

"Know, O Player, that from the sundering of Law from Chaos to the Triumph of Science over Magic, lived the Worlds of the Perfect Dreamer. This Virtue ruled over the gods, valar, demons and devils, who in turn guided and blocked the ways of Dwarf, Elf, Orc and Gnoll. Hither came bold and lusty women and men of adventure, to ripen their Souls and their Treasure Bags in . . ."

# THE WORLDS OF TANSTAAFL

Wargrypt • Terra Supra • Anarchipelago • Nu • Legos • Chaotia

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First, an apology to Lee Gold, whose *Alarums & Excursions* are much more reasonable for entry than I remembered or expected. Thanks also to Barry Gold for pointing this out to me and entrepreneuring. This issue will also be sent to A&E, although it will undoubtedly be the last four-pager to be done so. Next issue will be largely devoted to Anarchipelago, and the maps and keys of this oceanic world will be distributed only to those trading with WoT and local gamespersons. Those interested in different-scale hex maps of Freeport, the major Neutral/Good city and ITT transmitter site, and possibly the *Voracic Isles* (site of first major odyssey)—for whatever weird reason—are invited to send postage and request it/them.

A word on hex maps: it is possible to geometrically construct a five-hex diagonal inside a (large) hex; an example will be printed in this issue or next, depending on space. This makes it useful to step up or down from 5-mile standard hexes. Next issue I'll run a table I've constructed going upward to pentahexes and dodecapentahexes down to semidecihexes and so on. These are of particular use in vast overland campaigns such as an entire planet (e.g. Anarchipelago) and then stepping up or down the focus.

One change to be announced from last issue: Long Beach D&D is in flux right now; it looks like we may be shifting *en masse* to a modified version of Basic/Expert D&D<sup>®</sup>; the modifications will be our own because we still dislike AD&D<sup>®</sup> but at least we will extend our compatibility. I'm considering keeping the Criticals and Fumbles from *Warlock Spartan* unless better ones come up. Oh, a single sheet (two sides) crammed with the rules and first modifications (on golden paper) are available to anyone writing in: just ask for TANSTAAFL's *Golden Rules*. [If you're not trading for WoT, postage would be appreciated.]

Finally, I'm dropping the point-size henceforth to cram in more material. Sorry for those of you even more myopic than I whom I leave behind. (This is ten point; rest of text is nine point. Headlines are 18 and subheads are twelve, for those of you into such things.)

## New Character Subclass: AMORAL CLERICS (aligned)

By now it should be obvious that I take Clerics seriously. Nothing against those who do *not*; but for others who do, I'm offering a standardizing group of miracles to truly depict *Amorality*.

Jack Harness published the first "Neutral Cleric" (back in linear alignment days) that I saw. But the combination of Neutral and Amoral (what Gygax for some obscure reason calls "True Neutral") Cleric quickly turned into the nature-worshipping *Druids*. That's fine, though I think there can be another kind of N/A Cleric. Even so, what about Law/Amoral and Chaos/Amoral Clerics?

### Meaning of Alignment

In order to deal with clerics neither Good nor Evil, we have to have a solid understanding of *alignment*. Permit me a couple of paragraphs of "heavy philosophy" here. After all, without morality, the cleric is completely loyal and bound to that allegiance. He or she serves the Lords of Law or the Lords of Chaos.

Alignment was taken from Michael Moorcock (with whom I am noddingly acquainted as a fellow anarchist and SF fan) and it's clear from his writing that he is concerned with the nature of entropy and its impact on human life and morality. Anthropomorphic Chaos is a concept in many mythologies, so Moorcock drew upon that to dramatize his philosophical (even theological) inquiries.

The Lords of Law push order to the limit, freezing everything in crystal-lattice purity and crushing Free Will. The Lords of Chaos free everything but into disintegration and formlessness, where freedom becomes meaningless. Neutrals seek to maintain a balance. The Neutral Goods seek a virtuous order with maximum freedom; the Neutral Evils seek Chaos to free them from restraint and Order to enslave others. The Neutral Amoralists seek . . . nothing. They wish to balance entropy and morality to void them both. So much for the heavier stuff.

