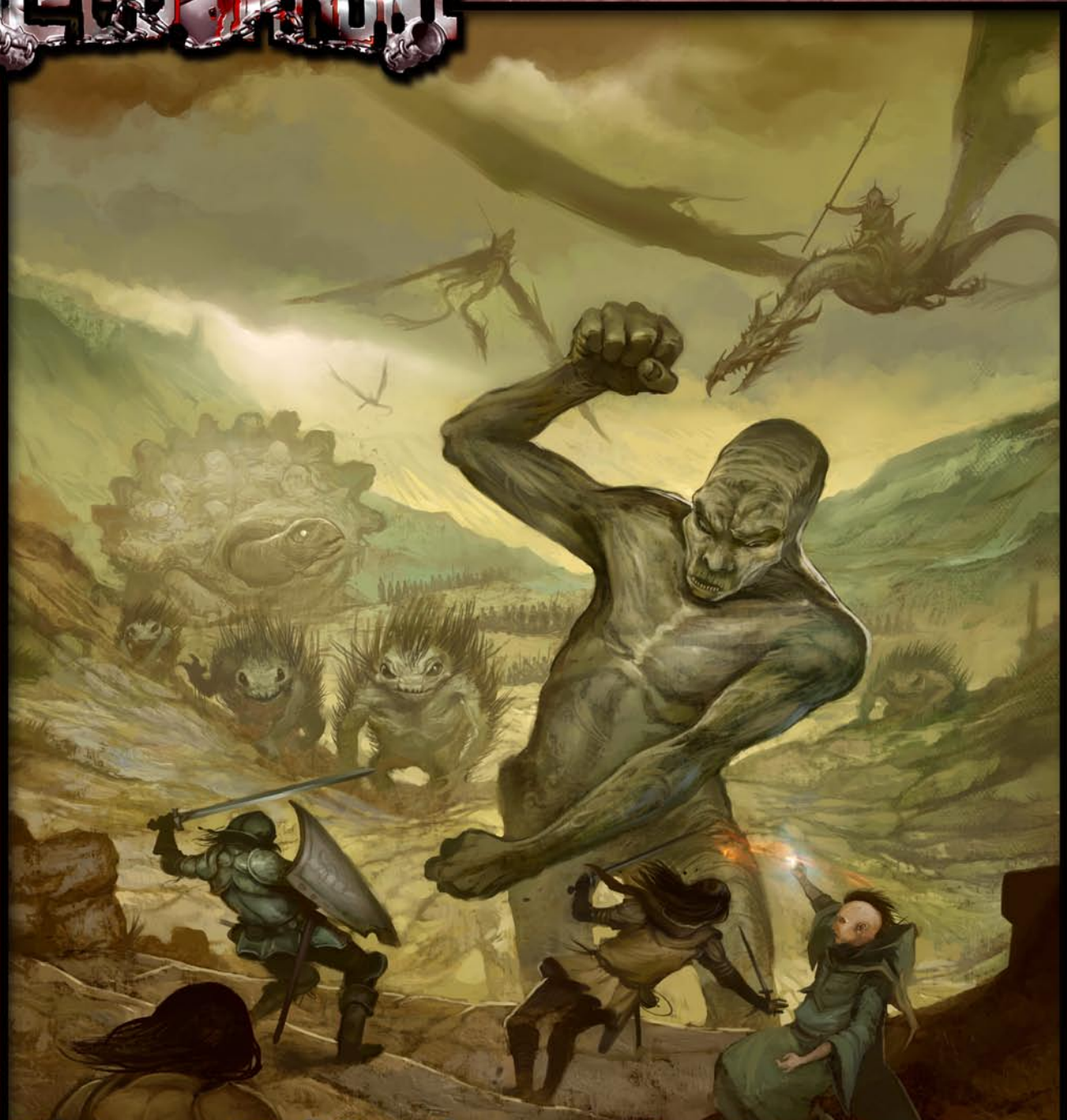


BLOOD THRONE



The Blighted Bestiary

Hal Maclean, Matthew Kaiser

Requires True20 Adventure Roleplaying
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BLOOD THRONE

CAMPAIGN SETTING

CREDITS:

AUTHOR: HAL MACLEAN, MATTHEW KAISER

EDITORS: RONE BARTON, ED HEALY

PROOF READERS: PETER ARONSON

PROJECT MANAGER: RONE BARTON

LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN: DAVID JARVIS, JASON WALTON

COVER ARTIST: JON HODGSON

INTERIOR ARTISTS: ANTHONY COURNOYER, RICK HERSHEY

BRAND MANAGER: ED HEALY

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: DAVID JARVIS



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Let them know obedience. Let them know desolation. But, most of all, let them know pain...

Salena Valanas, instructing the Shapers Guild

INTRODUCTION

The *Blighted Bestiary* presents a host of new monsters and minions designed to help the blight elves carry out their crusade of visiting misery to every corner of the world. Though designed as a companion volume to *Blight Elves: Architects of Despair*, a Narrator could easily adapt the creatures, templates and even stat blocks of different creatures found within this book to fit other situations. Every world needs villains, the more dastardly the better, and the blight elves, devoted servants to the goddess of suicide, bring an entirely new dimension to villainy.

Seeking not territorial aggrandizement or personal glory, but rather to make every living creature prefer death to life, the blight elves apply every facet of their pitiless lore to manufacturing servant creatures. Twisting flesh and bone to suit their purposes, they delight in the certainty that most of their vassals suffer with constant torment, both physical and psychological. Only the safeguards bred into them by their masters keeps these wretched creatures from taking revenge for the misery of their existence.

In this book, discover:

Blaze Shrikes: birds with combustible blood that serve their masters as free-willed grenades.

Blight Nags: Once noble steeds twisted into slavish battle mounts that radiate an aura overwhelming melancholy.

Bone Gallows: An undead lynching post made from the bone and flesh of earlier victims.

Carrion Claws: Emaciated predatory cats that must feed through their claws by stealing life energy from their victims.

Desiccated Colossi: Giants that drain the moisture from their victims with the slightest touch.

Dracoraptors: Flying reptiles with breath so repulsive few creatures can stand against them.

Dust Stalkers: Disease ridden guard animals trained to hunt and kill.

Fendrac: Psionic wolves psychically linked by a pack mind.

Frost Creeps: Giant worms that emit a slime that liquefies and then freezes their surroundings, making it all but impossible for their victims to escape when they roll over them.

Hollowhorns: Gigantic rams that make sounds that grow more terrifying the faster they move.

Hookhides: Huge froglike creatures covered in

barbed quills capable of shredding through entire squadrons with each leap.

Killstings: Giant wasp like creatures that implant rapidly maturing eggs in their victims causing squirming grubs to almost instantly spill out of the wound.

Mudtongues: Bizarre combinations of anteater and peacock with stomachs that constantly roil with alchemical menace.

Plague Bears: Mutant bears that host a deadly array of diseases.

Rot Ghouls: Ferocious undead that infect their victims with a rotting disease that eats away at living flesh and turns its victims into the walking dead.

Rustbreaths: Bloated cattle that breathe a corrosive gas.

Shelldrags: Massive, blind turtles that fearlessly carry troops into the thick of battle.

Snatchlings: Small simian thieves with a knack for stealing the items you treasure most.

Surge Spiders: Giant spiders that crackle with electricity and spin lethally conductive webs.

Tricksters: Shape changing avian spies.

Unending: Giant rats that reproduce by laying eggs in their foes and recover from virtually any injury.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The blight elves assign important tasks in their society to a particular guild; including that of producing servant creatures. The ancient feud between the Cabal of Entropic Channelers and the Shapers Guild stems in part from this division of labor. The Cabal, reaching forward through time to draw on the final embers of the universe in its death throes, creates all undead. The Shapers Guild, spawning hideous mutants of all descriptions, claims exclusive jurisdiction over the living. While theoretically equal, the entropic channelers know that the shapers enjoy greater prestige and it rankles.

Though some of this marked difference in status stems from the long-ago treason committed by the founder of the entropic channelers, much of it rests on more practical reasons. All blight elves must learn how to use their innate magic to call forth diseases and poisons, a power they call the blighted touch; represented by the requirement that they must take Infect as a supernatural power at first level. The Shapers Guild exploits the power of this innate ability by making sure any creature it breeds may not harm someone with the blighted touch. For this reason, most blight elves regard the Shapers Guild as the preeminent source of servant monsters and the entropic channelers—their undead far more dangerous and difficult to control—as second best.

BLIGHTED SUBTYPE

Any creature produced by, or even tracing its lineage back to, the Shapers Guild must have the blighted subtype. This represents the compulsions and magical conditions bred into its fundamental nature that keeps it from turning against its masters, no matter how much the creature might wish to strike back. In game terms, the blighted subtype affects a creature in two ways.

First, it makes it impossible for the creature to harm anyone with the blighted touch ability, by inducing painful convulsions as soon as it forms the intent to attack. These convulsions render the creature helpless the instant before it tries to take hostile action against its blight elf target. It remains helpless, and wracked with overwhelming pain, until the blight elf it intended to harm moves out of its presence. The physical and mental traumas of these convulsions also deal 1 point of damage to each of the creature's abilities. Creatures compelled by magic or other unusual circumstances to attack a blight elf still suffer the full effects of the pain and incapacitation normally caused by trying to harm someone with the blighted touch. If driven to harm a blight elf by some outside source the blighted creature always gains another saving throw to resist that specific compulsion, even if the effect normally does not allow for additional (or any) saving throws.

The creature need not know a target possesses the blighted touch. Once fully developed by a blight elf, the power produces a magical aura that constantly emanates from his body. Though not detectable by any means, save its effects on blighted creatures (making powers such as Second Sight irrelevant), this aura persists after death, forcing these creatures to shun even the corpse of a blight elf so long as it remains relatively intact. The blighted touch, while based on Infect, possesses several subtle differences due to the way in which it interacts with blight elf physiology. For this reason, members of other races may not use the Infect power to simulate the blighted touch.

At least partially due to the effect it has upon their servant creatures the blight elves view the ability to manifest the blighted touch the central defining characteristic of their race. They make a practice of sending their children out into the woods alone as a rite of passage. Those unable, or unwilling, to use the blighted touch as a defense always die at the hands of the many blighted creatures living within the Sarangak Forest, who must normally leave blight elves alone.

Second, it makes the creature susceptible to commands posed in Blight Speak, a special language designed by the guild to help it compel obedience from its creations. Though rather limited in its scope, with a vocabulary of perhaps only a few hundred words, many blight elves still make a point of learning Blight

Speak since it gives them such influence over their servants. Some creatures, in addition to the commands programmed into every being manufactured by the guild, also live with the burden or one or two additional trigger phrases custom designed to exploit their special abilities or talents. Please see the individual descriptions of the monsters for more information about the commands unique to them.

BLIGHT SPEAK (GENERAL)

You know the language of clicks, grunts and growls that every creature tracing its origin back to the Shapers Guild instinctively understands. Part of their fundamental nature, as integral as the number of their limbs or the placement of their eyes, they find it almost impossible to resist instructions conveyed by this language. You may use the Handle Animal skill to influence the behavior of any creature with the blighted subtype, regardless of its Intelligence or creature type. In addition, every creature with the blighted subtype instinctively knows the following tricks, and by making a Handle Animal check you may prompt it to perform that action.

BLIGHT SPEAK

TRICK	HANDLE ANIMAL DIFFICULTY
Attack (creature you designate)	20
Defend (creature you designate)	25
Fetch (object you designate)	20
Follow (creature you designate)	20
Guard (creature, object, or location you designate)	25
Heel/Halt	15

These tricks do not count towards the maximum number of tricks you may teach a creature to perform with the Handle Animal skill. In fact, if you wish to teach an otherwise eligible creature to perform one of the tricks in the table above without the need to prompt it with Blight Speak, you must teach it the trick as normal. Creatures with an Intelligence of -3 or greater may attempt to resist any command issued using Blight Speak. They must succeed in a Will save with a Difficulty equal to your Handle Animal check to avoid leaping to obey your order without conscious thought.



MONSTERS

The blight elves regard their servant creatures as tools, nothing more. For this reason, they seldom devote any more time and attention to their well being than is necessary. They also rarely see the point of embroidering these poor, miserable creatures with names that do anything beyond describe their intended function.

BLAZE SHRIKE

Type: 2nd Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Tiny

Speed: 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Abilities: Str -4, Dex +5, Con +1, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha 0

Skills: Notice 5 (+6)

Feats: All-Out Attack^B, Attack Focus (talons)

Traits: Combustible Blood, Darkvision 60ft., Frenzy

Combat: Attack +10 (+2 base, +5 Dex, +2 size, +1 Attack Focus), Damage -4 (+0 talons, -4 Str, +1 Fire Aura) Defense: Dodge/Parry +9/+0 (+2 Base, +5 Dex, +2 Size), Initiative +5

Saves: Toughness -1 (+1 Con, -2 size), Fortitude +4 (+3 base, +1 Con), Reflex +8 (+3 base, +5 Dex), Will +1 (+0 base, +1 Wis)

These birds, their coal dark feathers streaked with sullen splashes of red and yellow like that of a sunset on a foggy day, leave a heat shimmer and the faintest trail of sour smoke in their wake. Their tiny black eyes containing a spark of madness, blaze shrikes seem to welcome any opportunity for battle, perhaps hoping for the sweet release of death. Their call sounds more like a dusty cough than the warble of a songbird and they often hack up spittle laced with minuscule pieces of gray cinders. Blaze shrikes rarely perch on anything flammable for very long since their intense body heat soon causes their resting place to smolder.

