focus the opposition sphere of the sphere it

learned to focus at level 13.

16th: The strength of the focusing field the familiar learned to generate

at level 5 is doubled, as is the conjugate field the familiar learned

how to generate at level 7.

17th: The familiar learns to focus a new type of magic (chosen from the Random Focus Table).

18th: The familiar learns to focus the opposition sphere of the sphere it learned to focus at level 17.

For example, Gusvas the cat is the familiar of Silvanara the evoker. At 5th level Gusvas learns to generate a field which enhances invocation/evocation magic, and dampens enchantment/charm magic. At 7th level Gusvas learns to reverse this field, producing one which dampens invocation/evocation and enhances enchantment/charm. Silvanara has no use for this field (as she can not even cast enchantment/charm spells), but Gusvas can not chose to learn to generate another field instead. At 9th level, in preparation for an assault on a wild mage's castle, Silvanara teaches Gusvas to dampen wildmagic. At 11th level, Gusvas learns to focus wild magic. Silvanara curses her lack of foresight, as once again, this ability is of no use to her.

When a focusing familiar dies, their master immediately loses the ability to properly focus magical energies. The effect of this is to cause all spells cast by the mage to function as if he was two experience levels lower. Wild mages suffering from loss of control must make a save versus spells whenever they cast a spell or they will suffer a wildsurge. When the mage next gains an experience level it will take three times the normal training time, as the mage will be exercising his magic abilities and attempting to regain control of his magical powers. Despite his best efforts, mage spells of one sphere (selected by the caster) will become permanently unfocused (with the penalty defined above). The sphere selected must be one which the mage has access to.

As a further penalty, specialist wizards and elemental wizards (but not wild mages) lose all specialist bonuses (including the ability to memorize bonus spells) as long as their magical abilities are unfocused.

#### SPECIAL AFFECTS OF FIELDS

Some focusing fields produce special effects. These are outlined below.

Necromancy: Undead in an enhanced necromantic field are turned with a penalty of -1. Intelligent undead will be able to detect the source of this field, and may wish to capture the familiar generating it. Undead in a dampened necromantic field are turned with a bonus of +1. Intelligent undead will wish to destroy the familiar generating this field.

Alteration: Shapeshifters exposed to an alteration enhancing field have a 5% chance of involuntarily transforming each round (25% chance if the shapeshifter is a lycanthrope, and their is currently a full moon). Shapeshifters in an alteration dampening field have a 10% chance of being unable to transform (check each round). A lycanthrope undergoing an involuntary transformation (due to a full moon for example) while in an alteration dampening field may save vs spells to avoid transforming.

Divination: Divination magics cast in a divination enhancing/dampening field carries a range and duration bonus/penalty of 25%.

Conjuration: Creatures summoned by a mage in a conjuration enhancing field have a bonus of +1hp per hit die (to a max of 8hp per die). If these summoned creatures are allowed a save to avoid control by the mage, they do so with a bonus of +2. Creatures summoned by a mage in a dampening field suffer a penalty of -1hp per hit die.

Enchantment/Charm: Charmed creatures which are exposed to an enchantment/charm dampening field may make an immediate save vs spells (with a penalty of -4) to throw off the effects of the charm. This "extra" save may only be taken once and, if the charmed creature has been treated well, may not be granted at all (DM's discretion).

Wild Magic: It is said only the insane would chose to teach their familiars to focus wild magic (but it is also said that many wild mages are insane). Wild magic is not subject to normal rules for enhancing/dampening. Most noticeably, an enhanced or dampened wild magic field does not dampen any opposing magical sphere (as there is none). For this reason, wild magic fields are highly unstable.

Generating an enhanced wild magic field is not, in itself, dangerous. The danger comes when a wild mage actually casts a spell. Every time such a spell is enhanced, the familiar must save versus spells. This save carries a bonus of +1 for every level the spell is below 5, or a penalty of -1 for every level the spell is above 5. Enhancing a 6th-level spell such as \*Wildstrike\* would thus carry a save penalty of -1. If the save is failed, the familiar immediately suffers a wildsurge as if \*it\* had cast the spell. The wizard will still successfully casts his spell, and may even suffer from a wildsurge himself.