The priests of the Lords of Law (Chaos) should have miracles appropriate to their "religion." Nothing said here is to forbid use of the standard AD&D<sup>®</sup> miracles and their evil perversions for Amoralists; one may want to inhibit their use if inappropriate to the alignment. For example, we inhibit the use of the *Finger of Death* for Good Clerics and that of *Raise Dead* for Evil ones.

Rather than go through the ever-growing list, use your elementary chemistry/physics knowledge and ask yourself if a given miracle increases or decreases *order*. For example, liquefying gases and freezing liquids is anti-entropic (lawful) while melting and boiling are entropic (chaotic). *Fire* spells are entropic—but they *can* be used, as in a forge, to order something. *Cold* spells are ordering—but if they lead to

shattering, they are used chaotically. *Disintegrate* must be chaotic; *reintegrate* (or reverse disintegrate) could only be lawful. *Flesh to Stone* and back, by the way, change one order to another and are neutral. **Change itself is neutral with respect to Law and Chaos; context must be supplied for evaluation.**

To sum up, Amoral Clerics will seek to promote order (or disorder) to the limits of their devotion and be aided by their gods accordingly. The following is a non-exhaustive list of appropriate, supplemental miracles to make up for the inhibitions on the use of Good/Evil ones. They may be resorted to by aligned *moral* clerics but not Neutrals.

### Level I MIRACLES FOR AMORAL CLERIC

#### Change State I Range 6" (=60 feet).

The Amoral Cleric may boil liquids, melt solids and disperse gases if Chaotic; freeze, condense and sort out gaseous mixtures. Only one cubic foot of flesh can be affected—not internal organs and not if armored. D8 damage. Note that little temperature change occurs (only *entropic*, look up your thermodynamics) so that if the transition is highly unstable, it will immediately revert and is effectively null. For example, melting a sword will be instantaneously reversed. On the other hand, two of these cast back-to-back could be very effective: melt the object, then vaporize it. Still, the liquid *must* be stable long enough for the second miracle to vaporize it.

Three Chaotic Clerics may ask the Lords of Chaos to guide them in melting a shield, vaporizing it, and dispersing the gas so that it condenses as microscopic droplets of metal. Without the Lords' intervention, the probability of them hitting it right is one combination out of six (123, 132, 321, 312, 231, 213) or 17%. Again, let it be stressed that water boiled out of someone's hands (e.g. holy water from an enemy cleric's vial) will *not* get hot; only entropy is involved. Similarly, freezing it will *not* make it cold.

Finally, one should assign a reasonable *decay rate* for things like *Holy Ice* at room temperature once the Cleric ceases to concentrate on it. 50% melted a turn (one hour) is one rate; double it in hot jungle or desert. Leave it frozen in northern frigid waste, etc.

#### Retard Change Range 6".

Law/A Clerics may slow changes such as decomposition, decay, even dying (if slow death like poison, disease or the victim down to exactly 0 hit points); the action will top D10 melee rounds per casting. C/A clerics will accelerate these changes but retard ordering processes such as druid's *Wall Of Plants* or *Raise Dead*, *Animate Dead* and *Freeze* spells. (The higher-level version of this is simply *Dispel Magic*.)

#### Tangle/Untangle Range (6+L)" L = caster's level.

This reinforces or cancels out rope bonds, web spells (or real webs), plant tangles and so on. Good for use on tentacled enemy. Lasts D10 melee turns then tangle/untangle reverts to previous condition.

### Level II AMORAL MIRACLES

#### Suspend Action/Release Suspension

**Range (3+L)".** Order is maintained or disorder is continued; note that spells of order (e.g. *freezing*, *animate*) will be suspended by chaotics and suspension released by lawfuls. This is *not* a *dispel*; action resumes in D10 melee rounds.

