

SOCIAL THEORIES

KARL MARX

ALIENATION & EXPLOITATION

A story of a worker, his boss and a revolution by Marijke Breunesse

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DISCLAIMER

Now that I am done with this story, I realize there is a lot of information in this document. I recommend reading the *Campaign* page first and then go back to the other pages for more information if needed. I tried to be as concise as possible, but there is a lot more to DnD than I initially thought. Thank you for reading and hopefully you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed creating this!



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INTRODUCTION

I^o STARTED PLAYING *DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS* (DnD) last year and now it is a fairly big part of my life. It is easy to be creative in this world and I enjoy that very much. DnD is the inspiration for the very popular video game *Baldur's Gate* and that is how I learned the gameplay and most of the rules.

They are very similar, but there are some differences here and there.

A crucial part of the game is the creation of the character that you are going to roleplay with. This character has a *race* (human, elf, dwarf etc.) and a *class* (warlock, rogue, sorcerer etc.). These races and classes all have different traits that you can use in the story that the *Dungeon Master* (DM) guides. When starting the campaign or one-shot you get the general sense of the setting and the story, and you create a character that fits that setting.

When I first read about Alienation and Exploitation, I instantly thought these could be excellent DnD characters. So, Alienation (Alius) became a *playable character*, and Exploitation (Titus) a *non-playable character* (NPC) who is the *Big Bad Evil Guy* (BBEG) to be defeated in this story. I based Titus on Raphael from *Baldur's Gate*, Mammon (the existing archdevil of greed in DnD) and our very own big tech guys.

THE GAME

I will explain the most important components of the game briefly. The components that I explain, can usually be found and consulted on a *character sheet* or *monster stat block*. For Alius I wrote everything in the *Player's Handbook* (the official book for character creation) style, and I included his character sheet in the appendix. Titus' stat block is included in his chapter.

CHARACTER CREATION

When the class and race of a character have been determined, there are some other choices that need to be made. Every (playable) character has a different *background* that gives them a certain edge. The Player's Handbook and other resources have a lot of premade backgrounds, but it is also possible to create your own. I rewrote the background *soldier* to *worker* for Alius. He is a warlock, so that means a *patron* and *spells* must be chosen as well. I'll explain more in his chapter.

ABILITY SCORES & SKILLS

Every creature has certain *ability scores* and *proficiencies*. There are multiple systems for the calculation of *ability scores*, I always use the *Point Buy System*, where 27 points are divided between the abilities. All the abilities have associated *skills* that creatures can be *proficient* in.

Strength: Physical power and might. (Athletics)

Dexterity: Agility, speed and reflexes. (Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, Stealth)

Constitution: Endurance, health and stamina.

Intelligence: Reasoning, memory and knowledge. (Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, Religion)

Wisdom: Perception, insight and intuition. (Animal Handling, Insight, Medicine, Perception, Survival)

Charisma Force of personality, charm, and social influence. (Deception, Intimidation, Performance, Persuasion)

OTHER USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Armour Class (AC): How difficult it is to hit the creature with an attack.

Hit Points (HP): The creature's health and how long it can survive in combat.

Speed: The creature's movement capabilities (e.g., walking, flying, swimming).

Saving Throws & Skills: Bonuses for a creature's ability to resist spells and perform certain actions.

Actions: The attacks and spells the creature can use in combat, including attack modifiers and damage.

Reactions/Legendary Actions Special actions that a creature can take outside its turn or in response to certain events.

Spells Magic that requires *spell slots*, these have levels and can be seen as the caster's well of magic.

Cantrips Magic that can be cast at will.

D20 (AND OTHER DICE)

In DnD the d20 is used to determine almost everything. Want to hit something? Roll a d20 to see if you can. Want to sneak around? Roll a d20. Want to impress someone? Roll a d20. If you roll a 20, what you tried to do instantly succeeds and if you roll a 1 it critically fails. What happens for the scores in between is for the DM to decide.

In combat there are even more dice to use (d4, d6, d8, d10), it depends on the action what type is used. DnD is a game of strategy, but with the dice also a game of chance.

