



THE VEIL KNIVES

Spirits can be a threat, especially those born out of darker emotions. Such spirits can negatively influence the lives of the people around them, amplifying feelings of anguish, anxiety, and hate and causing them to linger longer than they otherwise would. The Veil Knives offer a solution to such problems. For a fee.

Members of this spirit-hunting guild specialize in capturing or destroying ethereal entities. After evacuating residents from the haunting grounds, a veil knife will try to goad the malevolent spirit to manifest and face them. The methods of veil knives vary greatly, but more often than not, they get the job done.

AGENDA

The guild keeps the city safe from invisible threats that few understand. Most of the spirits encountered in Selovast have subtle impacts on the material plane; they alter emotions and affect

everyday life in ways that most people don't notice. The Veil Knives have no quarrel with those ethereal beings. But when powerful spirits fully materialize within the city's bounds, they unleash their direct influence on unsuspecting people. Such events can be lethal and are always traumatic. These are the spirits the Veil Knives stand against. In fact, many hunters and huntresses of the guild personally experienced the dangers from the spirit realm and are often driven to join the guild by senses of duty or revenge.

While spirit hunting may be personally satisfying, it is not a cheap endeavor. Veil knives can't sustain their work on moral imperative alone. On top of the physical cost that comes with facing spirits in combat, hunting spirits requires specialized equipment and rare consumable materials. Unfortunately, that means that some who are sorely in need of spirit hunting services are unable to pay the guild's fees and spirits are allowed to wreak havoc in their communities.



Even with occasional discounts and some outright works of charity, many poor wards in the Crater have become overrun with spirits, generating a volume of work that is beyond what the guild can reasonably provide.

LEADERSHIP

The Veil Knives are led by Guildmaster **Tanalan Nahillin**, one of the few elves that reside in Selovast. Tanalan created the guild nearly two centuries ago, when he first arrived in the city. Seeing the potential Selovast had even back then, he decided to make it his duty to protect the city from ethereal threats. Tanalan views spirits as monstrous beings that practice a form of mind control. His teachings claim that when spirits abound, one's emotions are not really their own. Thus, the only way to hear one's inner truth and achieve clarity is to live in an environment devoid of emotional pollution.

Guildmaster Tanalan doesn't speak of his past very often, and avoids any discussions about his elven homeland; it is clear that he carries a lot of guilt and shame due to something that happened there. Every few years, Tanalan journeys out of the city for several months at a time, leaving one of the veteran guild members in charge until he returns.

Tanalan takes on official jobs only rarely, but that's not to say he's not out there fighting the good fight. Tanalan believes the worst cases of spiritual influence are the ones not reported; he sees enemies everywhere and insists that spirits control more than everyone thinks. On one occasion, he was spotted lurking near the Heptagram tower. He refused to reveal his intentions or goals to the council, and they have held a grudge against Tanalan and his "agents" in the guild ever since. He didn't even give his own guild a proper explanation for his behavior, and his refusal to apologize to the council and relieve tensions has led some voices to call for Tanalan's replacement. None, however, have acted to unseat him yet.

JOINING THE VEIL KNIVES

Becoming a veil knife is no easy feat. Before joining their ranks, prospective members must sign a waiver, pay 100 gp, and then complete two tasks.

The first takes the candidates to the training grounds beneath the guild hall, an elegant stone-carved hall covered with glyphs that ward against ethereal travel. There, each candidate must prove their mettle against a spirit trapped by the guild. An instructor watches each fight, and only intervenes if the candidate fails the task and drops unconscious. Should that happen, the instructor

will dispatch the spirit and stabilize the wounded.

As part of their second task, candidates will be paired up and supervised by an instructor. Together, the three will take on a job from the board. This normally involves a brief investigation followed by fighting a malevolent spirit and trapping it inside a **spirit core** (which is leased from the guild). The instructor is only there to observe, and may not interfere with any part of this job. Interference means failure for the candidates, so they only jump in if the candidates are at real risk of dying.

A candidate that completes both tasks is invited to join the guild. They gain access to the guild's wares and artificing services and may take on more jobs from the board. A candidate that fails on either task must wait a year before they may try again.

STORY SEEDS

Veil Knives can always find work in the guild hall. Trained clerks take all incoming requests and rate them based on their estimated difficulty. They then offer hunters and huntresses a job that fits their level of experience. Ambitious guild members can ignore these recommendations and pick a different task from the board. Here are two suggestions for jobs that new members of the Veil Knives might be offered.

HAUNTED MANOR

Following a horrible murder, the Orville Manor stood barren for almost a year. A few months after the incident, a group of hunters was called to remove malevolent spirits from the manor grounds. Even after the spirits were gone, the manor stood empty while the remaining family members argued about its inheritance. They finally came to a decision a few weeks ago and **Gale Orville**, the new heir of the manor, finally stepped inside to examine her property. She was surprised to find that, even though the Veil Knives "cleared" her manor months ago, there was still something haunting her estate. She now blames the guild for doing a lousy job and is threatening a lawsuit. The guild wishes to eliminate any remaining spirits in the manor and investigate how they were missed on the first pass. The guild will pay 150 gp for this task and information.