COMBAT

Blaze shrikes serve their masters as living grenades, exploding in great bursts of flame when killed. Some blight elves also know the secret of compelling them to detonate on command, burning and potentially blinding everyone near the explosion.

Combustible Blood: A blaze shrike's volatile blood ignites mere moments after first making contact with air. Whenever a blaze shrike suffers lethal damage from a slashing or piercing melee weapon its splatter of scorching blood deals +1 heat damage to the wielder of that weapon.

When killed, regardless of the weapon, or on suffering an injury from fire, a blaze shrike's arteries and veins instantly collapse and vent the entirety of their contents in a spray of searing droplets that deals +2 heat damage to every creature within a 10-foot radius.

Frenzy: Their blood quite literally boiling, blaze shrikes rarely hesitate to attack any creature that attracts their notice. Completely indifferent to their own well-being they launch themselves at their foes with a heedless abandon. They may use their All-Out Attack feat to apply the full -5 penalty on their Dodge and Parry bonuses in order to gain a +5 bonus on their attack roll despite the restrictions that would normally prevent this.

ECOLOGY

Hatched in nests of charcoal and most commonly fed on an elixir of oil and sulfur mixed with wood chips, blaze shrikes spend their entire existence wracked by the agony of their blistering internal temperatures. Despite the pain of their condition they loathe the sensation of cold even more. This drives them to spend their days miserably huddling as close to a heat source as they dare since direct contact with flame causes them to explode.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a blaze shrike to "Die" by succeeding in a Difficulty 30 Handle Animal check. If the blaze shrike does die as ordered, it



detonates in an especially violent explosion. This blast deals +4 heat damage to any creature within 10-feet of it and requires they make a Difficulty 12 Fortitude save or become blind for 1 minute. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. Due to the blighted touch, a blaze shrike may not explode near a blight elf.

Since blaze shrikes invariably explode when slain, utterly destroying their remains, connoisseurs prize their feathers due to both their rarity and distinctive color scheme. Anyone who manages to pluck the feathers from a living blaze shrike may use them to adorn a garment or an ornamental accessory, such as a hat or fan, by succeeding in the appropriate Difficulty 10 Craft check. This increases the value of the newly decorated item by 6.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Someone asks the heroes to investigate rumors that a notorious arsonist recently purchased a consignment of exotic eggs. On closer examination their initial concerns, that he actually bought some sort of incendiary weapon disguised as eggs, takes on an even more sinister tenor when he hatches the first blaze shrike.

BLIGHT NAG

Type: 5th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +2, Con +3, Int -4, Wis +1, Cha -3

Skills: Notice 8(+9)

Feats: Double Strike^B, Endurance, Night Vision^B, Run

Traits: Scent

Combat: Attack +6 (+5 base, -1 size, +2 Dex), Damage +6 (hooves or bite), Defense: Dodge/Parry +6/— (+5 base, -1 size, +2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saves: Toughness +5 (+3 Con, +2 size), Fortitude +7 (+4 base, +3 Con), Reflex +6 (+4 base, +2 Dex), Will +2 (+1 base, +1 Wis)

These wretched steeds appear to be mummified horses with jagged rotten teeth; however, they are very much alive. Their sides heave painfully with every breath, contributing to an already volatile disposition. Their eyes are black wells of sorrow, reflecting an inner desolation of spirit that mirrors their wasted bodies. Despite a frail appearance, blight nags are capable steeds, whose sickly frames possess unnatural strength and vitality. Their bony ankles end in broad, sharp hooves and their misaligned teeth can rend flesh far more effectively than any natural born equine. Their patchy coats range in color from a rancid black to blood red, to a sickly grey-green pallor. They emanate an aura of sadness and deep despair that casts a shadow of hopelessness and foreboding over the hearts of

those who draw near them. Adult blight nags are around eight or nine feet long, stand about 5 feet high at the shoulder and weigh between 600 and 800 pounds, with females tending to be slightly smaller than males.

Legend tells these fell creatures were once a mighty breed of wild steed known as the Numaire—a proud race, likened unto kings among wild horses, and lords of the open plains. Though untamable, in times of trouble they occasionally chose a rider deemed virtuous and pure to bear into battle against evil forces. Only the greatest of heroes enjoyed this honor. This once majestic animal is a twisted mockery of its forebears. Laid low and transformed by the baleful breeding of the blight elves, they now serve as their pitiable mounts.

COMBAT

Blight nags may appear weak, but they make surprisingly effective battle mounts, delivering powerful kicks with razor sharp hooves, and rending flesh from bone with their mismatched teeth. Their ferocity goes beyond that of a natural born animal, for combat is one of the few things that distracts them from their internal pain and anguish. Blight nags have excellent morale, and will continue fighting in spite of grievous wounds, rarely retreating unless directed to do so by their masters, whom they obey implicitly. They are hostile towards any non-blight elf humanoid daring to approach.


Aura of Despair: Blight nags were once among the merriest, most unbound of creatures. The completeness of their subjugation and spiritual ruin is infectious. Anyone within a 90 ft. radius of a blight nag risks succumbing to the aura of despair and apathy that surrounds it. They must succeed in a Difficulty 13 Will save or suffer the despair effect of the Heart Shaping supernatural power. The save Difficulty is Wisdom based. Blight elves and their servants are immune to this aura. Those who successfully save against a blight nag's Aura of Despair are considered immune to that particular blight nag's aura for the rest of the encounter.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a blight nag is up to 300 pounds; a medium load, 301-600 pounds; and a heavy load, 601-900 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Like many blighted creatures, blight nags once had a place in the natural order, but now have none. They have become omnivorous, able to graze on the flesh of fallen enemies as well as





oats and grass. They show a distinct preference for rancid meat and rotted plant matter over fresh food.

ADVENTURE HOOK

One of the heroes has a dream in which they find a blight nag, and with a magical vial of liquid are able to wash away the taint inherent in their body and spirit, restoring the wretched beast to one of the magnificent Numaire of old. The Numaire then kneels, offering its services as mount. The hero reaches to pat the steed's great silver mane and then wakes up clutching a lock of silvery horsehair.

BONE GALLOWS

Type: 14th Level Undead

Size: Huge

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +10, Dex -1, Con -, Int -, Wis 0, Cha 0

Feats: Awesome Blow^B, Cleave^B, Chokehold^B, Improved Grab^B, Improved Pin^B

Traits: Choking Nooses, Corpse Slam, Darkvision 60 ft., Morbid Repair, Stillness, Undead Traits

Combat: Attack +4 (+7 base, -1 Dex, -2 size) Damage +6 (nooses and constriction) or +20 (slam) Defense: Dodge/Parry +4/- (+7 base, -2 size, -1 Dex), Initiative -1

Saves: Toughness +17 (+7 Undead, +4 size, +6 natural), Fortitude +4 (+4 base), Reflex +3 (+4 base, -1 Dex), Will +9 (+9 base)

This hangman's platform, made from bones, skulls and lashed cords of dried flesh bleached white by the sun, houses three dangling nooses composed of many strands of hair knotted and twined together. Though thoroughly dehydrated it still reeks ever so slightly of putrefied tissue, particularly when exposed to water. Whenever it moves the bone gallows creaks as its constituent bones grate against each other—an alarming sound that hints of the grisly fate that might befall its newest targets.

COMBAT

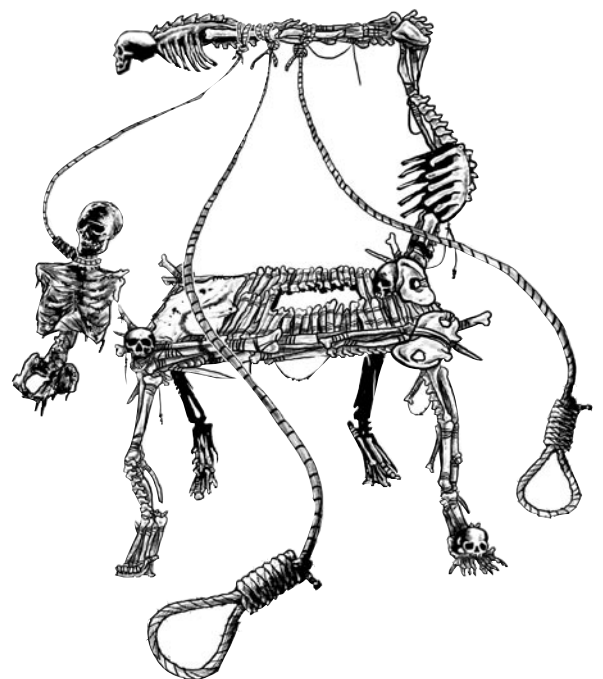
Manufactured by the Cabal of Entropic Channelers a bone gallows most often serves as guardian of a particular location. Equally able to ceaselessly patrol without need of rest or to lie in wait until the unwary step within reach of its dangling nooses, the bone gallows attacks any creature its master designates, including other blight elves, since, as undead, it lacks the blighted subtype. For this reason, though in theory especially valuable since it does not possess the mental acuity to grow bored with its assigned task, many blight elves still hesitate to use bone gallows on their home ground.

Choking Nooses: Each of a bone gallows' three nooses may reach any target within 30-feet of it. If it strikes a target with its nooses, it may begin a grapple as a free action with a grapple check bonus +25 (+7 base +10 Str +8 Size). It deals constriction damage each round as it squeezes the life out of target. Creatures attempting to escape from a noose suffer a -4 penalty on their grapple check due to its Improved Pin feat.

Corpse Slam: If a bone gallows succeeds in strangling a creature with one of its nooses it uses the body as a weapon, allowing it to batter anyone within reach of that particular noose. It gains a +6 bonus on its attack roll (+10 in total) and does slam damage when it hits. Additionally, any creature targeted by this horrific assault must succeed in a Difficulty 17 Will save to avoid becoming panicked and fleeing in mindless horror. The creature may make a new saving throw to overcome its terror each minute and continues to flee until it succeeds in one of them. The save Difficulty is Charisma based.

Morbid Repair: Whenever a bone gallows succeeds in killing creature with one of its nooses it may, as a standard action, absorb and incorporate that creature into itself. This repairs all damage currently suffered by the bone gallows. Absorbing a corpse in this way utterly destroys the creature's remains, forever merging them with the bone gallows.

Stillness: A bone gallows seem like nothing more than particularly macabre gibbet until it actually moves. Creatures approaching it must succeed in a Difficulty 30 Notice check to realize it poses a threat the moment before it strikes. The bone gallows' first attack surprises those who fail their check.



NECROLOGY

Most often, three entropic channelers collaborate in the creation of a bone gallows. Each must contribute five corpses of medium sized humanoids to the process. It takes two days to separate and prepare the raw materials gleaned from these bodies but only a relatively short time to work the magic that causes them to knit together and become a bone gallows. Each of the entropic channelers who created a bone gallows may give it instructions, including the order to obey another master. When these commands conflict the entropic channelers must make level checks (applying only their adept levels on the check) to determine which one of its creators the bone gallows obeys.

SPECIAL NOTES

If anticipating trouble a bone gallows' master sometimes sends it into battle already outfitted with one or more bodies dangling from its nooses. Typically, it begins with two such corpses, one to batter away at opponents and one to dispense with by way of its morbid repair ability as soon as it sustains injuries. These limp and lifeless bodies sagging in the nooses, swaying ever so slightly in the breeze, contribute to the bone gallows' guise as an inanimate object (increasing the Difficulty of Notice checks to thwart its Stillness power +2 for each corpse).

ADVENTURE HOOK

Stories of a grimly silent masked figure called the "Hangman", who rides a mobile gibbet from town to town and executes criminals free of charge, intrigues someone enough to ask the heroes to investigate. This Hangman, a dwarf warrior, the only survivor of a battle with blight elves, somehow managed to seize control of their bone gallows and now uses it for his own purposes.

CARRION CLAW

Type: 7th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +4, Con +2, Int +1, Wis +1, Cha +1

Skills: Notice 10 (+11), Stealth 10 (+14), Survival 10 (+11)

Feats: Accurate Attack, Attack Focus (claws), Improved Initiative, Track^B

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Life Steal, Transfer

Combat: Attack +12 (+7 base, +4 Dex, +1 Attack Focus), Damage +9 (claws) Defense: Dodge/Parry +11/- (+7 base, +4 Dex), Initiative +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Saves: Toughness +6 (+2 Con, +4 natural), Fortitude +7 (+5 base, +2 Con), Reflex +9 (+5 base, +4 Dex), Will +3 (+2 base, +1 Wis)

Seemingly descended from some forest dwelling great cat these cadaverous and sickly looking creatures have no mouths and only the thinnest of slits for a nose, causing them to snuffle whenever they exert themselves. Pallid to the point of albinism their eyes recede deep into hollow sockets, offering some protection from the bright light of the sun. Their transparent claws leave tiny black spots on any living being they make physical contact with, including any plants on which they tread.

COMBAT

Carrion claws serve their blight elf masters as a particularly hideous form of field medic. Though unable to store the life energy they steal from their victims, this ability nevertheless gives them the means to rapidly recover when they pass on some of their own vitality to a blight elf in need. In particularly dire circumstances, blight elves sometimes actually order a carrion claw to expire, which releases a wave of life-giving energy.