MULTIVERSE

The Dungeons and Dragons world is big. There are also loads of possibilities to create your own sections in this world. That is what I did (a little). I created the plane *Europia* where Titus rules and exploits the people that live there. Titus is an *Archdevil* from the Nine Hells (Hell) that came across *Europia* (it is possible to travel from plane to plane if you are powerful enough) and started to dig up the resources that are found there and sell them in other realms.

ALIUS (ALIENATION)



HE WORKER HERO

Alius is a *human*, *warlock* and he has a *worker* background. This gives him certain traits and capabilities, explained more fully in this chapter.

CLASS & RACE

WARLOCKS ARE SEEKERS OF THE KNOWLEDGE THAT LIES hidden in the fabric of the multiverse. Through pacts made with mysterious beings of supernatural power, warlocks unlock magical effects both subtle and spectacular.

— The Player's Handbook

IN THE RECKONINGS OF MOST WORLDS, HUMANS ARE THE youngest of the common races, late to arrive on the world scene and short-lived in comparison to dwarves, elves, and dragons. Perhaps it is because of their shorter lives that they strive to achieve as much as they can in the years they are given. Or maybe they feel they have something to prove to the elder races, and that's why they build their mighty empires on the foundation of conquest and trade. Whatever drives them, humans are the innovators, the achievers, and the pioneers of the worlds.

— The Player's Handbook

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per warlock level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier = 8 HP (that is very low...)

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor

Weapons: Simple weapons

Tools: none

Saving Throws: Wisdom, Charisma

Skills: Choose two from **Arcana**, Deception, History, Intimidation, Investigation, **Nature**, and Religion

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier = 12

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier = +4

ABILITY SCORES

Alius is a *human* so that means all his *ability scores* are increased by one.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a light crossbow and 20 bolts or **(b) any simple weapon** = small sword
- (a) a component pouch or **(b) an arcane focus**
- (a) a scholar's pack or (b) a **dungeoneer's pack**
- Leather armor, any simple weapon, and two daggers

OTHERWORLDLY PATRON

AT 1ST LEVEL, YOU HAVE STRUCK A BARGAIN WITH AN *otherworldly being of your choice*. Your choice grants you features at 1st level and again at 6th, 10th, and 14th level.

— The Player's Handbook

Alius has unknowingly struck a bargain with the *fiend* Titus. Titus chooses children that show affinity for magic and grants them powers to work in his factory. Titus does not show himself to his workers, so Alius has no idea where his magic and abilities come from. Alius also does not know he can grow his powers (yet) by going on adventures. Right now he is level 1 and his patron gives him the following ability:

Dark One's Blessing: Starting at 1st level, when you reduce a hostile creature to 0 hit points, you gain temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier + your warlock level (minimum of 1). This is very useful for working in the dark corners of the Factory where small monsters crawl.

MAGIC

As a first level warlock Alius learned two *cantrips* and two *spells*. Warlock spell slots are replenished with a *short rest* (as opposed to other casters that need a *long rest*). A warlock can change their spells every time they level up. Alius has not changed his spells for a long time, because he has never leveled up before.

ALIUS (ALIENATION)

CANTRIPS

Alius knows *Mage Hand*, a spectral hand that floats around and can touch and handle stuff that he cannot reach for example. It cannot carry much (10 pounds), but it is still helpful in the Factory. The other cantrip he knows is *Eldritch Blast*, which does 1d10 *force damage*, and with that he blasts the small monsters.

SPELLS

Alius knows *Hellish Rebuke* which damages a creature that damaged him, it is a *reaction*. He also knows *Command*, which can give a simple instruction to someone. These two he must use sparingly, because he does not have unlimited spell slots (well of magic).

BACKGROUND

As I said before I rewrote the *soldier* background into a custom *worker* one. I included the source of the background on my Sources page at the end.