**Accelerate Range = (3+L)".** Similar to *Retard Change* but more powerful in its effect. Similar to *Haste* but works fine for non-organics such as burning (or freezing) something in one-fourth the time. Can also be used in reverse as a double-

time *Retard* (2D10 melee rounds). *Special Use* Cleric throws miracle simultaneous with an ally opening a wound; *Damage is doubled*. Law cleric may *halve* damage. (This is far more powerful than it looks since it applies to fireballs and lightning bolts. It could cancel a *save* against them.)

#### Change State II Range (6+L)".

Two variants. First is *double phase change* where solids go directly to gases or the reverse. Liquids go to dispersed gases which can only be regathered and liquefied by this, more powerful, miracle. Second is *extended phase change* where *Change State I* applies but change lasts D10 *full turns*. Damage to flesh 2D8. Armor and weapons may be corroded but not permanently destroyed.

**Align Temporary Duration L turns.** One unaligned object, weapon or armor gains alignment. Requires touching. *Not* reversible at this level. It can obviously be used by clerics of *any* alignment though perhaps higher-level for *moral* cleric.

### Level III AMORAL MIRACLES

#### Bolts of Bedevilment see *Supplementary Spells*.

#### UnAlign Temporary See *Align Temporary*.

Ego-swords and other intelligent objects get saving throws. If they fail, they "sleep" for duration which is still L turns.

#### Disperse/Regroup Rabble. Range (6+L)".

**Area** 10×L square feet. **Number Affected** 10+Level of cleric. **Duration** one full turn. Chaotics may break up mobs and force morale checks on loosely-loyal troops and ship crews. Lawfuls will form coherent squads out of crowds or automatically make morale checks on followers. Counter-miracle may cancel miracle if cast within one melee round.

#### Change State III Range 2×(6+L)".

Several variants. *Triple phase change* (see *Change State II*), *permanent physical change* (*ice will not melt now even if warm ambience, etc.*) of one phase. Damage to flesh 3D8 or armor corroded to breaking point. The last case can be considered a *surface disintegration*. Non-magic weapons will rust their surface (or not if wood or bone) and must *save* against breaking until repaired. Weakened weapons and armor can be made sharp, sturdy and clean by Law version. Gold or salt may be collected from seawater or other mixtures: D6 gold pieces or equivalent weight per miracle per L of cleric. Dilute toxic substances may be concentrated to poisons underwater or in gaseous form in air. Chaos can reverse these, of course. As a rule of thumb, this is the most powerful entropic force short of *disintegration/reintegration*.

### Level IV AMORAL MIRACLES

#### Mass Ordering/Disordering Range (6+L)".

**Duration** Until outside change. Examples would be to set all the sail on a ship (or reverse), sort out a pile of weapons, treasure and other goods (or mix them), synchronize missile fire (or randomize it), herd animals (or scatter them), and so on.

#### Enforce/Break Discipline Range (6+L)".

**Area** (10+L) square feet (cubic feet if volume as in Astra space.) **Duration** one turn. Miracle works with or against *loya* minions (unlike *Disperse/Regroup Rabble*). If no morale check needed, lawful version creates high degree of coordinator such that every unit is where the cleric wants them. Example one strikes the enemy high, the other low, a third guard:

against interference or takes on another enemy, and if the enemy falls, remaining blows are not wasted but used against another enemy in the same melee round. Ordering steps (only one): rabble  $\diamond$  group (morale check)  $\diamond$  loyal group (no check)  $\diamond$  perfect coordination. Disordering steps reverse direction ( $\diamond$ ).

### Area State Change Range (6+L)". Area (10+L)

As *Change State I* but no longer limited to one object. It affects everything (surface only) in an area.

### Align Permanent Requires one full turn.

Only works on unaligned object, weapon or armor. *Variants:* magnetize appropriate metallic object (but not also align unless a second miracle is cast).