Life Steal: Any living creature successfully struck by a carrion claw (regardless of whether or not it actually takes damage from the attack due to its Toughness save) must succeed in a Difficulty 14 Fortitude save to avoid gaining one level of lethal damage (e.g. from wounded to disabled). This represents the carrion claw's ability to siphon away part of its target's life force in addition to any actual physical damage dealt by its claws. Whenever a target fails its Fortitude saving throw a carrion claw improves its damage condition by one step (e.g. from disabled to wounded) and loses all levels of fatigue (if any). Since carrion claws lack mouths this also serves as their only way of gaining sustenance, driving them to frantically suck the life out any creature they meet in a vain attempt to quell their relentless hunger. The save Difficulty is Charisma based.

Transfer: A carrion claw may, as a standard action, touch any living creature and pass on some of its own vitality through its claws. This removes all fatigue from the creature it touches and improves the creature's damage condition by one step (e.g. from disabled to wounded). However, using this ability causes the carrion claw to gain one level of lethal damage and fatigue.

ECOLOGY

Carrion claws spend their entire existence in search of living creatures on which to feed. Though actually able to go as long as two weeks between meals their gnawing hunger grows progressively more agonizing, swiftly rendering





them desperate to find prey. This overwhelming drive even makes them a danger to each other, requiring that their shaper masters clip the claws of a male and female before allowing them to mate just in case they try to kill each other instead. A female carrion claw always falls unconscious after giving birth, allowing her offspring the opportunity to steal some tiny portion of her life force before scampering off lest she feed on her own child when she awakens.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a carrion claw to “Heal” by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. This command causes the carrion claw to gently touch the creature designated and use its Transfer ability. Additionally, anyone who knows Blight Speak may also order a carrion claw to “Die” by succeeding in a Difficulty 30 Handle Animal check. If ordered to die in this way a carrion claw instantly expires, collapsing like a suddenly empty suit of clothing, and emits a wave of life-giving energy that allows every living creature within 30 feet to make a bonus recovery roll for both damage and fatigue.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A wandering healer has a carrion claw tightly bound up, and hidden away in his wagon. He claims that in order to heal someone another must volunteer to suffer an injury. This gives him the excuse to feed the carrion claw the life force of his blindfolded volunteers.

DESICCATED COLOSSUS

Type: 12th Level Monstrous Humanoid (Blighted, Giant)

Size: Huge

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +11, Dex +1, Con +7, Int -1, Wis +2, Cha +1

Skills: Intimidate 9 (+10), Notice 10 (+12)

Feats: Attack Focus (great club), Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Heavy Armor Training^B, Light Armor Training^B, Skill Training, Weapon Training^B

Traits: Leach Moisture, Rock Catching, Rock Throwing

Combat: Attack +11 (+12 base, +1 Dex, -2 size)(+12 w great club), Damage +16 (great club), +14 (slam) or +17 (thrown rock), Defense: Dodge/Parry +11/+21 (+12 base, -2 size, +1 Dex/+11 Str), Initiative +1

Saves: Toughness +15 (+7 Con, +4 size, +4 natural), Fortitude +13 (+4 base, +7 Con), Reflex +9 (+8 base, +1 Dex), Will +10 (+8 base, +2 Wis)

Living colossi appear as gaunt angular humanoids carved from a block of salt. Their chalky, gray-white hides cling tightly to their hairless bodies like cured leather, revealing the wiry muscle and bone structures beneath. Their angular features seem rough-hewn, as if by hammer and chisel, and their facial features are human-like but elongated and hard-edged with protruding brow ridges, wide jaws, sunken cheeks and hooked noses. Their eyes are blank milky-white orbs, devoid of emotion. Their movements are almost mechanical, leading some to believe they are constructs, but they bleed like any mortal creature once their thick hide is cracked. Desiccated colossi vary in height, with adults averaging around 23 feet tall, and weighing up to 8,000 pounds.

While intelligent, desiccated colossi are emotional voids, and if they bear any racial memory of their proud history or recognition of the complete and utter oppression they live under at the hands of the blight elves, they show no outward signs of either. They are bereft of passion and pleasure, seeking only to appease their blight elf masters and bear their torment in silence.

Once a noble breed of giants who dwelt in the Black Peaks, along the coastlines of the Whitecap and Grey seas, these beings fell prey to the blight elves’ corruptive powers after centuries of warring and rivalry. They were master masons and shipwrights gifted in song and artifice, but, since their defeat, and a diabolical mutation program, they now serve the blight elves as prodigious guards, shock troopers and living war machines, and



only a few ancient ruins and sunken shipwrecks attest to the immense talent of their ancestors.

COMBAT

Desiccated colossi serve as living siege engines for the blight elves. They can hurl rocks with the force of a catapult, smash city gates like a battering ram and even lift troops to the tops of most fortifications, serving as makeshift siege towers. In melee, they smash with their bulky fists or employ large stone clubs carved from granite or quartz.

Leach Moisture: A desiccated colossus can draw the moisture out of living creatures they touch. Casual contact is only enough to cause the victim mild thirst, but if a desiccated colossus initiates a grapple the effect becomes much more pronounced. Any creature engaged in a grapple with a desiccated colossus must make a Fortitude save each round after the first or suffer fatigue as they become increasingly dehydrated. The Difficulty of this save is 16 +1 per previous check.

Rock Catching: A desiccated colossus gains a +4 racial bonus on its Reflex save when attempting to catch a thrown rock.

Rock Throwing: The range increment is 180 feet for a desiccated colossus' thrown rocks. It uses both hands when throwing a rock.

ECOLOGY

Once great fishermen, desiccated colossi were pescetarians, eating mostly fish and supplementing their diet with various seaweeds and the olives that they grew in the region. Perhaps subconsciously tethered to this maritime past, their meager diet, consisting mainly of gruel and salt, is sometimes supplemented with rotten fish.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The heroes learn that at a time before the desiccated colossi fell to the blight elves' enslavement and corruption they sent an expedition over the Whitecap Sea to start a new colony on some uncharted land to the north. Initial reports stated that the colony was successful, but then all contact was lost. If there are still untainted relatives of the desiccated colossi in the frozen north, they could prove valuable allies, and an expedition forms to explore the ruins among the Black Peaks for hints as to where this lost colony might be.

DRACORAPTOR

Type: 7th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Huge

Speed: 20 ft., Fly 60 ft. (poor)

Abilities: Str +5, Dex +1, Con +3, Int -2, Wis +1, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 10 (+11)

Feats: Attack Focus (talons), Improved Grab^B,



Improved Initiative, Move-by Action, Night Vision^B

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Fetid Breath, Immunity to Sleep and Paralysis

Combat: Attack +6 (+7 base, +1 Dex, -2 size) (+7 w talons), Damage +9 (talons) or +11 (bite), Defense: Dodge/Parry +6/— (+7 base, -2 size, +1 Dex), Initiative +5

Saves: Toughness +11 (+3 Con, +4 size, +4 natural), Fortitude +8 (+5 base, +3 Con), Reflex +6 (+5 base, +1 Dex), Will +3 (+2 base, +1 Wis)

These emaciated, winged reptiles serve as the blight elves' aerial mounts. The dracoraptors have been in the service of the blight elves for so many centuries that no one remembers quite what these creatures were or what they looked like before their enslavement and metamorphosis at the hands of their twisted masters. In their current form, that of a large predatory bird with a serpentine neck, they resemble an intimidating fusion of avian and saurian elements. Their long beak-like mouths line with rows of jagged teeth and their finely scaled skin clings tightly to their skeletal frames. The dracoraptor's massive wings are leathern and bat-like, and their long tails have a membranous ridge that fans out at the back, serving as a rudder during flight.

The first recorded dracoraptor appeared in the service of the blight elves during their Blood War with the volsparan elves early in the Age of Steel. These winged mounts proved highly effective in the war, as much for their ability to demoralize foes as their combat effectiveness.





COMBAT

Trained to fly about some 80 feet above their enemies, dracoraptors allow their blight elf riders to knock off a few arrows while their aura of despair takes effect. After a few rounds, the dracoraptor swoops down low enough to use its fetid breath on the largest concentration of foes before using a Move-by Action to rend with its talons and returning to the sky to wheel around for another strike.

Aura of Despair: Anyone within a 90 ft. radius of a dracoraptor risks succumbing to its aura of despair. They must succeed in a Difficulty 14 Will save or suffer the despair effect of the Heart Shaping supernatural power. The save Difficulty is Wisdom based. Blight elves are immune to this aura. Those who successfully save against a dracoraptor's Aura of Despair are considered immune to that particular dracoraptor's aura for the rest of the encounter.

Fetid Breath: The stinking breath of a dracoraptor is enough to turn the stomachs of even the most hardened warrior. A dracoraptor can breathe a 30 ft. cone of stinking vapors. All living creatures, except other dracoraptor and blight elves, within the affected area must succeed on a Difficulty 16 Fortitude save or be sickened for 10 rounds. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same dracoraptor's breath for 24 hours. A use of the Cure Poison supernatural power removes the effect from the sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws.

ECOLOGY

Dracoraptors are large, egg-laying aerial predators. While their blight elf masters tend to keep them fed on carrion, they often kill and fly off with smaller animals from deer to sheep.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Volsparran elves hire the heroes to infiltrate a dracoraptor breeding aerie on the Shrieking Plateau (see **Chapter 5** of *Blight Elves: Architects of Despair* for more information) in order to steal some of their eggs and disrupt the breeding operations as much as possible.

DUST STALKER

Type: 4th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +3, Con +2, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha +0

Skills: Intimidate 2 (+4), Notice 5 (+8), Stealth 6 (+11), Survival 2 (+3)*

Feats: Improved Trip^B, Night Vision^B, Skill Training (2), Track^B

Traits: Scent, Wasting Disease

Combat: Attack +7 (+4 base, +3 Dex), Damage +4 (bite), Defense: Dodge/Parry +7/— (+4 base, +3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +3 (+2 Con, +1 natural), Fortitude +7 (+4 base, +2 Con), Reflex +7 (+4 base, +3 Dex), Will +2 (+1 base, +1 Wis)

Guard animals of the blight elves, dust stalkers have the body shape of a canine but their mouths are disproportionately large and alligator-like and their furless forms are clad in rough, cracked and warty skin. Their large glassy eyes are a cloudy white, and their pointed snouts end in slit-like nostrils. Their tongues are elongated, and loll from their slaving mouths like a rabid beast. Dust stalkers have a lean and hungry look about them, which betrays their nasty temperament and nigh insatiable ravenousness. Dust stalkers are typically around four feet tall at the shoulder, some seven feet long and weigh over 250 pounds.

Dust stalkers are the morbid perversions of a particular breed of magical dog once favored by the volsparran elves in the Age of Plenty. History records them as the mystical forest striders, a noble and treasured breed of elven hound much beloved by the volsparran. These beasts, or what remains of their once proud bloodline, now serve as ferocious trackers, guard animals and attack dogs for the blight elves. Captured and mutated into their current forms by the shapers toward the end of the Age of Steel, the dust stalkers became ideal hunting companions and attack animals. This perversion of the beloved volsparran hound proved symbolic of the blight elves split from, and victories over their former kin and serve to this day as a lasting and hurtful insult to the volsparran people.

COMBAT

Dust stalkers are tenacious in battle, trained to never flee or back down. When more than one dust stalker is present, they tend to use pack tactics, encircling their foes and coordinating their attacks. If one successfully trips a foe, the others will swarm the prone enemy in a combined attack, tearing them to shreds. If blight elves are present, the dust stalkers will look to them for leadership, effectively considering them the alphas of the pack. Some blight elves have become quite adroit at signaling their trained dust stalkers in combat.

Wasting Disease: Supernatural disease—bite; Fortitude Difficulty 14, incubation period 1 minute; damage 2 Con and 2 Cha. The save Difficulty is Constitution-based.

Skills: A dust stalker has a +2 racial bonus on Intimidate, Stealth, and Notice checks. It also has a +4 racial bonus* on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

ECOLOGY

Domesticated by the volsparan elves long before the blight elves corrupted them, dust stalkers play no more of a role in nature than other tamed canines. However, long ago descending from wolves, groups of dust stalkers separated from their blight elf masters will naturally revert to pack hunter lifestyle, though their violent nature makes them prone to infighting and even cannibalism without a trainer around to keep them in check.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a dust stalker to “Capture” a target within sight with a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. They can also “Track” a particular scent with a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The heroes follow cries for help, and loud growls, to find a young blight elf pursued relentlessly by a pack of dust stalkers and a pair of blight elf hunters. The heroes will have to act quickly if they wish to discover why the blight elves wish one of their own dead.

FENDRAC

Type: 3rd Level Supernatural Beast

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +2, Con +2, Int -3, Wis +2, Cha -2

Skills: Notice 4 (+6), Stealth 1 (+3), Survival 1 (+3)*

Feats: All-Out Attack, Defensive Attack, Improved Trip^B, Night Vision^B, Power (2)^B, Track^B

Traits: Scent, Pack Mind, Powers (rank 6, Wis, Difficulty 13; Mind Reading +8, Mind Touch +8)

Combat: Attack +5 (+3 base, +2 Dex), Damage +3 (bite), Defense +5/— (+3 base, +2 Dex), Initiative +2

Saving Throws: Toughness +3 (+2 base, +1 natural), Fortitude +5 (+3 base, +2 Con), Reflex +5 (+3 base, +2 Dex), Will +3 (+1 base, +2 Wis)

Skills: *Fendrac have a +4 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Fendrac are wolf-like hunters known for their persistence and cunning. These creatures have a highly evolved pack structure and the ability to communicate with other pack members telepathically. Visually, there is little to distinguish a fendrac from other wolves, save for broader shoulders and a slightly larger cranium. Their eyes sometimes betray the spark of great intelligence to those attuned to animals and nature. The fur of a fendrac ranges in color from dun brown and reddish brown to grey, with a few individuals sporting white or black coats. They grow up to five feet long,

stand around three feet tall at the shoulder, and weigh up to 220 pounds.