In truth, the hunters had completed their job successfully six months ago. However, rumors about the manor being haunted remained. The fact that one of the oldest structures in Ivy Hills stood abandoned had lured several teenagers to brave entry and pull pranks on each other. This, in turn, led to several **spooks** manifesting and initiating an actual haunting.



WONDERFUL HAVOC

A few days ago, representatives of Moon Grove Preparatory School (a small private school in Harper Keys) requested the extermination of an unknown spirit that lurks on the Ethereal plane around the school grounds. The spirit is disturbing classes and creating disorder. **Donella**

Loodfollue, headmistress of Moon Grove, claims that spirit is also encouraging underage drinking and drug use and has reached out to the Veil Knives for help. The guild will pay 300 gp for the removal of this spirit.

The source of these disruptions is a **clatterstorm**, a spirit of wonder that manifests from the anticipatory energy before a large event. The spirit manifested in the nearby Skyview Theater when a famous musician performed last week, but due to the wards on the theater, it wasn't able to materialize inside and remained on the Ethereal Plane. It has since made its way to the school, which has many more people and fewer protections.

As far as the clatterstorm is concerned, this "school" is an excellent source of essence, especially if it entertains the small humans when they gather for what they call a "class". The clatterstorm made the small humans so excited that they even threw it something called a "party" so that it could feed at night.

FEAT: VEIL KNIFE BINDER

Prerequisite: Member of the Veil Knives

Your training with the Veil Knives made you an expert hunter of incorporeal adversaries, granting you the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You learn the *spirit ward* spell. You may cast it as a ritual without expanding a spell slot. When you do, the area of the spell expands to encompass an entire structure or a room within a structure, as long as it is no larger than 100 feet in any dimension. When you complete the ritual, you can choose to reverse the direction of the ward, preventing spirits from leaving instead of entering. If a creature with incorporeal movement starts its turn inside a reversed ward and fails their save, they cannot leave the ward for the spell's duration. The spell's spellcasting ability is the ability increased by this feat.
- You can cast the *forced materialization* spell without expending a spell slot. You must finish a long rest before you can cast this spell in this way again. You can also cast this spell using spell slots you have of the appropriate level. The spellcasting ability for the spell is the ability increased by this feat.

SPELLS

SPIRIT WARD

1st-level abjuration (ritual) (cleric, druid, wizard)

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch (20-foot cube)

Components: V, S, M (a dreamcatcher and 5gp worth of salt which the spell consumes)

Duration: 8 hours

You create a 20-foot cube of magical energy originating from a point on the ground that you can see within range. This barrier blocks the passage of incorporeal beings such as spirits and ghosts. The barrier extends into the Ethereal Plane and lasts for the duration. If a creature with incorporeal movement tries to enter the ward's area, it must first succeed on a Charisma saving throw. A creature of CR 1 or lower automatically fails the save. On a success, the creature can enter the warded area. An incorporeal creature that starts its turn within the warded area must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be pushed to the nearest unoccupied space outside of it. A creature that fails either save may not attempt to enter the warded area again for the spell's duration.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the CR of creatures that fail automatically increases by 1 for each slot level above 1st.

FORCED MATERIALIZATION

2nd-level abjuration (artificer, cleric, druid, wizard)

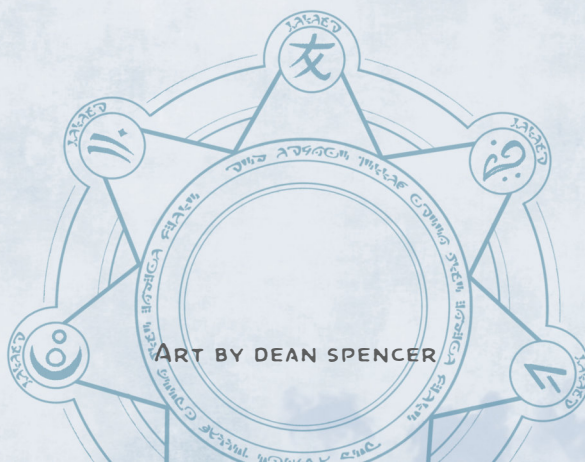
Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You utter a command that forces incorporeal creatures to materialize around a point that you can see within range. Each creature within 20 feet of that point on the Material or Ethereal Plane must succeed on a Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 2d6 psychic damage and materializes immediately in the nearest unoccupied space to it. Affected creatures cannot cross back into the Ethereal Plane for the spell's duration. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and suffers none of the spell's other effects.