## Level V AMORAL MIRACLES

### Limited Disintegrate/Reintegrate

**Range (6+L)".** Permanent if not reversed or dispelled. Works on single object or creature of one hit die or less. For creatures above one hit die or large objects, it will take out a cubic foot, limb or organ (can be used to strike under armor or barriers) or restore same.

### Stasis Range (6+L)". Volume (10+L) cubic feet

**Duration** One full turn but may have *Permanent* spell added. Basically a Law miracle with only Chaotic use to dispel it. It "freezes" (no temperature change) everything in the volume described to motionless, even fire and lightning. Life continues, no lasting damage. *Suggestion:* use on a field of grass (blades) before an oncoming charge of cavalry.

### Sow Discord Range (6+L)". Volume (10+L)'<sup>3</sup>.

**Duration** one full turn. Basically a Chaotic miracle with Lawful use to *Restore Harmony* when Discord results from miracle or naturally. All in the volume (bar saving throw, of course) find any difference among them, no matter how trivial, more important than a common front against their foes. Disagreements will be settled by party splitting or outright combat depending on the nature of the victims. (Great for placing on Golden Apples!)

### Extend Order/Chaos

Double range or volume or duration or phase change steps (if applicable) to any of the miracles here listed. Range matches miracle extended.

### Dispel Alignment Range within touching.

Requires Full Turn. Leaves object, weapon, armor unaligned but magic (unless contradiction would result). Ego-devices get saving throw.

## Level VI AMORAL MIRACLES

### Disintegrate (Chaos) Range (6+L)".

**Volume** 1 cubic feet. **Duration** Permanent. **Saving Throw** is special, the entire volume saves with highest (easiest to make) throw of that occupying the blasted volume. A person, for example, half into the cube or sphere will lose that part cleanly and completely. All within the volume is vaporized and the gases thoroughly mixed. If mostly solid or liquid, assume the new gas explodes outward like a bomb. For quick calculation of explosive damage outside disintegrated sphere or cube, use  $L \times D6 + R^2$  where  $R$  = distance in inches (10') from edge of blast sphere. (20' away would divide by 4, 30' by 9, and so on.) (Great for blowing ships and dragons apart!)

### Reintegration (Law) same specifications as Disint.

This miracle must be handled very carefully by the DM to prevent it from becoming a *Wish*. Only that which previously existed in a volume within the memory of the cleric may be reintegrated. It need not be limited to reversing a *Disintegration*. For example, some building which fell to a catapult or wall that froze and shattered or ship that burned can be reintegrated. An *implosion* similar to *Disintegrate's* explosion may result outside the reintegrated area if gases are drawn in to form a mostly solid filling of the sphere/cube.

### Reverse Alignment Range actual touch.

Saving throw applicable for holder/wielder of weapon/armor/artifact plus additional throw for ego-device. This miracle available to Neutral/Amoral Clerics at Fifth Level since they have "half as far to go." This miracle may be thrown during combat if (and only if) device comes in contact with cleric. Otherwise, a leisurely throw by cleric without contact for "L" maximum distance. **Note** Holy swords and such may change alignment but not morality. A chaotic holy sword may choose to continue serving a neutral or even lawful paladin for the sake of goodness over amorality, let alone evil. In case there is any doubt, the reversal goes only in the direction of the cleric, never in the other direction. **Note 2** This miracle may also be thrown against Neutrals by Law/Chaos Amoralists at the Fifth Level since they also have only "half as far to go."