Fendrac are strongly free-willed creatures, mistrustful of anyone outside of their pack, particularly humanoids and especially elves. Fendrac try to keep their intelligence and psionic abilities hidden, preferring to appear as mere wolves to others for fear that their old masters, the blight elves, will come looking for them if their true nature ever reveals itself. They are more than willing to kill in order to keep their secrets, so those who discover their intelligence would do well to gain their trust as well if they wish to survive the encounter.

Created by the blight elf Shapers Guild from a particularly intelligent breed of wolf, fendrac came about in the same set of experiments that would eventually produce the dust stalkers. During experiments designed to create the ideal hunting and guard animal for the blight elves, the fendrac appeared to be an early success in creating a psychic link between such creatures for silent communication during the hunt. However, their pack mind rendered them resistant to further taint, and made them difficult to control. Eventually their creators declared them a “failed experiment,” and sent them to die in death matches with other such defective creations. However, the fendrac were able to collectively overpower and slay their handlers before escaping into the Sarangack Forest and on to the lands south and east.

COMBAT

In combat, they coordinate their attacks flawlessly. A favorite tactic is to send a few individuals against the foe’s front while the rest of the pack circles and attacks from the flanks or rear. One or two of them will use Mind Reading to detect which pack member an opponent will attack next and communicates this telepathically to the rest of the pack. The targeted fendrac goes on full defensive while the others use an offensive stance and All-out Attack to take their prey down quickly.

Pack Mind: Fendrac are in constant communication with each other as though they were using the Mind Touch power on each other. As long as one of them is not considered surprised or flat-footed, none of the pack is either. If one pack member senses something, all other members perceive it as well, including Notice and Search checks.

ECOLOGY

Today fendrac range throughout the Wild Lands, the Sunken Vale, the Spiderhaunt Forest, and parts of Sargolia. To date, none of them has





returned to the lands controlled by the blight elves out of fear of their former masters. Fendrac are frighteningly efficient hunters, but are fortunately few in number and intelligent enough not to overhunt any one area. They prefer large game such as deer or elk, which can feed the entire pack, but will hunt anything from rabbits to ogres. They tend to avoid hunting domesticated animals. Even though they are easy pickings, the fendrac wish to avoid the attention and potential wrath of their owners.

FROST CREEP

Type: 10th Level Vermin (Blighted) (Cold)

Size: Gargantuan

Speed: 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +12, Dex -1, Con +6, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha 0

Skills: Notice 12 (+13), Survival 1 (+2)

Feats: Ability Focus (Freeze/Thaw Slime), Awesome Blow, Improved Critical (slam), Trailblazer

Traits: Darkvision 60ft., Freeze/Thaw Slime, Killing Roll

Combat: Attack +2 (+7 Base, -1 Dex, -4 Size), Damage +20 (slam, +4 Cold Aura), Defense: Dodge/Parry +3/- (+7 Base, -4 Size), Initiative -1

Saves: Toughness +14 (+6 Con, +6 size, +2 natural) Fortitude +13 (+7 Base, +6 Con), Reflex +2 (+3 Base, -1 Dex) Will +4 (+3 Base, +1 Wis)

These massive, bone white slugs ooze rivulets of bitterly cold slime that puddle around them in all directions. Thin streams of vapor, byproducts of the temperature differential caused by this magical gel, constantly waft from their sturdy frames and fill their surroundings with a strangely bitter scent. To the outside observer frost creeps seem wantonly destructive, crushing everything they encounter—making loud and slurping sounds with every inch of movement. Toppling trees and boulders into the muck, they blaze a trail easy for anyone to follow. In truth, frost creeps suffer from a painful itch that never goes away. They spend much of their existences desperately seeking even a moment's relief by rubbing against every available surface.

COMBAT

Frost creeps serve their blight elf masters by altering the terrain they move through in order to incapacitate large numbers of enemy troops. They also sometimes act as the first wave of construction crew, clearing the ground of all obstructions before moving on and giving it time to thaw and grow solid again. Some blight elves know how to command a frost creep to temporarily step up its production of icy slime. Others simply content themselves with ordering frost creeps to roll over the creatures helplessly trapped in the frozen mud they create.

Freeze/Thaw Slime: A frost creep releases a constant deluge of slime that first liquefies and then freezes any open ground in its vicinity. Only stone, wooden floors and material of similar consistency resists this transformation into an almost instantly congealing mud. Its slime advances at the rate of 20 feet each round, potentially affecting a wide area should the frost creep choose to be still for any length of time. Any creature caught in this suddenly frozen mire sinks down to its knees and becomes trapped unless it succeeds in a Difficulty 23 Fortitude save. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. Creatures trapped by this frozen mud cannot move unless they, as a standard action, succeed in a Difficulty 23 Strength check. A creature that succeeds in this check suffers a movement penalty of ½ (bad surface) and must make another Fortitude save each round it spends within the territory affected by the frost creep. While trapped in place the creature loses any dodge bonus to defense and forfeits its Dexterity bonus on any Reflex saves it must make.

Killing Roll: A frost creep may, as a full-round action, choose to crush everything in a particular area by simply rolling over it. It must stretch out its entire 60-foot length and then roll either left or right, moving all out (80 feet) for one round. Any creature within the area it crosses over must make a Difficulty 27 Reflex save to avoid the frost creeps' slam attack. The save Difficulty is Strength based. A creature may, by choosing to forfeit its Reflex save, attempt to grapple the frost creep instead (+31 Grapple check: +7 base, +12 Str, +12 Size). If the creature succeeds in grappling the frost creep it halts it in its tracks, prematurely ending its roll and protecting any creature beyond that point from harm. Each creature that unsuccessfully attempts to grapple the frost creep grants a +1 bonus to any other creature attempting to grapple the frost creep during that round. Performing a killing roll attack makes a frost creep exhausted.

ECOLOGY

Despite constant effort, the Shapers Guild never managed to replicate the breeding program that resulted in producing the very first frost creep. Every member of this species came into being by slicing another frost creep into two equal pieces and carefully tending each until they recovered, becoming separate monsters. Due to their rarity and the difficulty of procuring replacements blight elves react with great hostility to anyone attempting to harm a frost creep.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a frost creep to "Sweat" by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. This command temporarily doubles the volume of icy slime it produces, causing it to advance at the rate of 40 feet per round instead of 20. If ordered to exert itself in this way, a frost creep becomes winded automatically. In addition, it must make a Constitution check each round in which it produces this extra slime.

The Difficulty of this check begins at 20 and increases by +1 for each subsequent round. When it fails a check, a frost creep becomes fatigued and then exhausted at which point it automatically stops producing the extra slime. Someone who knows Blight Speak may also order a frost creep to “Roll” by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the frost creep to use killing roll attack in the following round.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Something is destroying entire villages in the dead of night. Only a trail of wrecked foliage and muddy, freshly thawed ground, offers any hint that a frost creep is the source of the mayhem.

HOLLOWHORNS

Type: 4th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Medium

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +2, Dex +1, Con +1, Int -2, Wis +1, Cha 0

Skills: Intimidate 7 (+10)

Feats: Skill Focus (Intimidate), Startle^B, Spirited Charge

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Intimidating Keening, Terror Charge

Combat: Attack +5 (+4 Base, +1 Dex), Damage +6 (horns) Defense: Dodge/Parry +5/- (+4 base, +1 Dex), Initiative +1

Saves: Toughness +3 (+1 Con, +2 natural), Fortitude +5 (+4 base, +1 Con), Reflex +5 (+4 base, +1 Dex), Will +2 (+1 base, +1 Wis)

Clearly derived from mountain rams these hairless, hunchbacked creatures typically move with a slightly shuffling gait due to the immense pair of horns curling from the tops of their heads. Honeycombed with countless tiny perforations and vibratory ligaments these horns emit a teeth-grating whistle with even the slightest movement. A sound like nothing else, though perhaps most closely resembling a set of bagpipes, it grows to a shrieking crescendo when a hollowhorns breaks into a run.

COMBAT

Hollowhorns serve their blight elf masters by sowing terror in the hearts of their enemies. Any creature they meet in battle might suddenly cringe away from them. However, when a hollowhorns chooses to advance at a more rapid pace, causing the legendary eerie sound of their whistling

horns to reach its fullest expression, even veteran troops sometimes break. Some blight elves know how to command a hollowhorns to not only charge a foe but to do it at such a breakneck pace that very few things may halt their advance.

Intimidating Keening: A hollowhorns instinctively knows how to use the uncanny sounds produced by its horns to unsettle its foes. Each round it may make an Intimidate check either to demoralize an opponent or to feint as a free action.

Terror Charge: Any creature able to hear the dreadful sounds produced when a hollowhorns breaks into a charge must succeed in a Difficulty 13 Will save or become shaken until one additional minute past the time it takes for the ghastly sounds to fade away. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. If actually standing in a hollowhorns' path when it makes a charge, a creature that fails its saving throw instead becomes frightened and tries to flee. If able to run down a fleeing creature a charging hollowhorns gains a +4 bonus on its attack roll (instead of the normal +2) if it actually makes contact.

ECOLOGY

Though not susceptible to the fear effect created by their species' horns, hollowhorns nevertheless find the sound very disturbing. Many eventually try to deafen themselves in a futile attempt to escape the oppressive wailing. Those few who





actually succeed, perforating their eardrums on branches or something similar soon discover, to their dismay, that the sound conducts directly through their bones of their head rather than through their ears. This means that a deaf hollowhorns only hears the screeching sound produced by its own horns. Most hollowhorns in this predicament soon find some way to kill themselves.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a hollowhorns to “Stampede” by making a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. This command unleashes an extra jolt of adrenaline that increases the creature’s base move by 20 feet for that round which also increases the maximum distance of its run by 80 feet. Any creature standing in the path of a hollowhorns when following this command must succeed in a Difficulty 13 Will save or become panicked instead of frightened as normal. If a hollowhorns strikes an object (size huge or less) while obeying this command, such as a door or wagon, it gets a +10 bonus on its Strength check to destroy it. A hollowhorns becomes fatigued immediately after carrying out this order.

If properly harvested (requiring either a Difficulty 15 Craft (Butcher) check or a Difficulty 20 check using another, less applicable, but still related skill such as Medicine) a hollowhorns’ horn becomes a formidable musical instrument. The owner of one of these horns may attempt to startle opponents by sounding it in the first round of battle (but only the first round) as a standard action. Each creature opposed to the owner must make a Will saving throw equal or greater than the result of the owner’s Perform (Wind Instrument) check. Those who fail their check become startled for 1 round. If put up for sale one of these horns has a cost of 17.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A cattle rustler uses a hollowhorns to spook herds on the move and then steals a few as they scatter.

HOOKHIDE

Type: 6th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 40 ft.

Abilities: Str +6, Dex +2, Con +5, Int -4, Wis -1, Cha -2

Skills: Jump 9 (+38)

Feats: Improved Initiative, Move-By Action^B, Skill Focus (Jump), Toughness

Traits: Darkvision 60ft., Extraordinary Leap, In and Out, Rolling Jump

Combat: Attack +7 (+6 base, +2 Dex, -1 size), Damage +10 (Quill Slam) Defense: Dodge/Parry



+7/- (+6 base, +2 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Saves: Toughness +10 (+5 Con, +2 size, +2 natural, +1 Toughness), Fortitude +10 (+5 base, +5 Con), Reflex +7 (+5 base, +2 Dex), Will +1 (+2 base, -1 Wis)

Covered with wickedly barbed quills slightly larger than fishhooks these vaguely frog-like creatures stand about the same size as an adult bear. Their quills click against one another with even the softest breeze so hookhides often seem at the center of many hundreds of snapping fingers. Hookhides smell very strongly of rancid grease, not due their own bodily secretions but rather from their frantic wallowing in lubricants in hopes of keeping their quills from interlocking. When their quills mesh together in this way they yank at their flesh with every movement, similar in many ways to yanking at a person’s hair. Hookhides always suffer at least some pain due to quills that intertwine in this way, but if without access to these lubricating baths, the pain swiftly rises to nearly incapacitating agony.

COMBAT

Hookhides serve their blight elf masters as a form of living artillery designed to crash through close troop formations. Their great body weight, when coupled

with the fantastic lifting power of their legs, generates an extraordinary amount of momentum, allowing them to send their targets scattering like windswept leaves. Some blight elves know how to command a hookhide to wrap itself around a particular creature almost like a living net, despite the intense pain it suffers by doing so. Others content themselves merely ordering one to launch itself fearlessly against foes.

Extraordinary Jumper: Hookhides gain a +20 bonus on Jump checks due to the incredible power of their legs.

In and Out: A hookhide may divide the result of a single Jump check into two separate hops during the same round. This allows it to advance on a foe, makes its attack, then jump away again. The hookhide must decide to use this ability before making its Jump check and, if its check does not permit it to move the total distance it needs, the hookhide forfeits its attack and instead falls prone in front of its target. An opponent who takes a ready action may attack a hookhide the instant it lands and gains a +2 bonus on his attack roll.