The Factory has been your life for as long as you can remember. You were trained as a youth to assist and protect your fellow workers as they dig up the resources and rework them so they can be transported to only the Gods know where. You learned basic survival techniques, because the Factory is an extremely dangerous place.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: One type of gaming set, simple factory machinery

Languages: none (he speaks *Common* in a European dialect, because he is a human)

Equipment: A worker badge, a token from a fallen friend, a deck of cards, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10gp of saved up wages

FEATURES

Alius is one of the higher rankings, but still lowly workers laboring deep in the Factory. He assists the workers with his *Mage Hand* and defeats the small monsters that can be found in the darker places.

Other workers, also from other Factory departments all over Europa, recognize his badge and respect the work he does. They will try to help him by offering simple equipment or horses for temporary use. He can also gain access to other Factory departments where the job is recognized.

CHARACTERISTICS

At level one, you usually choose some *Personality Traits*, *Ideals*, *Bonds* and *Flaws* for your character. It is possible to choose from the prewritten ones or write them yourself. These can of course change as the campaign progresses.

PERSONALITY TRAIT

Alius is haunted by memories of the factory. He cannot get the images of the horrors that occurred there out of his mind. He has violent nightmares from them.

IDEAL

Alius fights for his world and his people; they are all that matters.

BOND

Alius' best friend died in the Factory; he will stop at nothing to avenge him.

FLAW

Alius will blast at every small sound, a remnant from the frequent attacks of small monsters in the Factory.



TITUS (EXPLOITATION)

TITUS IS A FIEND, A VERY POWERFUL ARCHDEVIL. He is the patron of several workers in his Factory, ones he chose carefully for the best and most efficient results. Titus is originally from one of the Nine Hells, but he now resides on Europia and he has his *lair* there. Titus is incredibly greedy, and he will never be satisfied. He thinks Europia's resources are the easiest way to innumerable wealth, and he will only stop when Europia is completely empty. Titus entertains himself by offering contracts to desperate creatures under the pretense of philanthropy. He makes them think he is helping them, but there are always small letters in his contracts that either make him even richer or eventually indebt those people so much they are forced to come work for him.

Titus' lair can be found in the deepest part of Europia and can even be considered as a small plane in itself. It is incredibly hard to reach and the effects the lair has on a creature that comes close are significant.

The *stat block* on the next page is based on the archdevil of greed, created by the creators of *Tome of Beasts*. The *actions* he can take are incredibly powerful and only a very high-level party can defeat him. He uses his wealth as a weapon and as protection.

THE FACTORY

A lot of rare raw resources are buried in the depths of Europia. They look like small silver orbs that need to be worked to be of any value. In other worlds they are highly sought after magical items that sell for a 1000 gold pieces per item. Titus created a complicated, but highly efficient system that needs a lot of hands on work. Luckily for him, when he found Europia, it was already inhabited by millions of humans. These humans were ruled by kings and nobles, and mostly lived in small cities where they worked as artisans and traders, or were bound to the farmlands they worked on. When Titus came, he offered a new prospect for a lot of people: a way to earn their own money and finally be 'free'. Nothing was done against the hard working conditions and the long hours, and the system deteriorated.

The Factory takes lives every day and no one can do anything about it. The Factory system became too powerful and is now completely interwoven in Europia and the lives of its people. It also recently became clear that the magical silver orbs are actually the lifeblood of Europia and the plane is slowly, but very surely, dying.



TITUS (EXPLOITATION)

STAT BLOCK

ARCHDEVIL: TITUS

weakness: revolution

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 378 (28d12 + 196)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (+0)	13 (+2)	20 (+5)	11 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Int +14, Wis +13, Cha +16

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from weapons that aren't silvered

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 23

Languages all, telepathy 120ft.

Challenge 25 (75,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The archdevil's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 24, +16 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

- **At will:** charm person, detect magic, dispel magic, heat metal, magic aura
- **3/day each:** animate objects, counterspell, creation, instant summons, legend lore, teleport
- **1/day each:** imprisonment (minimum containment only, inside gems), sunburst

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If the archdevil fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The archdevil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The archdevil's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

- **Multiattack.** The archdevil of greed makes three attacks.
- **Purse.** Melee Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.
- **Hit:** 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) radiant damage.