### Alignment Supremacy Range (6+L)".

**Area** (10xL) square feet. **Duration** L turns. The super-patriarch charms all of his alignment to unite under his control; Goods and Evils will fight alongside each other and Amoralists though Goods cannot be compelled to perform obvious Evil and *vice-versa* (each may be tricked if the consequences require consideration). *Saving Throw* ordinary for second and third Experience Groups; 20 only for first experience group. Fourth experience group save at -1 (easier) and Fifth (same as super-cleric) -2. Anyone higher than Cleric fail to save only on a 1. *Magic resistance* does not count (remember, miracles are not magic) for demons and the like below the Cleric's level (or hit dice equivalent). Demon or devil or angel or god or eldritch or fiend etc. get magic resistance if they are actually lower than the cleric. (*Erinac, tharicis*)

### Gate similar to AD&D<sup>®</sup> but special remarks.

This opens door to Law/Chaos dimension for L turns. If DM is unfamiliar with the Lords of Law and Chaos (and Grey Lords for Neutrals), consult *Elic* and *Corum* series by Michael Moorcock in particular. **Note** Arioch, Xiomberg, Arkyn, and the gang are considered Amoral even though the Lords of Chaos were often called the "Dukes of Hell" in the stories. Run their incarnations here as interested in alignment victory and unconcerned with good and evil. **Mabelrode** is supreme Lord of Chaos; **Arkyn** may be used as his Lawful equivalent. They should be clearly more powerful than the cleric and have access to all the miracles listed here with upward adjustment of duration, range and volume. See also the *Seventh Level Amoral Miracles* immediately below.

## Level VII AMORAL MIRACLES (tops)

### Unleash Chaos/Law Volume L cu. ft. + special

**Range** L". **Duration** permanent. The fabric of the universe is torn and a hole to the dimension is opened. Not only does the volume (assume spherical unless deformed or blocked by opposite aligned barrier or object) become crystallized or formless law-stuff or chaos-stuff respectively, but the volume

spreads and will eventually engulf the world and beyond at the rate of 1000 cubic feet per full turn (10 foot radius increase, for initial size factor multiply in  $4/3 \times (\pi r^3)$ ). *Dispel Magic*, *Dispel Good/Evil* will not work. *Dispel Alignment* and *Reverse Alignment* will work only on that space that would normally be affected. (So a Lawful party could invade Chaos' dimension with a powerful patriarch forming a Law bubble around them or with a Staff, Wand or Ring of alignment reversal or dispelling. And vice-versa.) It may be cancelled by the reverse miracle. It cannot be unleashed on the opposite alignment's home dimension and would have no effect in the same dimension. *Neutrals* may stop the spreading but cannot reclaim that volume lost and may do so as *Sixth-level* miracle. Law and Chaos Good and Evils may arrest but not reverse as *Neutrals*. This miracle is the Amoral biggie!

### Preserve Essence

This miracle allows the caster and/or any others (up to L) of the same alignment to cross into their alignment dimension and not crystallize or turn formless. (The "reverse" is used by the Lords of Law and Chaos to take substance in other dimensions.) Not all of Chaos is heat-death scattered atoms; random chance generates islands of varying coherence—if not truly order. These can be played like Alice's Wonderland. Some of Law can be similarly considered complex ordering of motion and have islands of rigid, disciplined activity but at least motion. Also, the "borderlands" of Law and Chaos with the Prime Plane can be run as "rigid" totalitarian state with recognizable terrain and animals and Lawful monsters and as a realm of demented whimsy and caprice (mindless "anarchy" as the term is often misused) with recognizable terrain, animals and Chaotic monsters.

### General Remarks on Amoral Miracles

*AD&D* and *D&D* existing miracles should be checked for alignment compatibility. For example, while a Lawful cleric would throw *Hold Person*, a Chaotic would reverse it to *Release Person*. (Discordians—a Chaotic/Good religious type—would love this.)

All the miracles above assume normal saving throws unless otherwise specified.

*Neutrals* are covered in passing; most of these miracles are incompatible with them unless it is irrelevant which alignment one is, e.g., align or unalign objects.

Goods & Evils who are Law or Chaos aligned may be permitted these miracles with appropriate moral inhibitions except where noted above.

## Supplementary Spells/Miracles

**Flame Lance** (alternate names: *Limited Fireball*, *Fiery Magic Missile*)

**Class of User** Mage, druid. **Level 2**. **Range** 1" to 6" + (1" x Level of caster). [Formula in parentheses hereby denoted L in future spell and miracle descriptions.] **Damage** 2D8.