Rolling Jump: A hookhide may, as a full-round action, launch itself against multiple creatures by targeting an area instead a particular individual when making a long jump. The hookhide must select a landing point before it makes its Jump check, one at least 30 feet away from its starting position. On landing, the hookhide converts any extra jumping distance generated by the check into rolling distance instead at the rate of two feet of rolling for every one foot of jumping. For instance, if the hookhide's Jump check permitted it to Jump 6 feet further than it actually needed to go it rolls 12 feet beyond its landing point. Any creature within a 5-foot radius of a hookhide's path must succeed in a Difficulty 19 Reflex save to avoid the hookhide's slam attack. The save Difficulty is Strength based. A creature may, by choosing to forfeit its Reflex save, attempt to grapple the hookhide instead (+16 Grapple check: +6 base, +6 Str, +4 Size). If the creature succeeds in grappling the hookhide it halts it in its tracks, prematurely ending its roll and protecting any creature beyond that point from harm. Each creature that unsuccessfully attempts to grapple the hookhide grants a +1 bonus to any other creature attempting to grapple the hookhide during that round. A hookhide's roll ends prematurely if it meets any sort of major obstacle head-on, such as a tree or wall.

ECOLOGY

As one might expect considering their physiology hookhides reproduce in the same manner as many fish and amphibians. The female lays a number of soft, semi-permeable eggs and then the male fertilizes them. Though clearly descended from frogs, and indeed starting their lives as a particularly ugly type of giant tadpole, hookhides lose all competence with water once they mature. They prefer to wade into shallow pools or similar bodies when laying, or fertilizing eggs.

If an adult hookhide ever finds itself submerged or unable to touch bottom, it panics and flails wildly, often inadvertently damaging anyone trying to assist it.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a hookhide to "Ensnare" by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the hookhide to attempt a special grapple against the designated creature. If the hookhide succeeds in pinning the creature both it and hookhide risk sustaining damage from its quills. For the creature grappled this acts as the hookhide's normal slam attack. For the hookhide, it acts as a slam attack with a +5 damage bonus instead of the normal +10. Due to the excruciating pain it endures when carrying out this command, a hookhide becomes sickened as soon as it suffers damage from its own quills. Anyone using Blight Speak may order a hookhide to "Skip" by succeeding in a Difficulty 15 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the hookhide to use its rolling jump attack in the following round.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A number of shredded bodies appearing almost simultaneously at scattered locations throughout town suggest some sort of depraved cult or the invasion of several new predator creatures. In truth, a single hookhide, capable of bounding across several rooftops at once, killed each victim, but the heroes might find this difficult to believe until they see it in action.

KILLSTING

Type: 5th Level Vermin (Blighted)

Size: Small

Speed: 10 ft., fly 40 (perfect)

Abilities: Str -1, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -4, Wis 0, Cha -1

Skills: Stealth 8 (+11)

Feats: Hover, Dodge Focus

Traits: Darkvision 60ft., Dropping Charge, Larval Sting

Combat: Attack +7 (+3 base, +3 Dex, +1 size), Damage +4 (sting) Defense: Dodge/Parry +8/- (+3 base, +3 Dex +1 size), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +2 (+1 Con, -1 size, +2 natural), Fortitude +5 (+4 base, +1 Con), Reflex +4 (+1 base, +3 Dex), Will +1 (+1 base)

The size of mastiffs, these hermaphroditic, wasp-like creatures suffer from grossly distended bellies due to their unceasing production of





eggs. In fact, killstings manufacture eggs at such a rapid pace that these ova sometimes drip out from the tip of their rapier sharp stingers. If somehow prevented from releasing these eggs from their bodies, killstings die within a matter of hours, their newest batch of hatchlings devouring them from inside out. Striped with alternating bands of blue and gray they find it quite simple to blend into the sky above; doubly fortunate since this causes the wind to sweep away the sulfuric reek of rotted eggs that clings to them. Often, only the strange, gravelly humming of a descending killsting's wings offers any clue of its coming assault.

COMBAT

Killstings serve their blight elf masters as skirmishers and mobile assassins. Able to move effortlessly past the enemy's front lines and descend to make their gruesome attack without warning, they ensure that their opponents never feel truly safe. Some blight elves know the secret of commanding them to spew forth their eggs across every creature in an entire area. For those caught in the spray, these larvae, though only surviving for a brief time, present a particularly vile and dangerous menace.

Dropping Charge: Killstings may enlist the full force of gravity to their cause; allowing them to plummet toward their target with a particularly devastating strike. They must begin their attack at least 30 feet above their unaware target and win an opposed check of their Stealth versus the target's Notice. If they succeed, they surprise their target and gain a +4 bonus on their attack roll and damage.

Larval Sting: Killstings produce an all but inexhaustible supply of eggs, which they may inject through their hollow stinger whenever they succeed in damaging an opponent. Their grubs mature at a fantastic pace, spilling out of a wound like a cascade of squirming green maggots the length of a tall man's thumb. Any living creature taking damage from a killsting must make a Difficulty 13 Fortitude in each of the next three rounds as these larvae mature and eat their way out. With each failed saving throw the creature suffers 1 point of Strength damage. The save Difficulty is Constitution based.

ECOLOGY

Fortunately for the world, the Shapers Guild has yet to discover a way to allow a killsting's grubs to thrive on their own. Without a carefully controlled environment in which to rear them, the larvae die within moments of hatching. Some shapers devote themselves to finding a solution to this puzzle, despite the fact that it could swiftly lead to the extinction of all other creatures. In truth, the shapers seeking to solve this problem regard it as potentially another way of achieving their goal of cleansing the world of all life so that they might repopulate it with their own

creations (see Chapter 5 of *Blight Elves: Architects of Despair* for more information).

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a killsting to "Spray" a particular spot with a coating of its eggs by succeeding in a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. This area attack affects every creature within 10-feet of the point of origin unless they succeed in a Difficulty 15 Reflex saving throw. Those who make their save manage to leap out of the area unharmed. Those who fail become nauseated for one round and automatically suffer a lethal attack of +4 damage as the hatching grubs attempt to burrow inside them.

If properly harvested (requiring either a Difficulty 15 Craft (Butcher) check or a Difficulty 20 check using another, less applicable, but still related skill such as Medicine) a killsting's stinger becomes a useful weapon. It acts in all ways as a masterwork sword except that it deals piercing damage instead of slashing, and its wielder may use its hollow interior to inject poisons or other noxious liquids into any creature it strikes. Note, the wielder must still provide these substances. If put up for sale a stinger has a cost of 18.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The unscrupulous owner of a dueling academy managed to capture several killstings and schemes to find some way to keep their grubs alive. Though he hopes simply to give his students an edge by providing them with a source of fencing foils that can fill with poison, the entire world could suffer should he succeed.

MUDTONGUE

Type: 8th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +2, Int -3, Wis +2, Cha -1

Skills: Notice 11 (+13)

Feats: Improved Defense, Improved Disarm^B, Improved Grab^B, Improved Sunder, Sneak Attack

Traits: Alchemical Gullet, Darkvision 60 ft., Elongated Tongue

Combat: Attack +10 (+8 base, +3 Dex, -1 size), Damage +7 (Tongue) Defense: Dodge/Parry +10/-(+8 base, +3 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +5 (+2 Con, +2 size, +1 natural) Fortitude +8 (+6 base, +2 Con), Reflex +9 (+6 base, +3 Dex), Will +4 (+2 base, +2 Wis)

At first glance these curious creatures seem a bizarre cross between anteater and a gray peacock, albeit one fifteen feet tall. Drab and colorless, surrounded by a reek of chemicals gone stale, mudtongues convey an inexplicable sensation of lethargic gloom as they go about their business. Suffering from unrelenting

stomach aches due to the strange mystical process that transforms the common sludge of their diet into myriad wondrous substances; mudtongues nevertheless suffer from an unrelenting hunger that drives them to prowl the streets of Sangrannok. Uttering moans of distress, and unearthly, gobbling cries when they find a collapsed building, they make their own unique contribution to the sights and sounds of the blight elf capital.

COMBAT

Ostensibly, the mudtongues serve their blight elf masters by clearing away the never-ending rain of debris that falls from the buildings of their capital, Salgrannok, as it decays. Wandering its sludge filled streets they snag every cast-off brick they encounter with their twenty-foot tongues and slurp it down. Though they do perform a vital function, in truth they fill a much greater roll than that of merely eating garbage. Unbeknownst to all save a handful of the elite, mudtongues play a critical role in blight elf society. Virtually every one of their bodily secretions possesses some rare and prized quality which, when properly prepared, yields a useful alchemical substance. For instance, their dung, suitably treated, acts as the primary ingredient in the concoction that eases the occasional bouts of pain suffered by dark matrons when their trapped offspring grow especially agitated.

Some blight elves know how to command mudtongues to spit up the contents of their stomachs on demand. Others, more interested in the tactical possibilities, use mudtongues to generate brief, but still sometimes useful, clouds of dust and cast off feathers to hide them from their enemies.

Alchemical Gullet: The stomach of a mudtongue acts as almost an organic laboratory and constantly roils with an exotic blend of unusual substances. The first time a mudtongue suffers lethal damage in a combat it immediately throws up and expels a foul smelling glutinous fluid usually centered on the creature that harmed it. Any creature caught within this 10-foot radius cascade must make a Difficulty 16 Fortitude save or become nauseated. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. Creatures who fail this initial saving throw may make a new save each round and remain nauseated until they succeed. Once the creature succeeds in its saving throw it becomes sickened instead, and remains so for 1 additional minute.

Elongated Tongue: Mudtongues may strike any target within reach of their 20-foot tongues. Moving at the speed of blinking eye, and with the deftness rarely seen even in a fully formed hand, they often use their tongues to gain an advantage over their opponents. A mudtongue always achieves surprise with its first attack unless its target has specific prior knowledge of its speed and reach. A mudtongue also gains an additional +2 (above and beyond that gained from the Improved Disarm feat) on any attempt to separate an opponent from a weapon when using its tongue.

ECOLOGY

Mudtongues bury clutches of eggs in the streets of Salgrannok and then leave them to hatch on their own. Despite the inconvenience of detouring around them blight elves, who immediately recognize the characteristic bulge of a mudtongue nest in the middle of street, always give them a wide berth. Though laws promulgated, and enforced, by the dark matrons offer severe penalties for those who disturb a mudtongue nest, the unbearable and clinging stench of a prematurely cracked egg makes them mostly unnecessary.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a mudtongue to “Gag” by succeeding in a difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the mudtongue to throw up on the creature designated in the exact same manner as if that creature had managed to deal lethal damage to it and with the same consequences. Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a mudtongue to “Flail” by succeeding in a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the mudtongue to wildly flap its vestigial wings and make pathetic little hops as some long-buried instinct drives it to try to fly. Though an utterly hopeless venture, it shakes loose a great deal of dust, dander and loose feathers. The mudtongue, and any creature standing within five feet of it, gains concealment in the following round due to this haze.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A strike force of blight elves attack a caravan guarded by the heroes. After fending off this first sortie the blight elves actually attempt to parley and offer to leave if the caravan turns over the contents of one single chest. Though they refuse to explain—since the dark matron who dispatched them gave them incomplete information—this chest contains samples of many different mudtongue secretions. The dark matrons fear allowing these samples to fall into the hands of outsiders.

PLAGUE BEAR

Type: 7th Level Animal (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +10, Dex +1, Con +4, Int –4, Wis +1, Cha –2

Skills: Climb 0 (+10), Notice 10 (+11), Swim 0 (+14)

Feats: Double Strike, Endurance, Improved





Grab^B, Night Vision^B, Rage^B, Run, Track^B

Traits: Immunity to disease and pain effects, Scent, Virulent

Combat: Attack +5 (+5 base, +1 Dex, -1 size), Damage +10 (unarmed), Defense: Dodge/Parry +5/— (+5 base, -1 size, +1 Dex), Initiative +1

Saving Throws: Toughness +8 (+4 con, +2 size, +2 natural), Fortitude +9 (+5 base, +4 Con), Reflex +6 (+5 base, +1 Dex), Will +3 (+2 base, +1 Wis)

Atrociously twisted by the Shapers Guild's foul experimentations, Simarrans recognize plague bears at once as harbingers of terrible disease. Pocked with off-colored blotches and boils, these tortured creatures ooze puss from their eyes and nose. They often exhibit self-inflicted wounds where they have clawed gashes into their own hide while trying to scratch at the painfully irritating sores, sometimes leaving large putrefying wounds that ooze an oily black puss. Plague bears stand up to 14 feet tall when rearing up on their hind legs, and weigh some 1,300 pounds.

Plague bears are a creation of the Shapers Guild, twisted to make frighteningly effective war beasts. Blight elves seem to delight in sending plague bears tearing into enemy ranks and unsuspecting civilian villages alike. To other races, the plague bears seem like a flawed creation since their battle rages render them almost uncontrollable, even to the blight elves mastery of their own creations, but to the blight elf mentality, they are something beautiful and pure akin to a masterful work of art.

COMBAT

In combat, plague bears will close into melee as quickly as possible and begin to rage as they mete out death with their massive claws, spreading their virulence all the while. There is an existence of unremitting pain and they blindly attack anyone within reach, always fighting to the death. Those who survive the initial mauling of a plague bear often succumb to a variety of deadly diseases afterwards.