Enhanced wild magic causes +1 point of damage per die, and carries with it a saving throw modifier of -1. Standard wild magic level variations are still in affect of course.

Dampening wild magic is a far saner option available to a cautious mage. If a wild mage rolls a wild magic surge while he is in a dampening field, the familiar must immediately makes a save versus spells. If this save is successful, the wild surge drains away, but the spell also fails (as the familiar effectively manages to cut off the spell's power at the source). Dampened wild magic causes -1 point of damage per die (minimum of 1 per die) and carries a saving throw bonus of +1.

Additional Notes: Spells are not the only magic affected by enhancing and dampening magical fields. The exact nature of these affects is left up the imagination of the DM. For example, a \*flameblade\* wielded in an enhanced evocation field will cause +1 hp of damage per successful hit, but also fall under the affects of a \*heat metal\* spell.

## SENSORY FAMILIARS

All familiars share a deep bond with their masters, but with sensory familiars this bond goes far beyond normal levels. Sensory familiars hold an incredible rapport with their masters, which allows them to share each other's senses, and develop senses not normally possessed by man or beast.

Sensory familiars may communicate empathically with their masters, as do normal familiars. This ability has unlimited range, as long as both master and familiar are on the same plane of existence. Sensory familiars grant their masters the standard sensory bonuses for possessing a familiar. In addition, sensory familiars grant their master an initiative bonus of +2. Mages owning sensory familiars are only surprised on a roll of 1 on d6. Sensory familiars have the tracking proficiency, at a base equal to 8 + their experience level.

All sensory familiars have a "primary sense": eyesight for cats, avian and toad familiars, smell for canine and weasel familiars. For other familiar types the DM can select an appropriate senses. Sensory familiars are immune to surprise by creatures that can be detected by its primary sense.

When a sensory familiar dies, their master immediately loses use of the sense corresponding to his familiar's primary sense (usually sight). In addition, if the mage is within telepathic range (as detailed below), the mental death wail of his familiar has a 25% chance of driving the mage insane (details of which are left up to the dungeon master). Lastly, the mage will suffer from a -4 initiative penalty after his familiar dies and will be surprised on a d6 roll of 4 or less. The mage also suffers from all standard penalties for losing one's familiar.

After one day elapses (after his familiar's death) the mage will regain partial use of his lost sense. After one month the sense will have been restored in full. To restore initiative and surprise modifiers requires three months of peaceful rest. After this period of time the mage will still suffer a surprise penalty of 1 point, but will otherwise have recovered. This penalty to surprise can never be removed. Recovery from lost sanity is up the GM. In general, three months of peaceful rest will allow the mage's mind to heal, but mild paranoia or a phobia may still remain.

The abilities a sensory familiar gains as it goes up levels are listed in the following chart. A detailed description of each ability follows.

5th: The mage gains the ability to access his familiar's primary sense.

6th: The mage gains the ability to access his familiar's secondary sense.

7th: The mage gains the ability to access all of his familiar's senses.

8th: The mage may now communicate telepathically with his familiar.

9th: The familiar gains the ability to detect magical auras. The mage and familiar are both now immune to 1st level illusion spells. Mage and familiar gains sensory duality.

10th: The familiar gains the ability to detect invisible creatures.

11th: The mage gains the ability to identify different types of magic.

Mage and familiar are now immune to 2nd level illusion spells.

12th: The familiar gains the ability to perceive ethereal creatures.

13th: Mage and familiar are now immune to 3rd level illusion spells. The

familiar gains the ability to perceive astral creatures.

14th: Both mage and familiar gain the power of possession.

15th: Mage and familiar are now immune to 4th level illusion spells.