**Description** *Flame Lance* can be pictured either as a longer magic missile (lance vs arrow) or a smaller, non-spherical fireball. It is best conceived as a hybrid of *Magic Missile* and *Fireball*. As with any "throw spells," caster's arms must be free.

**Defense** "Fire Resistance" reduces *Flame Lance* to *Magic Missile*. "Protection Against Magic Missiles" reduces damage to D8 plus possible ignition. **Two (2) saving throws**: first for 1/2 damage (including ignition), second for complete miss.

**Reasons for Introduction** Fireballs are often played as uncontrollable; e.g., the maximum range is the only one. Even if range is controlled, the blast volume alone makes them far too dangerous to the caste in dungeon rooms, corridors, and (for

druids) in flammable forest paths. Additionally, current *AD&D* has no second level missile spell between first-level *Magic Missile* and third-level *Fireball* and *Lightning Bolt* (the latter is usually "crooked" by having it "bounce" for its full-length and ricochet back to the casting party in close quarters). **Note Bene** that *Flame Lance* is far weaker than *Fireball* and *Lightning Bolt*; that is the trade-off for the *Magic Missile* degree of control. **Credit Note** I saw the term "Flame Lance" used many years ago in *A&E* but no longer remember the source or how it was used. Probably similar and those with collections can look up originator for proper credit.

† **Note** Spells and miracles will be introduced only if an important "gap" or lacuna is perceived in the existing system.

### Detect Evil/Good

**Different Interpretation** Frankly, the idea of interpreting this as "a directional premonition of unfortunate or harmful action" is ridiculous; the effect on causation approaches *Limited Wish* in scope (consider: I wish I knew what was going to happen next). Additionally, *Know Alignment* is, in TANSTAAFL's worlds, strictly that and tells nothing about Morality.

Hence, *Detect Evil/Good* is a morality detector, perfectly reasonable for a first-level miracle. And to pinpoint both Morality and Alignment (e.g. Chaotic/Evil) one needs both Miracles. It should not be available to Mages; Druids possibly.

### Bolts Of Bedevilment

**Class of User** Cleric/Anti-Cleric† **Level 3**. **Range** (3+L)". **Damage** Non-physical. **Area** Sprayed machine-gun style, may fill a reasonable arc from caster. **Number** Equals level of caster. **Saving Throw** Each must be individually saved against. *Save vs paralysis*.

**Characteristics** Each *Bolt of Bedevilment* causes paralysis of the Will—not limbs—for one full turn. The recipient is torn with conflict and indecision but can be led away. Each additional bolt adds another turn. Three or more striking during the first turn makes the victim *save vs Feeblemind* (even if not mage). Armor class of recipient is not lowered unless highly positive action must be made for self-defense (e.g. fighting Monks); on the other hand, capture/subdual is ridiculously easy. **Note** This miracle is recommended for *Amoral Clerics* of Law and Chaos. Lawfuls in particular may dispel it from a Chaotic. [See new subclass of *Amoral Clerics*.]

**Reasons for Introduction** (1) Although inspired by magic-using Dr. Strange© of Marvel Comics, this seems much more clerical (as Stephen Strange often does). (2) See entropic considerations for Law/Chaos; this is a mental entropy case. Since that crosses over into morality considerations, it is especially recommended for *Moral Law* and *Chaos* clerics but not *Neutral Good*, *Amoral* or *Evil* ones. It obvious cancels out psionic powers.

### Interested in Entering TANSTAAFL's Worlds?

Sure, the Long Beach section of the D&D International (also known as SFALB for Speculative Fiction Association of Long Beach) would love to have new blood. Write at colophon address or leave message at (213) 432-5839. (If it doesn't start off with a weird libertarian message, you dialed wrong.) Specify if you want a one-shot introductory or a protracted expedition and/or voyage. I may be at Westcon and definitely at ConStellation, the World Science Fiction Convention.