Immunities: Plague bears are immune to disease and any effect that relies on pain.

Virulent: Plague bears always carry one or more diseases though they themselves are immune to them. Because of their blight-infused nature, all save Difficulties for any disease they harbor is increased by +2.

Skills: A plague bear has a +4 bonus on Swim checks.

ECOLOGY

Although they are twisted abominations, plague bears still serve the ecological role of large

predators in the corrupted mockery of an ecosystem that is the Sarangak Forest. They no longer share the omnivorous tendencies of natural bears, refusing to eat berries or other plant matter. They will hunt down and kill anything they can catch, whether they are hungry or merely for sport. They also serve as carriers for a number of communicable diseases, both supernatural and mundane.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a plague bear to "Attack" a specific target within sight with a Difficulty 15 Handle Animal check. Ordering them to "Calm" from a battle rage is much more difficult, requiring a Difficulty 30 Handle Animal check.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A plague bear appears far outside the blight elf realm where normally encountered, and viciously attacks the heroes. This bear carries and unidentified disease that, should it spread to any of the heroes during melee, proves to be slow acting but beyond their current means of curing. If the infected individuals are to survive, the heroes must find a cure. Afterwards, they may try to investigate how a plague bear arrived so far from the Sarangak Forest.





ROT GHOUL

Type: 4th Level Undead

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex +3, Con—, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha +1

Skills: Acrobatics 7 (+10), Climb 7 (+8), Jump 7 (+8), Notice 7 (+9), Stealth 7(+10)

Feats: Attack Focus (Bite), Double Strike, Tough^B

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Red Rot, Undead Traits

Combat: Attack +6 (+3 base, +3 Dex), Damage +3 (bite) or +2 (claws), Defense Dodge/Parry +6/— (+3 base, +3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saving Throws: Toughness +4 (+2 undead, +1 natural, +1 Tough), Fortitude +1 (+1 base), Reflex +4 (+1 base, +3 Dex), Will +5 (+3 base, +2 Wis)

Rot ghouls are walking corpses covered in scarlet red blisters that slowly eat away at their undead flesh. Their skin has partially sloughed off and hangs about them in tattered crimson ribbons of gore. Their once human anatomy has become twisted and feral looking, with elongated arms ending in claw-like hands, and sharp elongated teeth protruding from impossibly large mouths. Rot ghouls get their name from the deadly supernatural disease that they carry, the red rot.

Red rot is a supernatural disease representing one of the blight elves' crowning achievements. Elite members of both the entropic channelers and the

plaguewrights developed it within a fortified laboratory specially built far away from all landmarks, near the outskirts of the Sarangak Forest. A small human army marched against this tower and became unwitting participants in the disease's first trial, to devastating effect. Those soldiers not immediately succumbing to the red rot quickly fell to the unbridled ferocity of own infected and now undead troops. Blight elves playfully led the first rot ghouls back to their own homeland and, spreading their murderous contagion to every compatriot within a single night, forever buried away their small kingdom and its history. The red rot has since become a key weapon in the blight elf arsenal, used often to infect foes, prisoners and slaves, in order to offer blight elves a speedily produced supply of ravaging undead armies wherever and whenever needed.

COMBAT

Rot ghouls run screaming into combat with no regard for their own preservation. While surprisingly intelligent, they burning red rot drives them mad, filling their undead psyches with unbearable torment. This eternal suffering only subsides temporarily when a rot ghoul passes its infection. They do not fear destruction, and only seek to infect as many others as they can before their own destruction. Only the entropic channelers seem capable of controlling these undead terrors and their method of doing so is a closely guarded secret.

Red Rot: Supernatural Disease—bite; Fortitude Difficulty 14; incubation period one minute; damage 2 Dex. The save Difficulty is Charisma-based. An afflicted humanoid that dies while infected with red rot rises as a free-willed rot ghoul in one minute. A rot ghoul does not possess any memory of its former life. The ghoul retains its abilities but since it is undead, it has no Constitution. Replace all of the hero's heroic levels, feats, skills and traits with those of a rot ghoul.

NECROLOGY

Rot ghouls are unnatural things that have no place in nature, other than to despoil it and spread supernatural disease.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A number of rot ghouls have appeared in the service of the Death Lords of Numaráth. The heroes embark on a quest to investigate, and discover whether the blight elves are involved or if the Death Lords have found a way to control the spread of the disease and command the rot ghouls.





RUSTBREATH

Type: 3rd Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 20 ft.

Abilities: Str +1, Dex -2, Con +2, Int -3, Wis -4, Cha 0

Skills: Notice 6(+2)

Feats: Ability Focus (Corrosive Cloud), Run

Traits: Corrosive Cloud, Darkvision 60 ft.

Combat: Attack +0 (+3 base, -2 Dex, -1 size), Damage +2 (Slam), Defense: Dodge/Parry +0/- (+3 base, -2 Dex, -1 size), Initiative -2

Saves: Toughness +5 (+2 Con, +2 size, +1 natural) Fortitude +5 (+3 base, +2 Con), Reflex +1 (+3 base, -2 Dex), Will -3 (+1 base, -4 Wis)

These bow-legged, eight limbed cattle with grotesquely distorted udders constantly belch out fetid wisps of reddish brown gas. They appear to possess extra lungs, or at least lung capacity, causing much of their skin on their upper torso and neck to droop like an old man's jowls when exhaling. When they draw in a full breath, as a prelude to unleashing their corrosive cloud attack, they swell up like a balloon and their two foremost legs actually briefly lose purchase with the ground. This ability to draw in such great gulps of air when needed seems to leave rustbreaths with a constant sensation of choking. Slumped in dismay, lowing dolefully and plagued by asthmatic wheezing, rustbreaths suffer from the discomfort, and dread, of an ever-present but never quite realized suffocation.

COMBAT

Rustbreaths serve their blight elf masters by destroying the weapons and armor of enemy troops. Slow and clumsy they rarely last very long if forced directly into combat. Special units of troops, equipped with non-corrosive gear, and supported by a wide assortment of monsters usually protect small herds of rustbreaths on the battlefield. Deployed to their best effect they often strip an opposing force of its capacity to fight before the battle even begins. Some blight elves know how to order a rustbreath to make a particularly violent exhalation that knocks their targets to the ground as well as ruining their equipment. Since rustbreaths often lack the common sense to run from danger, their blight elf masters took the precaution of breeding a conditioned flight reflex into them.

Corrosive Cloud: A rustbreath may, as a full-round action, emit a 20-foot radius cloud of foul smelling coppery mist that

disperses in the following round. Any metal object exposed to this loathsome gas must succeed in a Difficulty 25 Toughness save or instantly collapse into rust. Creatures may avoid this cloud and the risk it poses to their possessions by making a Difficulty 15 Reflex save. The save Difficulty is Constitution based.

ECOLOGY

No one has ever seen a rustbreath bull. Some scholars speculate that while males of the species must exist, their form and abilities so separates them from their cattle rootstock as to make them unrecognizable. Others, factoring in the dark and twisted worldview of most blight elves to their reasoning, suspect a more grotesque possibility. They suggest that the blight elves use the most vile and unholy of magic on their rustbreath creations to force them to give birth to the exact duplicates of themselves.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a rustbreath to "Gasp" by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the rustbreath to, as a full-round action, release a particularly powerful blast of its corrosive cloud attack. Any creature caught within it must—in addition to the normal risk to its equipment—also make a Difficulty 13 Fortitude save to avoid being knocked prone. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. Obeying this order causes a rustbreath to gain one level of fatigue. Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a rustbreath to "Dash" by succeeding in a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the rustbreath to run, at its best speed, in the direction pointed for one minute plus one additional minute for every point by which the result exceeded the Difficulty of the check.



ADVENTURE HOOK

A pirate uses an intermediary to book passage for a captured rustbreath aboard his next target. When the rustbreath expels its corrosive breath, every nail, hinge and joint holding the ship together will collapse into dust. Even as it sinks, the pirate anticipates plenty of time to attack and loot the ship.

SHELLDRAG

Type: 12th Level Supernatural Beast (Aquatic, Blighted)

Size: Gargantuan

Speed: 40 ft., swim 80

Abilities: Str +16, Dex -3, Con +10, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha 0

Skills: Swim 15 (+39)

Feats: Awesome Blow, Blind Fight, Improved Defense (x2)

Traits: Amphibious, Blind, Blundering Charge, Breathing Space, Heavy Lifter, Hunker Down, Living Fortress

Combat: Attack +5 (+12 base, -3 Dex, -4 size) Damage +24 (Slam) Defense: Dodge/Parry +5/- (+12, -3 Dex, -4 size)*, Initiative -3

Saves: Toughness +30 (+10 Con, +6 size, +14 natural), Fortitude +18 (+8 base, +10 Con), Reflex +5 (+8 base, -3 Dex), Will +5 (+4 base, +1 Wis)

* Since shelldrags cannot see, they normally fail to notice attacks directed against them and hence get no chance to dodge or parry them. A rider with the Vehicular Combat feat may use a Ride check in lieu of a shelldrag's Defense as normally allowed by that feat.

Larger than most houses these turtle-like creatures lumber at their awkward pace, sniffing the air and craning their necks in hopes of hearing something useful. With milky eyes constantly weeping droplets that reek of pus and decay, their blindness seems more the result of some temporary infection than the congenital trait it actually is. Great knots of crenellated growths jut from their shells at eccentric angles. Similar in appearance to heavy tumors they share a consistency, and solidity, more like that of the rest of their shell than mere tissue. When angered, shelldrags let loose with a rumble so deep it registers more like the sound of the land rattling in those first few moments of an earthquake than something borne from the throat of a living creature.

COMBAT

Shelldrags serve their blight elf masters as mobile fortresses. Bred specifically to bear great burdens and due to their blindness, lacking the ability to spot danger, they fearlessly cross the battlefield as directed by their keeper. Most often sheltering squadrons of

archers or power wielding adepts within the all but impenetrable growths bedecking their shells also frequently carry siege weapons to vital points. Sometimes they also, due to their awesome weight, simply break through an enemy strongpoint when using their blundering charge attack. Some blight elf strategists make a point of using shelldrags to hold vital points by the simple expedient of ordering them to hunker down and refuse to move.

Amphibious: A shelldrag can breathe both air and water with equal ease.

Blind: Shelldrags lack the ability to see, which means any creature they attack gains the benefits of concealment against them. Though partially minimized by their acute senses of smell and hearing (and the Blind Sight feat) this still makes them somewhat less effective in combat than normal for creatures of their level. However, shelldrags, designed to ferry troops on land and sea, also rarely challenge the authority of their rider. Any creature, not just a blight elf, with the Vehicular Combat feat may, as a full-round action, substitute the result of its Ride check for the shelldrag's attack roll in that round. Though still subject to concealment, this often greatly increases the shelldrag's chance of actually striking its target.

Blundering Charge: Shelldrags, unable to see, do the best they can when ordered to advance at a rapid rate. Any creature in the path of a shelldrag whenever it uses a charge action must succeed in a Difficulty 26 Fortitude save to avoid suffering the effects of its slam attack. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. This replaces the normal effects of a charge, allowing a shelldrag to trample many creatures rather than simply strike one with greater force. Since the shelldrag simply steps on anyone who gets in its way creatures do not gain the benefit of concealment against this attack.

Breathing Space: When a shelldrag submerges beneath water, the many growths adorning its back open up like umbrellas and then close ranks together. This creates a hollow cavity with a supply of breathable air. Thus, creatures riding a shelldrag seldom need fear drowning.

Heavy Lifter: A shelldrag may carry three times the weight normally possible for a quadruped of its size and Strength so long as it bears this burden on its back.

Hunker Down: A shelldrag, though unable to see, may still use the total defense action. Doing so, it pulls its most vulnerable body parts inside of its shell and remains absolutely still. This grants it an additional +10 bonus on Toughness saves. Any creature riding a shelldrag when it hunkers down gains a +6 bonus to defense and a



+3 to Toughness checks due to the protection granted by the shelldrag.

Living Fortress: Any creature riding on the back of a shelldrag as it moves about gains cover and a +2 bonus on Toughness checks.

ECOLOGY

Even for creatures of their great bulk shelldrags require considerable amounts of food in order to remain healthy; a fact that often taxes the ingenuity and resources of their masters. Omnivorous and endowed with powerful jaws, they crunch down on anything shoveled into their mouths. In the aftermath of a battle, their keepers often feed them corpse after corpse, sometimes not even bothering to strip them of their armor before tossing them into a shelldrag's maw. A hungry shelldrag, rather than go off in search of food on its own, usually falls asleep instead. If not roused with a substantial meal it eventually slips into a coma and dies.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a shelldrag to "Sit" by succeeding in a Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the shelldrag to employ its hunker down trait on its next action.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The heroes investigate the aftermath of a battle in which a detachment of blight elves lost their lives. Their transportation, a shelldrag, appears dead as well but in truth, it merely went to sleep out of hunger. As the locals gather to celebrate the victory some of the more adventurous children creep ever closer to the shelldrag's gaping mouth.

