

The Order of the Miasmatic Scalpel

Symbol: A scalpel dripping blood.

The Order of the Miasmatic Scalpel exists to heal the sick and wounded -- as long as doing so would aid the cause of Evil. There are very few places in the world where the Order operates freely, but most major cities have a hidden temple or clinic. The Order's missionaries are a bit more open; in fact, most Dark Hordes or other evil-themed armies will have a tireless and proactive contingent of Order physicians. In the rear. Far, far in the rear, where the enemies of evil can't get to them.

Why is this necessary? Well, the Order's acolytes are all extremely well-versed in both medicine and healing magic, and they got that way through a thoroughly vile training process. Vivisection of living sentient creatures is only the beginning of it; the Order is a firm believer in using up good people in order to heal bad ones, and takes an absolutely malicious joy in acquiring innocent victims for its medical sacrifices. It'd be perhaps less obscene if the Order was incompetent at healing people -- but they're not. They're actually quite good at it.

Worse, the Order of the Miasmatic Scalpel does not typically go in for the usual backbiting and institutionalized treachery that one normally expects from evil cults. Members of the Order treat and respect each other as professional colleagues, from the lowest 'hold the victim down' orderly to the three cult heads (called Those Who Flense Health) who head up the Order from the shadows. It's all surprisingly collegial, in fact. They surreptitiously share papers and techniques when they can, although the Order hasn't dared to hold a true conference in roughly three centuries. The last one ended with multiple people being burned at the stake, once the authorities found out about the event.

Honestly, it should come as no surprise that the Order of the Miasmatic Scalpel continues to exist solely because of ongoing demonic assistance. In fact, it *has* to be ongoing: otherwise, both secular and religious authorities would absolutely have wiped out the Order by now. The very **idea** behind the Order is offensive, particularly to groups that foster medicine and/or magical healing. And as for actual healing-themed *deities*? Well, let's just say presenting one of them with the severed head of a member of the Order is an excellent way to get on their good side. Even if the deity in question is normally not very happy about people getting killed.

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