- **Molten Coins.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) fire damage.
- **Your Weight In Gold (Recharge 5-6).** The archdevil can use this ability as a bonus action immediately after hitting a creature with his purse attack. The creature must make a DC 24 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified by being turned to solid gold. Otherwise, a creature that fails the saving throw is restrained. A restrained creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature receives a greater restoration spell or comparable magic.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The archdevil can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The archdevil of greed regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

- **Attack.** The archdevil makes one purse or molten coins attack.
- **Make It Rain!** The archdevil of greed casts gold and jewels into a 5-foot radius within 60 feet. One creature within 60 feet of the treasure that can see it must make a DC 24 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature must use its reaction to move its speed toward the trinkets, which vanish at the end of the turn.
- **Deep Pockets (3 actions).** The archdevil recharges his Your Weight In Gold ability.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the archdevil takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the archdevil of greed can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The archdevil infuses a pile of treasure in his lair with life.
- It becomes an earth elemental made of precious metals and gems. The elemental acts immediately and lasts until destroyed or until the archdevil uses this action again.
- Stacked piles of treasure shift and slide, collapsing onto a creature the archdevil can see. The creature is restrained until initiative count 20 on the following round, or until it or an adjacent ally uses an action to make a successful DC 18 Strength check to free it.
- The archdevil magically teleports from one area of treasure to another within 150 feet.

THE CAMPAIGN (STORY)

THE BEAUTY OF DND IS THAT ALMOST ANYTHING can happen, but the main objective in this story is obvious: find a way to overthrow and maybe even kill Titus. The story of Alius and Titus can only start if Alius becomes conscious of his situation in the Factory and discovers a connection with himself and the workers around him. That is where this campaign will start: he sits in a tavern (where all DnD stories begin) after a long day's work. His best friend died in the Factory, and he could not do anything about it. He starts to wonder why nobody but him seems shaken up about it.

After some thinking and planning, Alius is ready to escape from the Factory and go on his adventure to become more powerful, and to find out where his powers even come from. He is in for a big surprise when he finds out that his patron is also his enemy... Fortunately, a patron cannot take away powers once granted, but Titus can make Alius' life a living hell if he wants to. So, Alius needs to find some comrades to assist him in his endeavors.

Hopefully Alius and his new friends become powerful enough to start a revolution, but that is not the only objective they have. Their world, Europia, is slowly dying because its life force has been taken out by Titus' Factory. So, they need to find a way to save their world, if that is even possible...

For now, that is all there is to the story. It is still open and maybe I will work out more details, so I can host one-shots or even a campaign in this world. I am very curious to see if Alius could succeed and what his path to revolution would look like.