SNATCHLING

Type: 1st Level Monstrous Humanoid (Blighted)

Size: Small

Speed: 40 ft., Climb 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -3, Wis +2, Cha +1

Skills: Notice 1 (+3), Stealth 1 (+12), Sleight of Hand 2 (+5)

Feats: Power^B, Skill Training

Traits: Powers (rank 4, Wis, Difficulty 13; Object Reading +6), Quickness

Combat: Attack +5 (+1 base, +1 size, +3 Dex), Damage +1 (bite), Defense: Dodge/Parry +5/— (+1 base, +1 size, +3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +0 (+1 Con, -1 size), Fortitude +3 (+2 base, +1 Con), Reflex +5 (+2 base, +3 Dex), Will +2 (+0 base, +2 Wis)



Snatchlings are small, roughly humanoid mammalian creatures with large fluffy ringed tails and an intense sense of curiosity. The fur of a Snatchling ranges from mottled brown to gray, and their heads are pointed and somewhat weasel-like despite their larger cranium and primate features. Snatchlings' ears curve inward atop their head and they are sometimes mistaken for horns. While they bear no apparent signs of blight, they are impish minions of the blight elves who seek to sow misery by filching objects of monetary worth and sentimental value.

Snatchlings are a bane to any who attempt to carry small valuables through the wilderness, since they are both intensely curious, and are attracted to treasured objects. These creatures seem to have a knack for stealing the objects an owner treasures most, using Object Reading to discover such information. Males collect and display such objects in order to attract mates, and females choose a mate based on the sentimental value of the stolen objects on display once had for their owners. Stolen wedding bands and mementos from dead loved ones seem to be a favorite among these creatures. When traveling through a Snatchling infested area, those in the know securely stow their treasured items out of sight.

The Shapers Guild created the Snatchlings primarily for their own amusement. They serve no structured purpose within blight elf society, though they do occasionally bring in objects of value or small supernatural charms. Snatchlings are merely used as another tool for spreading sorrow to the rest of the world. Their effect may be trivial, but the blight elves seem amused by Snatchling antics nonetheless, and keep breeding them for this meager purpose. Some blight elves keep them as pets, training them to steal

specific objects at their master's behest, but such ownership is rare enough to herald only the wealthiest and most influential members of blight elf society.

COMBAT

Snatchlings are thieves rather than combatants. They operate through stealth and guile and they will avoid combat at all costs. If captured, they can deliver a painful bite, but pose little martial threat to most heroes. A captured Snatchling may bite its captor, but will seek to escape and flee at the first opportunity, rather than stay and fight. Once a Snatchling has escaped, it will try to warn other Snatchlings or blight elves in the area of the presence of danger.

Quickness: A Snatchling gains an extra standard or move action each round.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a Snatchling to "Fetch" and "Bring" a particular item with a Difficulty 15 Handle Animal check. A Difficulty 20 Handle Animal check is required to get a Snatchling to "Leave" behind an item that strikes their interest.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The heroes spot a Snatchling stealing an object of grave importance to them. Despite the heroes' efforts, the beast escapes into the heart of a blight elf stronghold. If the heroes wish to retrieve the item, they will have to infiltrate the stronghold and face the horrors that await them within.

SURGE SPIDER

Type: 8th Level Vermin (Blighted)

Size: Large

Speed: 20 ft., climb 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +3, Dex +3, Con +4, Int -3, Wis +2, Cha 0

Skills: Climb 11 (+22)

Feats: Improved Initiative, Move By Action, Stunning Attack

Traits: Darkvision 60 ft., Conductive, Electrical Immunity, Shock Touch, Webbing

Combat: Attack +8 (+6 base, +3 Dex, -1 size), Damage +7 (Bite, +4 Electricity, ignores any Toughness gained from metal armor) Defense: Dodge/Parry +8/- (+6 base, +3 Dex, -1 size), Initiative +9 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Saves: Toughness +9 (+4 Con, +2 size, +3 natural) Fortitude +10 (+6 base, +4 Con), Reflex +7 (+2 base, +3 Dex), Will +4 (+2 base, +2 Wis)

These silvery giant spiders have relatively tiny central bodies with spindly and elongated legs covering about the same area as a farmer's wagon that constantly crackle with whorls of blue sparks dancing across their coarse bristles. Surge spiders fill the air with a scent

of ozone like that of just after a lightning strike and often gibber in unfeigned glee when given opportunity to electrocute a creature. Their stark, unnatural appearance, like some child of the storm striding into the mortal realm, might almost seem beautiful were it not for the naked malevolence lurking within their dark multifaceted eyes. Surge spiders seem unable to stand still. Ceaselessly jerking and twitching as miniscule rushes of electricity randomly stimulate their muscles and nerve endings they regard the world with a baleful frustration born from their inability to find even a moment's peace.

COMBAT

Surge spiders serve their blight elf masters by weaving great sticky nets of electrically conductive webbing. Able to send powerful jolts through these deadly cables they often cook any enmeshed creatures. Acting as guards for both home and field camps, they create secure fences around their masters' stockades allowing the blight elves to rest in relative comfort. Some blight elves know how to order surge spiders to create impromptu lassos that allow them to entangle and then fry creatures at a distance, though this puts a strain on them since they must extend the webbing too far too fast. When desperate some blight elves know how to order a surge spider to die in such a way that it sends streams of deadly current coursing throughout their vicinity.

Conductive: Any creature that strikes a surge spider with an unarmed or natural attack, or with a metal melee weapon, risks exposure to a sudden jolt of electricity. This flash of energy deals +1 lethal damage to any creature vulnerable to electricity and ignores any toughness bonus gained from metal armor.

Electrical Immunity: Surge spiders take no damage from electricity attacks or effects.

Shock Touch: A surge spider may modulate its natural ability to generate electrical current in such a way that it incapacitates rather than kills. Augmenting its Stunning Attack feat in this way increases the Difficulty of the Fortitude save needed to resist it by +4, making the Difficulty 21 overall. The Difficulty for creatures not affected by electricity remains 17 as normal.

Webbing: A surge spider may produce strands of electrically conductive spidersilk. Very strong and highly adhesive, this webbing entangles any creature coming into physical contact with it that fails a Difficulty 18 Reflex save. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. Creatures ensnared by a single strand may escape by succeeding in a Difficulty 22 Strength check or by dealing damage to it with a slashing weapon (Toughness +6). Creatures ensnared by multiple





strands, such as those in an intricate web, become trapped and unable to move from their current location until they escape—an act requiring they succeed in a Difficulty 24 Strength check or deal damage with a slashing weapon (Toughness +8) twice. If a surge spider touches webbing produced by it or any other member of its species it may, as a free action, send a jolt of electricity coursing through it that deals +4 damage and ignores any Toughness bonus gained from metal armor.

ECOLOGY

Unlike most spiders, surge spiders prefer their meat cooked; very cooked. They typically use their electricity to scorch creatures before eating them, one crunchy, charred bite at a time. Surge spiders regard the subtle differences in flavor caused by creatures burnt by fire instead of electricity as a rare treat. Something the blight elves exploit during those infrequent moments when they feel a need to either reward or entice a surge spider.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a surge spider to “Snare” by succeeding in a Difficulty 25 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the surge spider to produce webbing that it uses to make a ranged attack against the designated creature. The target must make a Difficulty 18 Reflex save to avoid entanglement with webbing that wraps itself around the creature like weighted rope. The save Difficulty is Constitution based. For the purpose of escape, these layers of webbing count as multiple strands. The surge spider gains one level of fatigue each time it obeys this command. Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a surge spider to “Die” by succeeding in a Difficulty 30 Handle Animal check. A successful check causes the surge spider to die, and, in so doing, to release one final jolt of sizzling energy that flows outwards in a 20-foot radius. Any creature within this area suffers +8 electricity damage. If this initial 20-foot radius brings the electricity into contact with water, it extends its reach by 80 additional feet, and if making contact with webbing it extends for the entire length of the webbing.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A researcher wants someone to capture a surge spider so that he can gain an inexhaustible supply of conductive webbing. His stated intent of using the webbing to create an electrified fence just like the blight elves do only scratches the surface of his ambitions. Ultimately, he hopes to find some way to trap lightning bolts and use them as a power source for his community.

TRICKSTER (BLIGHT RAVEN)

Type: 3rd Level Supernatural Beast

Size: Small

Speed: 15 ft., Fly 60 feet (good)

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +3, Con +1, Int -3, Wis +2, Cha +1

Skills: Notice 4 (+14), Stealth 6 (+13)

Feats: Evasion^B, Move-by Attack, Night Vision^B, Skill Training

Traits: Alternate Form, Darkvision 120 ft., Linked Vision, Powers (Rank 6, Wis, Difficulty 13; Mind Touch +8)

Combat: Attack +7 (+3 base, +1 size, +3 Dex), Damage +2 (bite) or +1 (claws), Defense +7/— (+3 base, +1 size, +3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +1 (+1 Con, -1 size, +1 natural), Fortitude +4 (+3 base, +1 Con), Reflex +6 (+3 base, +3 Dex), Will +3 (+1 base, +2 Wis)

These hideous, mange-ridden birds act as spies and messengers for the blight elves. Though their wings bear full ashen black feathering, sallow skin shows through the many patches of missing feathers on the rest of their scraggy bodies. A spiky bone crest juts from the tops of their exposed, vulture-like skulls, and their sunken eyes recess so deeply as to give the appearance of empty sockets. Tricksters make excellent spies due to their great speed, maneuverability and their supernatural ability to disguise themselves as normal ravens. A trickster is around 2.5 to 3 feet long with a wingspan out to 6 feet.

The Shapers Guild created the tricksters from the stock of a natural breed of crow-like scavenger as a means of carrying messages swiftly over long distances



through non-magical means. They later became among the first corrupted creatures that the blight elves put into widespread use during the Age of Steel as their minions due to their incredible potential for espionage.

COMBAT

Not bred for combat, trickster will flee any battle where they are outnumbered or become wounded. If their allies outnumber their enemies, they may choose to hover long enough to make a few swooping attacks, clawing at the eyes and faces of their foes with their keen talons. They will avoid landing near a foe if they can, instead preferring to use Move-by Action to retreat to a safe distance after each swooping attack.

Alternate Form: Tricksters can alter their shape as a free action to appear as normal ravens, a form they use when spying for the blight elves.

Linked Vision: So long as a trickster maintains mental contact with its master, it can transmit visual images back to him as if he were looking through the bird's own eyes.

Skills: Tricksters have a +8 racial bonus on Notice checks.

ECOLOGY

Of all creatures twisted by the shapers, the trickster's ecological niche experienced the least alteration. They are still scavengers, feeding off carrion, and still spend a great deal of time out in the wild as they serve as vigilant eyes and ears for the blight elves.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order a trickster to "Return" to their roost, or some other pre-set location, or to "Find" their master, commands often used to bear messages of parchment tied to their leg in a lightweight scroll tube. They also "Follow" a target at a safe distance, maintaining surveillance for as long as they are able, or until they receive a signal through their mental link with their master to return. No skill check is necessary for these commands.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The heroes discover that a trickster followed them back to their hideout, or other key location that must remain hidden from the blight elves. They must now trail the bird back to its master and slay them both before their secret passes on.

UNENDING (BLIGHT VERMIN)

Type: 7th Level Supernatural Beast (Blighted)

Size: Medium

Speed: 50 ft., Climb 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +5, Dex +3, Con +4, Int -3, Wis +1, Cha +0

Skills: Climb 2 (+15), Notice 6 (+7), Stealth 6 (+9)

Feats: Attack Focus (bite), Improved Trip^B, Night Vision^B, Skill Training, Tough, Track^B

Traits: Damage Reduction 4/supernatural, Darkvision 60 ft., Regeneration, Replication, Resurrection, Scent

Combat: Attack +10 (+7 base, +3 Dex) (+11 w bite), Damage +8 (bite) or +7 plus persistent wound and implant (tongue rasp), Defense: Dodge/Parry +10/— (+7 base, +3 Dex), Initiative +3

Saves: Toughness +9 (+4 Con, +4 natural, +1 Tough), Fortitude +9 (+5 base, +4 Con), Reflex +8 (+5 base, +3 Dex), Will +3 (+2 base, +1 Wis)

A teeming plague sent forth by the blight elves to spread across a sizable swath of Simarra, unending appear as blighted, rat like beasts. Though, on occasion, homeland defenders slaughter them to their last, it is far more common for them to deplete an area's food supply so thoroughly that they simply perish from starvation. These beasts owe their origin to the combined efforts of the League of Plaguewrights and the Shaper Guild, and, mercifully, the rare materials required to breed them limit the number of these monstrosities the guilds may create. Unending have the body structure of enormous rats, their flesh warty, hairless and coated in a thin, mucous secretion, and their skulls expose throughout most of their pate. Sunken eyes burrow into elongated snouts baring serrated teeth and a mane of tentacles sprout from the base of their skulls, running down their spinal ridges. Each unending spews forth a soft-shell egg from its gut once per week that, within a single day, matures into another adult unending. They stand nearly four feet tall at the shoulder, stretch some seven feet long and weigh over 300 pounds.

The blight elves created unending to be embodiments of cancer and blight, and they serve as the twisted minions of the blight elf goddess Salena Valanas. These rodents are her sacred messengers of destruction, pain and apocalypse, and they attract unholy reverence for their ability to cause massive destruction wherever they are unleashed. The blight elves only create these creatures in special circumstances however, since they are exceedingly difficult to make, and their ever-increasing numbers are hard to control, even through use of the Blight Speak. They can also prove impossible to maintain and feed as their numbers grow. Instead, the blight elves release them into the countryside to replicate and wreak havoc.