18th: The familiar's primary sense now functions as a \*gem of true sight\*.

#### SENSORY RANGE TABLE

Level Primary Secondary Full Senses Telepathy

5th 50' - - - -

6th 75' 50' - - -

7th 100' 75' 50' - -

8th 125' 100' 75' 25'

9th 150' 125' 100' 50'

10th 250' 150' 125' 75'

11th 1 mile 250' 150' 100'

12th 50 miles 1 mile 250' 150'

13th plane 50 miles 1 mile 250'

14th plane plane 50 miles 1 mile

15th plane plane plane 50 miles

16th+ plane plane plane plane

#### ENHANCED PERCEPTIONS

##### Illusion

Level Magic Invisible Magic(type) Ethereal Astral Immunity

9th 20% - - - - - 1st

10th 40% 20% - - - - 1st

11th 60% 30% 20% - - - 2nd

12th 70% 40% 25% 10% 10% 2nd

13th 80% 50% 30% 20% 20% 3rd

14th 90% 60% 35% 30% 30% 3rd

15th 100% 70% 45% 45% 40% 4th

16th 100% 80% 55% 60% 50% 4th

17th 100% 90% 65% 75% 60% 4th

18th 100% 100% 75% 100% 100% special

Note, most shared sensory abilities work for both familiar and master. For example, at fifth level a familiar may make use of his master's primary sense (sight).

Primary: The ability for the mage to make use of his familiar's primary sense. In most cases this is the ability to see through the familiar's eyes. When making uses of his familiar's primary sense, a mage can not make use of his own corresponding sense. Most mages, thus, are blind when using this ability, and must rely on their familiar's eyesight exclusively.

**Secondary:** The ability for a mage to make use of his familiar's secondary sense. In most cases this is the ability to hear with their familiar's ears. When making use of his familiar's secondary sense, a mage can not make use of his own corresponding sense. Most mages, thus, are deaf when using this ability, and must rely on their familiar's hearing exclusively.

**Full Senses:** The ability for the mage to access the full range of his familiar's sensory capabilities. The mage may choose which, if any, of the familiar's senses he wishes to experience. While using his familiar's senses, the mage loses the use of his own corresponding senses. A mage who chooses to experience all of his familiar's senses will feel as if he is in his familiar's body (though control of the body still belongs to the familiar). This same mage would be completely unaware of any events happening around his body, unless the familiar could perceive these events.

**Telepathy:** The ability for the mage to communicate telepathically with his familiar. This telepathic communication renders fully the intent and emotion of both parties, not just mere words. As an unfortunate side effect, when either the mage or his familiar is attacked by enchantment/charm, illusion, or pain inducing magic, both parties are affected (if they are within normal telepathic range of each other). The mage and the familiar do not have to be telepathically communicating at the time to incur this penalty, it is automatic if they are in range of one another.

**Sensory Duality:** Mage and familiar gains the ability to process massive amounts of sensory information. From now on, the mage may access both his familiar's senses, and his own, simultaneously (a mage can now look through his familiar's eyes, and still see with his own eyes). It is very common, at this point in the mage and familiar's sensory development, for the pair to remain in full sensory and telepathic contact at all times.

**Magic:** The sensory patterns of the familiar's eyes become attuned to certain magical wavelengths, granting the familiar (not the mage) a chance to see magical auras. If the familiar's primary sense is not sight, it will use its primary sense to detect magic instead of its eyes. The percentage chance listed is the chance for the familiar to perceive magic auras. A mage making use of his familiar's primary sense is also able to "see" these auras. Only one detection check is made for both familiar and mage. Only one attempt to perceive the magical aura of a specific item can be made per day.

**Invisible:** This is the chance for the familiar to detect invisible creatures. Through its extended sensory powers, the familiar can "feel" their presence, and then (through concentration) pierce their invisibility with its primary sense. When an invisible creature is near the familiar, the chance listed is the chance for the familiar to sense the invisible creature's presence. Familiars which attempt to actively detect invisible creatures have the listed percentage chance of being able to "see" the invisible creature. This power is useless against psionic invisibility. If the familiar's primary sense is other than sight, a successful check will also allow the familiar, and master, to attack without penalty in the dark.