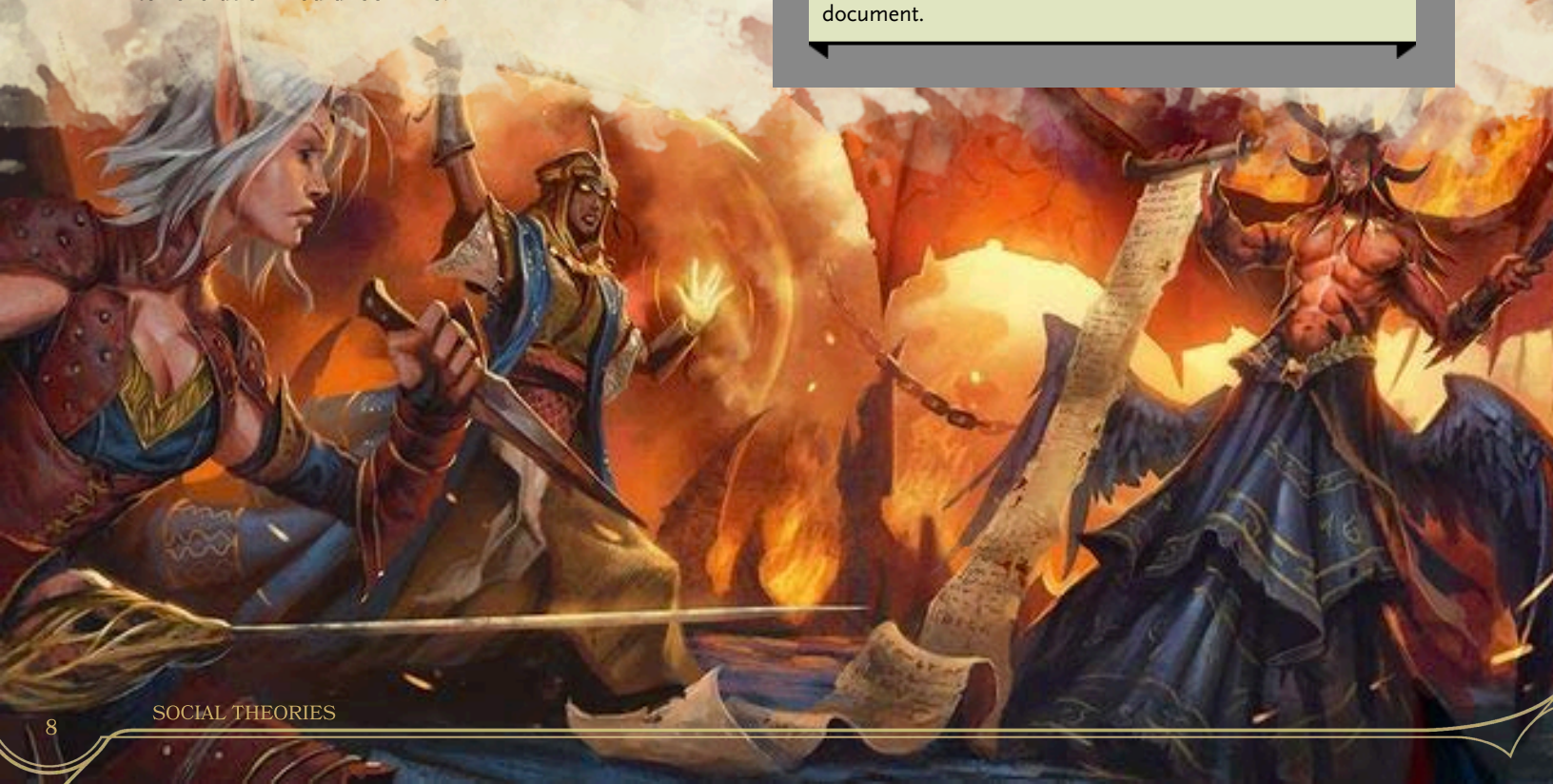
SOCIAL THEORIES CONNECTIONS

As seen, a lot of choices and connections need to be made when creating a Dungeons and Dragons character and (the humble beginning of) a campaign. I tried to keep the levels of Alienation and the horrors of Exploitation in mind. This is seen in the way that Alius is so alienated from his work, the product, his fellow humans and himself, that he does not see he is being exploited by Titus. Alius does not even know where his magic comes from. It also works the other way around: Titus can keep exploiting him and the other workers, because they are so alienated from everything.

The conditions of the Factory influence the way I build Alius. He has a lower *Constitution* because of the horrid working conditions, but a high *Dexterity* because he needed to be quick when handling the machines. It is usually recommended for a warlock to maximize *Charisma*, but it makes more sense for Alius to have higher *Wisdom*. He does not need to be charming or intimidating, he needs to keep his wits about him to survive. He only does low level combat anyway, so he does not need a high *Charisma* modifier right now. These are just a few examples of course; I really tried to incorporate a lot of Marx' theory into this story in the details.

What I lastly want to mention is the company behind the official DnD: Wizards of the Coast (WoTC). They are a division of the company Hasbro, and they essentially capitalized and, in some ways, ruined the game. One of the main issues is that they changed the Open Gaming License. With this new license they can (retroactively) capitalize on third party content, which is a huge part of the DnD community and what makes the game so much fun. Then there are also the issues of the 2024 Player's Handbook (rubbish), the obvious AI generated content that they sell for a top price, Baldur's Gate 4, and so on. If you want to start playing DnD: please try to find books second hand (I have most of them as PDFs).

