

ENCOUNTERING CATHAHAN NORD



Sellers cry out their wares, while buyers haggle over prices; the bazaar is alive with people. The streets are packed with bodies, the air full of shouting voices and the rank smell of unwashed shoppers and unsettled animals assails the senses. It is market day...

Amongst the market's mayhem, a beggar lies slumped against a bleached wall, somehow sleeping while the trappings of trade continue all around him. As the characters make their way past him, however, he suddenly leaps to his feet, shouting and pointing at one of them.

The beggar is Cathahan Nord, a Filkarian from the city of Raschil. Born to a rich merchant family, Nord's youth was much like any of his peers; a life of privilege complete with private tutors and exclusive friends. At the age of 10, however, Nord was struck on the head during a playful brawl, and although his injuries did not initially seem serious at the time, by dusk he had collapsed into a deep sleep from which he could not be awakened.

Over the next weeks and months, Nord's parents consulted the best physicians, wisest herbalists, and finally the most reclusive magicians on the cause and a cure for their son's illness. It was only after much travel and great expense that Amutro Malka, a Pikaraydian sorcerer of some reputed power, was summoned to the boy's bedside. With only a glance at the stricken youth, Malka declared that while all was not lost, any intervention would not be without consequences. When questioned further on this curious statement, the wizard stated Cathahan had long travelled in the realm of shadows and he could never return as the same boy he had once been.

Despite this warning, Nord's parents demanded that the sorcerer do all he could, and after many long hours of ritual and magic, the young boy's eye finally flickered open. Overjoyed at their son's return, Nord's parents showered Malka with untold rewards and riches. Yet, despite all that was offered, the old Pikaraydian demanded just one thing – to take Nord with him. Of

course, his parents refused; not only did they love their son dearly, but they had only just got him back from death's very door. Angry at the demands of the 'uncouth native', they ordered Malka to leave and never return. This the sorcerer did, but only after offering up one last warning – that until Nord was freed from the demons he carried, he could never truly be their son.

At first this 'threat' seemed little more than the ranting of a crazed old man, yet time proved the Pikaraydian correct. Very quickly Nord's personality changed from that of a normal, caring son to someone obviously severely disturbed. In the months following his recovery, he became unable to separate illusion from reality, with bouts of madness that saw him claiming to see the future or being haunted by demons. In the end, his family had little option but to commit the boy to Raschil's hospice for the insane, hoping beyond hope that one day he would fully recover.

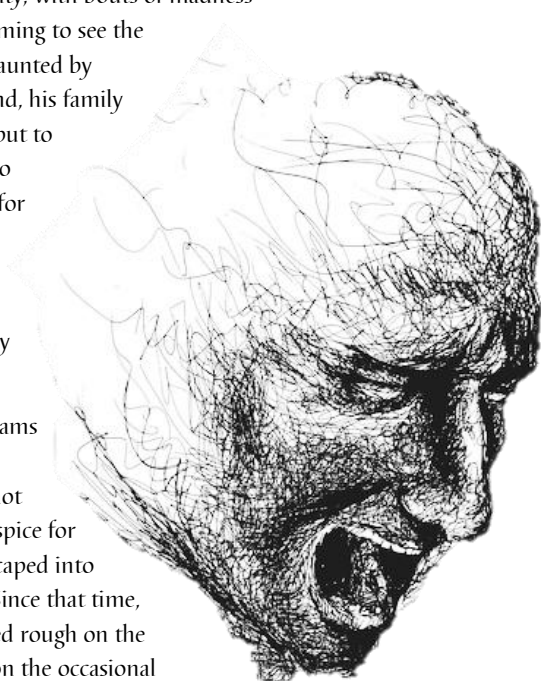
Cursed by his dreams and visions, Cathahan could not be kept in the hospice for long and soon escaped into the city beyond. Since that time, the youth has lived rough on the street, surviving on the occasional

ABOUT THIS STORY SEED

THE DOOMSEER was written by Marcus D. Bone (©2017, 2024)

Stormbringer Story Seeds are developed to spark a Gamemaster's imagination and help to create an interesting and diverse world in which their players adventure.

Images by Rochak Shukla and freepik.



CATHAHAN NORD

OUTCAST DOOMSEER, AGED 16

CHAOS 9, BALANCE 9, LAW 4

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STR 10, CON 9, SIZ 11,
INT 15, POW 16, DEX 13,
APP 9

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HIT POINTS: 10

ARMOUR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: None

WEAPONS: Brawl 50% 1d3+db

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SKILLS: Art (Painting) 23%,
Climb 55%, Fast Talk 29%, Hide
43%, Insight 65%, Jump 38%,
Pick Lock 7%, Scribe 31%,
Visions 99%.

SPELLS: None

SPECIAL: Doomseer – Nord can see the future. This is not a skill or a spell per se, but rather a cursed vision that strikes him at the most inopportune moments. He has been known to see people's deaths and the acts behind their darkest deeds – events that are yet to happen. Witnessing such visions has driven the poor boy half mad, and as such he swings from coherency to insanity.

generosity of passers-by, and more than a bit of thievery. This existence has been hard on the soft-skinned Nord, and now not even

his parents would recognise him on the street.

SCENARIO POSSIBILITIES

The following are just four suggestions on how to use this Story Seed in your adventures. Gamemasters are encouraged to develop their own.

The Ill Hermit – Cathahan's visions are a curse the boy will never be rid of in his lifetime. However, life on the street is no place for a boy, especially one with a severe mental illness and unused to such hardships. Maybe the party takes pity on the youth and looks to return him to his family. Maybe they will attempt to find him the support he needs, be it back in the hospice or somewhere more appropriate. The final option is to have the group learn of Amutro Malka's offer and attempt to find the old wizard. The question here, however, is whether the sorcerer wishes to take in Nord for his own good or as part of some fiendish plot?

Intricate Trappings – Cathahan Nord was not the only one to return when the wizard's spells were completed, Granash, a demon of significant power was also summoned into reality. Now riding Nord, Granash is looking to use its control over the boy to further its own goals; weakening the hold of Law on the Young Kingdoms. This might make Cathahan a potential threat to the party or maybe a quest that they take up to rid the boy, and the Young Kingdoms, of the monster. Of course, the demon may not be the only cause of the boy's doom-seeing.

Inklings of the Future – Rather than providing Cathahan Nord with a specific plot or story, he instead could be used as a tool for a resourceful Gamemaster. Perhaps the group has lost its way during an adventure; Nord could provide them with a clue or lead, as he states that they are but servants of Mistress Fate. Maybe he could be used as a trigger to a new scenario, especially one in a faraway land when his visions lead him to the characters as a bedraggled fortune teller. He could even

simply waylay an adventurer on the street and claim that they hold the balance in their hands, providing them with some strange future premonition or prophecy.

A Simple Madman – A final option is to have Cathahan as nothing more than simply a madman. His shouts and tantrums are nothing more than an interlude for the characters as they travel through the streets of Raschil. The Gamemaster may ignore his special ability and instead pester the group with yet another 'hanger-on' that offers little but frustration and the occasional humorous happening.