**Magic (type):** This is the chance for the mage, not the familiar, to identify a type of magic by interpreting the qualities of its magical aura (with his familiar's eyes). To use this ability, the familiar must already identified the object as magical. Determination of type of magic is limited to its school, and general power level. A +4 sword, for example, would radiate very strong enchantment magic. A mage may make only one attempt per day to comprehend the magical aura of an item. He must also make use of his familiar's primary sense when interpreting a magical aura.

**Ethereal:** The ability of the familiar to locate ethereal creatures. This detection/unmasking ability functions exactly like the familiar's ability to detect invisible creatures, and pierce through their invisibility. This does not grant the familiar, or the mage, the ability to attack ethereal creatures. A familiar may only make one attempt to perceive an ethereal creature. If it fails, the familiar is unaware of their existence.

**Astral:** This functions exactly as the invisibility detection/unmasking ability. It does not grant the familiar, or the mage, the ability to attack such creatures. A familiar may make only one attempt to perceive an astral creature. If it fails, the familiar is unaware of their existence.

**Possession:** Both mage and familiar gain the ability to possess each other's bodies. This possession is entirely voluntary, and can not be forced. During this possession the souls of the familiar and mage remain in their respective bodies, however, through telepathic communication, the possessor gains complete control over the possessed body. Mage and familiar can even switch bodies through using this ability. The range of this ability is the range of the familiar and mage's telepathy.

**Illusion:** As the caster and his familiar gain sensory powers, they become immune to petty illusions. The level listed is the spell level of illusions that the mage, and his familiar, are immune to. At 13th level, for example, no illusion spell of 3rd level or less can affect either the mage or his familiar. For this immunity to work, both mage and familiar must simultaneously view the illusion. It is important to note that at eighteenth level, when the familiar gains the powers of a \*gem of true sight\*, the familiar will be able to detect all illusion-magic.

## ROLE PLAYING EMPOWERED FAMILIARS

Empowered familiars have not been designed to become the powerful slaves of their mage masters. As they gain levels empowered familiars become more and more intelligent. Once they reach an intelligence of nine, if not

sooner, they will begin to question orders they are given if they do not believe they are necessary, appropriate, or intelligent. It is even possible that a familiar may refuse a direct order, though this is not likely. Empowered familiars, like all familiars, are filled with incredibly intense loyalty to their masters. Familiar and master may bicker constantly, but the familiar will always attempt to act in its master's best interest.

Empowered familiars will not happily sit in their master's pocket. Familiars like to roam about and see things. A curious familiar may even wander off with out announcing it is doing so (if it feels unneeded).

Here are some additional role playing notes. These are guides, not definitive rules, on how to role play familiars.

Cats: Cats are silent and sarcastic. Cats wander more than any other familiar type, and are prone to sulk if they feel they are not appreciated. Cats also like taking naps, especially if they feel their companions are wasting time. Cats often question their orders, often just to be annoying.

"Oh come on, why should I bother casting lightning bolt at that ogre. Why don't we let 'Zongar the barbarian' use that stupid sword he keeps claiming is magical...."

Canines: Canines tend to be somewhat slow speaking, and slow thinking. They are very friendly to their master's friends, and viciously hate their master's enemies. Canines always try to support and cheer up their master when he is feeling depressed. They possess infinite confidence in their master's wisdom, and are very unlikely to refuse a direct order.

"It's ok. I don't mind. I like this cave. I don't mind if we're trapped in here forever. It's not your fault, its mine, I should have known that chest was trapped. I'm sorry."