I included some sources of this at the end of the document.



SOURCES

- <https://dnd5e.wikidot.com/warlock>
- <https://dnd5e.wikidot.com/warlock:fiend>
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APPENDIX

A L I U S ' C H A R A C T E R S H E E T



CHARACTER NAME

ALIGNMENT

PATRON

PASSIVE INSIGHT

10

15

11

12

16

14

RACIAL TRAITS

Common

TOOLS & OTHER PROFICIENCIES

LIGHT ARMOUR	SIMPLE WEAPONS
MEDIUM ARMOUR	MARTIAL WEAPONS
HEAVY ARMOUR	SHIELDS

[illegible]

ELDRITCH INVOCATIONS

↑
at higher levels
Warlocks get cool
powers they can use
at will sometimes



Alius

CHARACTER NAME

AGE	20	HEIGHT	1.80 m	WEIGHT	65 kg	DISTINGUISHING MARKS	
EYES	brown	SKIN	light	HAIR	brown	SCARS	various



PERSONALITY TRAITS

IDEALS

BONDS

FLAWS

BACKGROUND

ALLIES

ENEMIES

ADDITIONAL FEATURES & TRAITS

EQUIPMENT

HEAD ☐

AMULET ☐

CLOAK ☐

ARMOUR ☐

HANDS/ARMS ☐

RING ☐

RING ☐

BELT ☐

BOOTS ☐

CP

SP

EP

GP

PP

MAGIC ITEMS

Name ☐

Name ☐

Name ☐

Name ☐

Name ☐

BACKPACK/STORAGE

Spells

Mage Hand

Source: Player's Handbook

Conjuration cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 minute

A spectral, floating hand appears at a point you choose within range. The hand lasts for the duration or until you dismiss it as an action. The hand vanishes if it is ever more than 30 feet away from you or if you cast this spell again.

You can use your action to control the hand. You can use the hand to manipulate an object, open an unlocked door or container, stow or retrieve an item from an open container, or pour the contents out of a vial. You can move the hand up to 30 feet each time you use it.

The hand can't attack, activate magical items, or carry more than 10 pounds.

Spell Lists. Artificer, Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

Eldritch Blast

Source: Player's Handbook

Evocation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

A beam of crackling energy streaks toward a creature within range. Make a ranged spell attack against the target. On a hit, the target takes 1d10 force damage.

At Higher Levels. The spell creates more than one beam when you reach higher levels: two beams at 5th level, three beams at 11th level, and four beams at 17th level. You can direct the beams at the same target or at different ones. Make a separate attack roll for each beam.

Spell Lists. Warlock

Command

Source: Player's Handbook

1st-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V

Duration: 1 round

You speak a one-word command to a creature you can see within range. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or follow the command on its next turn. The spell has no effect if the target is undead, if it doesn't understand your language, or if your command is directly harmful to it. Some typical commands and their effects follow. You might issue a command other than one described here. If you do so, the DM determines how the target behaves. If the target can't follow your command, the spell ends.

Approach. The target moves toward you by the shortest and most direct route, ending its turn if it moves within 5 feet of you.

Drop. The target drops whatever it is holding and then ends its turn.

Flee. The target spends its turn moving away from you by the fastest available means.

Grovel. The target falls prone and then ends its turn.

Halt. The target doesn't move and takes no actions. A flying creature stays aloft, provided that it is able to do so. If it must move to stay aloft, it flies the minimum distance needed to remain in the air.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, you can affect one additional creature for each slot level above 1st. The creatures must be within 30 feet of each other when you target them.

Hellish Rebuke

Source: Player's Handbook

1st-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when you are damaged by a creature within 60 feet of you that you can see

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

You point your finger, and the creature that damaged you is momentarily surrounded by hellish flames. The creature must make a Dexterity saving throw. It takes 2d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d10 for each slot level above 1st.

Spell Lists. Warlock