SPOOK

Small spirit

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 14 (4d6)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)

Skills Stealth +6

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 9

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The spook can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the Spook can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Ethereal Link. The spook can cast its innate spells on the Material Plane when it is on the Ethereal Plane and vice versa. For the purpose of these spells, the spook is located in the parallel location in the adjacent plane.

Innate Spellcasting. The spirit's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *mage hand (invisible)*, *minor illusion*, *thaumaturgy*
1/day each: *darkness*, *silent image*

ACTIONS

Toss Object. The spook chooses an object weighing 1 to 5 pounds within 30 feet of it that isn't being worn or carried. The object flies in a straight line up to 60 feet in a direction the spook chooses before falling to the ground, stopping early if it impacts against a solid surface. If the object would strike a creature, that creature must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the object strikes the target and stop moving. When the object strikes something, the object and what it strikes each take 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

Materialize (1/day). The spirit enters the Material Plane from the Ethereal Plane. The spirit can stay in the Material Plane for up to one minute, or until it uses an action to end the effect. When the effect ends, the spirit returns to the Ethereal Plane.

CREATURES

SPOOK

This spirit is a manifestation of fear that appears to be a tiny, hunched, and robed humanoid made of shadows with red eyes that stare out from the darkness. Spooks rarely use this form for long, however, as they prefer to meld into the shadows of other objects.

Haunted Places. Dark, abandoned places are where people expect to find spooks. Ironically, this is the main reason they haunt such places, as they hope to feed on the fear of those who will brave a visit. Other places where spooks might haunt include dark closets and under childrens' beds where they can feast on the fear of the young.

Harmless Pranksters. Spooks love the low-burning, tenuous fear before a good jumpscare. They often gather in pairs or trios to build just the right atmosphere of dread using their abilities to create illusions and move small objects. When they are sated by the building tension, they pounce to induce fear and send the people screaming in terror.

Spooks will rarely cause real harm to people since they cannot feed upon the dead, though they might injure someone by accident. If attacked, however, a spook will defend itself, launching objects at great speed towards their attacker.

CLATTERCLOUD

Another kind of manifestation of wonder, a clattercloud spirit appears like a dense, white cloud with arrhythmic colorful explosions within. As they move, they emit a cacophony of crashes and clangs, as if from clattering objects of all sizes and materials.

Heralds of Excitement. Clatterclouds are created from the anticipation of an upcoming event. They rarely materialize around people, but when large crowds gather for an exciting purpose, their rattling sounds can be heard faintly, even when the spirits themselves are on the Ethereal

Plane. Clatterclouds are most audible when the crowd falls silent in the moments before the event they have gathered for starts.

Center of Attention. A clattercloud is an experience. It is loud, disorienting, and wants everyone to admire it. Clatterclouds will fly in search of large gatherings and simply stay afloat in the area. Perhaps they believe the people will react to their resplendent form and feed the spirit with their wonder.

Clatterstorm. When clatterclouds feed enough to gain a spark, they become larger, stronger, and more intelligent than their weaker brethren. They realize that while they exist on the Ethereal Plane, people cannot actually see them in the Material

CLATTERCLOUD

Medium spirit

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 feet, passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 1 (100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The clattercloud can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Ephemeral. The clattercloud can't wear or carry anything.

Incorporeal Movement. The spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The spirit's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *thaumaturgy*, *enthrall*, *thunderwave*
1/day each: *hypnotic pattern*

ACTIONS

Zap. Ranged Spell Attack: +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., Hit: 10 (2d6+3) lightning damage.

Materialize (1/day). The spirit enters the Material Plane from the Ethereal Plane. The spirit can stay in the Material Plane for up to one minute, or until it uses an action to end the effect. When the effect ends, the spirit returns to the Ethereal Plane.

Plane. Since they do not have the strength to materialize in front of large audiences, they look instead for more exclusive gatherings.

It is not unheard of for a clatterstorm to materialize in a tavern and cause a ruckus. Most establishments that can afford to install protections against spirits (in the form of oversized dreamcatchers). Others invite the creature in as a novel, exciting way to communicate (and party) with the spirits. The latter often discover that clatterstorms respond well to certain kinds of music, playfully echoing tunes and rhythms they hear.

CLATTERSTORM

Large Spirit

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 52 (7d10+14)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 feet, passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The clatterstorm can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The spirit's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *thaumaturgy*, *enthrall*, *thunderwave*
1/day each: *major image*, *thunder step*, *hypnotic pattern*

ACTIONS

Zap. Ranged Spell Attack: +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., Hit: 10 (2d6+3) lightning damage.

Thunder Blast (Recharge 5-6). The clatterstorm emits a painfully loud blast of thunder that can be heard as far as 300 feet away. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius from the spirit must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 3d8 thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A nonmagical object that isn't being worn or carried also takes the damage if it's in range.

Etherealness. The spirit enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it