Crows: Crows are greedy, crude, and enjoy making off color jokes. Crows have a great love of "shinies" (glittering objects). Possessing high intelligence, crow familiars soon learn to not be satisfied with pieces of tin, and begin to seek gold, platinum, and gems. Crows may actually steal gems and not inform their master that they have taken them. Like all aves, crows dislike confined and underground settings.

"Oh my...you were right, that is a gem under my wing! Heaven forbid, how did that get there?"

Hawks: Hawks are serious, quiet, and uncommunicative. They are usually content to perch on their master's shoulder. Like all aves, hawks dislike confined and underground settings.

"In my reconaissance I located the goblin tribe and our missing compatriot Eric. At the time of my viewing Eric, a large goblin dressed in the headless of a shamon was approaching him with what I believe is a sacrificial knife. I doubt there is much point in us attempting our planned rescue-raid."

Owls: Owls are slow talking, fatherly, and consider themselves very wise. Owls are often lethargic in the day, and will sleep unless their services are needed. Owls are prone to overreact in dangerous situations. Owls offer their advice on all situations. Like all aves, owls dislike confined and underground settings.

"Goblins! Goblins! Hairy nasty goblins! Come on you idiots, get up! Can't you see them? Hairy nasty green goblins, all around us! Quick, master, cast web on that one with the big nose. He must be the leader, and they'll undoubtedly surrender if we catch him! Don't tell them about all the gold we have though, or they'll never let us go!"

Toads: Toads are slow thinking, untalkative, and sleep most of the time. Unlike most familiars they are quite content to remain in their master's pocket, preferably in a comfortable, damp, glass jar. Toads usually complain only when they are hungry. Toads must often be commanded to take action, as they prefer to lie back and let their masters do the work.

"Ribit. What's up? Oh...trols again. Can't you take care of them? Oh fine, one evocation enhancing field coming up...."

Weasels: Weasels are talkative, sly, charismatic, and vicious. Though not necessarily evil, all weasels have a nasty streak in them. Weasels eat voraciously when fresh meat is available. If in a losing situation, weasels will always try to find someone else to blame. Weasels have a strong wandering streak.

"Master, excuse my interruption. If Lord Ceribas is refusing to talk, perhaps I have ways of loosening his tongue. In my guardian form I am a most frightening sight, and if he still refuses to tell us what we wish to know, it has been hours since my last feed...."

Guardian Familiars: Guardian familiars do not suffer from the strong wanderlust that many familiars experience. They will not leave their mage's side unless ordered to do so. Their only purpose in life is to guard their mage from harm. For this reason, guardian familiars generally have a very serious outlook on life. They are often suspicious, untrusting, and ill-humored.

Thaumaturgical Familiars: Thaumaturgical familiars are highly intelligent, and they know it. Thaumaturgical

familiars tend to lend out advice whenever possible. Thaumaturgical familiars will be very interested in any magical tomes or items found, and will want to analyze them. Thaumaturgical familiars sometimes ask for a share in the party's treasure, if a magic item catches their eye.

**Sensory Familiars:** Sensory familiars feel very close to their mage, and seldom bicker with them. The closeness between the two leads to what can best be described as love, especially after telepathy has been gained. Sensory familiars will sacrifice their lives without question to save their mage, and quite often the mage is willing to do likewise. Sensory familiars possess very strong wanderlust, and constantly wish to gain new sensory experiences (see new sights, smell new smells).

**Focusing Familiars:** Focusing familiars usually possess a very serious nature, and a strong sense of individuality. Focusing familiars will often wander off, if they feel they are not needed, but will also almost always ask permission before doing so. They will remain in constant empathic contact with their mage while wandering, to ensure he is not in need of their services. If not given specific orders during a battle, focusing familiars will usually focus magic anyway. They trust their own judgement, and often feel that their focusing can lead to magical trends in their mage's favor. Only insane familiars enhance wild magic without being ordered to, but it is relatively common for focusing familiars to dampen wild magic without being prompted to do so.

\* Origin: WNN = Satan's Dentist! (FidoNet 1:249/106.5)

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