COMBAT

Unending are shrewd combatants. They try to kill anyone they perceive as a threat to their spread and reproduction, though they will flee from an enemy that proves too powerful initially, so they might replicate in hiding to return in far greater numbers. While they are not particularly friendly towards blight elves, the blighted touch keeps them at bay.

Persistent Wound: Creatures damaged by an unending's tongue suffer an additional +1 bleeding damage each round until a successful Difficulty 20 Medicine check or a Cure power is used on them. The save Difficulty is Strength based.

Implant: When an unending damages a creature with its tongue rasp attack, it can lay an egg inside the creature. The young emerges from the egg about 5 hours later, literally devouring the host from inside. The host takes 1 point of Constitution damage per hour for four hours, at which point a fully-grown adult unending emerges, dealing an additional 2 points of Constitution damage to the host. A successful use of the Cure Disease supernatural power rids a victim of the egg, as does a Difficulty 25 Medicine check. If the check fails, the healer can try again, but each attempt (successful or not) deals +3 damage to the patient. Despite their replicating themselves through egg laying once a week, their egg supply is nigh inexhaustible allowing them to implant any number of victims each day.

Regeneration: An unending gains an extra recovery check each round with a +2 bonus. Damage from electricity, fire and acid cannot be healed in this way.

Resurrection: An unending continues to heal even after it is "dead." It recovers from the dead condition on the damage track in the same manner as the dying condition. An unending can only be killed permanently by electricity, fire, acid, disintegration or starvation.

SPECIAL NOTES

Anyone who knows Blight Speak may order an unending to "Attack" a target within sight, or to "Go" in any given direction with a Difficulty 10 Handle Animal check. The latter command sends the beasts off in an ever-widening vector of carnage.



APPENDIX A: (THE SEMYAD)

During the Blood War, the blight elves used agents left behind specifically to spy on their volsparan kin to help them triumph over their numerically superior cousins. In the aftermath of that war, when the blight elves inexplicably chose to return to their forest realm, these agents, nicknamed the Semyad or “Poison Seeds” all either eventually fled or died once volsparan investigators uncovered their treachery. For more than a thousand years the blight elves regarded this moment from their early history as merely a passing curiosity.

That all changed when the plaguewrights discovered how to turn a living creature into an incubator for disease. At first, they planned to transform blight elf volunteers into carriers, but the dark matrons swiftly put an end to that notion. Considering it both an offense to the dignity of their people and impractical, since most creatures flee from blight elves on sight, they ordered the plaguewrights to find another solution.

Recalling accounts of the Semyad infiltrators who had proven so vital during the Blood War the plaguewrights next proposed recruiting children from many different races and transforming them as the newest weapon in the blight elf arsenal. Raised in specially designed enclaves that exactly mirror their original cultures these children, who while in body might appear human, dwarf, gnome, orc or even elf, possess souls as depraved as that of any blight elf. Generation after generation, carefully taught, and conditioned to blend in and burrow into the societies of their countrymen, they serve as a secret cadre of dedicated deep cover agents. Lacking all conscience, ready to kill or die at

the slightest word of their blight elf masters, the Semyad swiftly evolved far beyond the original intent of the Plaguewrights.

To the fury of the plaguewrights, rival guilds eventually managed to seize control of the Semyad project; primarily due to promises to expand the role they play in blight elf schemes. Though the original carriers still serve a vital function, the Semyad now fill many other useful niches for their masters. Some spend their entire lives gathering information about their assignments and working their way up through the ranks of the bureaucracy. This allows them to steer their victims into disastrous courses when ordered. Others simply procure critical trade goods and luxury items, everything the blight elves find difficult to secure on their own. Still other branches focus on spreading disinformation or promoting false religions and ideologies. All of them, regardless of their day-to-day tasks, regard spreading misery and debasing the societies of their homelands as their most important mission and never miss an opportunity to make things just a little bit worse. Not even the blight elves know exactly how much of the world’s suffering, or its villains, traces back to machinations of one of their Semyad agents.

SEMYAD (TEMPLATE)

On the surface, the Semyad seem like typical members of their original race. However, after many generations of careful conditioning and biological manipulation they have acquired a number of very subtle differences that separate and isolate them from their cousins. Still able, if necessary, to pass as a normal human, dwarf, elf, or any other humanoid race they nevertheless possess enough quirks and variations to warrant the creation of a new template.

Often their blight elf masters further augment the Semyad before sending them out into the wider world. Rather than endow these, their most important servants, with some uniform power designed to fit them neatly into one particular cog in their war machine they instead grant them abilities customized to help them accomplish their assigned task. Semyad gain these abilities as a special type of feat that represents the biological alterations made to them by their blight elf masters. Involving painful surgeries, tailored viruses and practices even more exotic, Semyad feats represent a significant commitment in both time and resources.





Due to their complexity, these alterations never prove compatible with each other. Once a Semyad chooses, or is assigned, his particular augmentation it becomes a fundamental part of that Semyad's anatomy and nature. Removing it, or attempting to make additional alterations by way of another Semyad feat, always leads a swift, but still painful, death.

SEMYAD

"Semyad" is an inherited template that can be applied to any humanoid.

Type: The creature's type does not change. However, it gains the augmented and blighted subtypes.

Abilities: Increase Constitution by +1 and reduce Wisdom by -1. The end products of countless generations of ruthless winnowing, a Semyad can endure greater physical punishment than is normal for his race, but lacks a certain instinct for independent thought and the judgment that comes with it.

Skills: At first level, a Semyad must select Bluff, Disguise, Gather Information and Stealth as part of his starting skills. If the Semyad lacks sufficient Intelligence to gain four starting skills he or she receives them anyway but gains skill ranks normally thereafter. This represents the duplicitous instincts all Semyad inherit as part of their birthright.

Feats: Semyad gain access to a special category of feats called Semyad feats. Designed to account for the special augmentation and biological conditioning performed on them by their blight elf masters a Semyad may choose one, but only one, of these feats in lieu of those normally available.

Traits: A Semyad retains all the traits of the base creature and gains the following additional traits:

Chemical Communication: All Semyad possess the ability to "speak" with each other by exchanging biochemical signals in their perspiration. A strange, almost indescribable blending of words, images, emotions and concepts, this language allows them to pass information back and forth in uniform blocks, similar in many ways to sending and receiving letters. If in direct physical contact with each other, Semyad may use their chemical communication ability as a standard action with no chance of

misunderstanding. If attempting to decipher secret information left on an object (a letter with additional instructions, a warning on a doorknob, etc) a Semyad must succeed in an Intelligence check. The Difficulty of this check begins at 15 and increases by +1 for each day since the message's creation. Leaving a message on an object in this way requires approximately the same amount of time it would take to speak it. Note, Narrators should feel free to impose circumstantial modifiers on this check to take into account complicating factors such as exposure to inclement weather.

Conditioned Obedience: Like all creatures with the blighted subtype Semyad respond to commands issued in Blight Speak. In addition to the standard orders outlined in the feat description, the Semyad also respond to the following extra trigger words.

Level Lag: 0

For more information on what steps, if any, a Semyad may take to resist obeying these instructions please read the description for Blight Speak in the "How to use this book" section.

SEMYAD FEATS

The three feats detailed below, each with several different versions and variations, represent but the tip of the iceberg of the abilities with which the blight elves may endow their Semyad servants. Narrators should use these as guides when creating additional Semyad feats.

CARRIER (SEMYAD)

You can pass on one specific disease selected from the examples below to others without suffering any of its ill effects or manifesting symptoms. You must choose which disease you carry when you take this feat and, once made, you cannot alter this decision. The virulence factor of your disease is 1/2 your level (rounded up) making the difficulty of the Fortitude save to resist it equal to 10 + 1/2 your level. Anyone who rolls a natural 1 on his initial save to resist your disease becomes a secondary carrier, suffering all the ill effects and symptoms but able to pass it on to others in the exact same manner as you. All others who fail their saving throw suffer from the disease but cannot pass it on to others.

TRICKS

Trick	Handle Animal Difficulty
Comply (obey an order just issued in any language, not just Blight Speak, so long as the Semyad actually understands it)	25
Die	30
Sleep	20
Stop (temporarily suppresses the functioning of Semyad feat)	20

LOVE SICK (INTIMATE CONTACT)

Incubation: 1 minute (save interval: none)

Description: Love sick erodes the will power of its victims, making them all but helpless to resist the carrier who infected them while leaving them otherwise in full command of their faculties. Spread through sexual contact, love sick has no physical symptoms but the intense devotion it instills sometimes causes noticeable personality changes in its victims. Those suffering from love sick always have a starting attitude of helpful towards the carrier who infected them. In addition, the carrier gains a +10 bonus on any opposed check involving social interaction (Bluff, Fast-talk, etc) with the victim. If the carrier wins one of these checks by 20 or more he or she can persuade a victim to perform deeds that are completely out of character. such as murdering a loved one or betraying a great trust. Unlike most diseases, love sick has a specific duration—three days, after which a victim comes to his senses, forevermore immune to the influence of that particular carrier. However, each time a carrier has sex with a victim this three-day deadline begins anew, making it possible for a carrier to exercise control for much longer intervals.

MAD POX (CONTACT)

Incubation: 1 month (save interval: 1 hour)

Description: Mad pox assaults the minds of its victims, stealing their reason while giving them a berserk strength and resilience that transforms them into rampaging engines of destruction. It earns its name by the throbbing black pustules that erupt from the skin of its victims once the disease manifests. With each failed fortitude save a victim suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage. However, victims also gain the equivalent of the Rage feat so long as they suffer from mad pox with the exception that they experience none of the fatigue penalties normally associated with the feat. Mad pox also causes victims to fly into a frenzy in which they attack the nearest creature (or object if no creature is in view) until either slain or they themselves fall unconscious. Lying dormant for a month before manifesting, and spread with merely a touch, carriers typically manage to infect large portions of a community or stronghold as a prelude to a sneak attack. One month later, just as the targeted area falls into chaos, the main force arrives and, since its rapid progress causes most victims to fall into a stupor within a few hours, waits for quiet to launch their assault.

NIGHT BREATH (AIRBORNE)

Incubation: Until next sunrise (save interval: 1 hour)

Description: Night breath leaves its victims blind and enfeebled after their first exposure to sunlight. It earns its name from the strange black vapor its victims emit with each breath. Heavier than air, this vapor drifts downward until it pools around their ankles. Carriers

may only pass this disease on at night, as it lies dormant during the day. However, during nighttime hours anyone who comes within 10-feet of a carrier must make a fortitude save to avoid falling prey to it. Victims of night breath immediately become blind and fatigued when first exposed to sunlight and must make a saving throw each hour they spend under the sun. With each failed save they suffer 1 point of Strength damage. Only manifesting with the dawn, carriers typically attempt to circulate through an opposing force immediately prior to the next day's battle. Moving from campfire to campfire, offering words of encouragement and martial songs, they seek to infect as many troops as possible before slipping away.

TERROR TREMORS (SALIVA AND BLOOD)

Incubation: 1 round (save interval: 1 hour)

Description: Terror tremors heighten the fear instinct to an extraordinary degree, leaving its sufferers cringing in helpless dread at the slightest threat. It earns its name from the way its victims continually shiver and chatter their teeth. Once manifested, victims of terror tremors immediately become shaken. However, if exposed to an even remotely stressful situation—anything putting them at risk or requiring them to make a check - they must make a Will save (difficulty equal to the Fortitude save needed to resist the disease) or become panicked instead. They remain panicked for so long as the object of their fear remains in their presence and for one minute thereafter. If unable to flee from the object of their dread, they cower in abject horror but retain enough presence of mind to communicate and obey the instructions of others, particularly if these orders come with a promise to remove that which frightened them. Spread through saliva and blood, carriers typically must lick a weapon and then successfully break the skin with their attack in order to transmit the disease. Though useful in direct combat, most carriers of this disease serve as interrogators rather than frontline troops, infecting and then terrorizing victims until they reveal all their secrets.

HARVESTER (SEMYAD)

You can gain some sort of advantage by incorporating a specific body part belonging to another humanoid within yourself. This requires you to remove that body part from the donor, which for them proves usually, but not necessarily always, a fatal experience. You must choose which body part you may incorporate when you take this feat and, once made, you cannot alter this decision. A harvested body part decomposes even when supported by your own system, albeit





at a slower rate. Each week that you wear the body part you must make a Constitution check. The first time you fail this check the body part, while still able to function, begins to manifest signs of decay that imposes a -5 penalty on all interaction checks. The second time you fail this check the body part loses all effectiveness. The Difficulty of this check begins at 15 and increases by +1 each time you attempt the check.

EYELESS

You may fit the eyes of another person in your own empty sockets so long as he or she died no more than 1 minute prior to when you harvested the eyes. Even when without eyes you still have the ability to “see” thanks to a subcutaneous mesh of light sensitive skin on your face. When wearing another creature’s eyes in this way you get two saving throw to resist any blinding attack or effect. If you succeed in either saving throw you retain your ability to see. This minor benefit pales in comparison to the true use to which you may put these harvested eyeballs. You may, by succeeding in a Notice check, recall any image witnessed by the original owner of your newly claimed eyes. The Difficulty of this check begins at



20 and increases by +1 for each hour in which the image occurred prior to the moment when you first harvested the eyes. Note, this ability only allows you to view an image of a past event and conveys no information from any other sense such as hearing.

HEART THIEF

You may rip the still-beating heart from another person and, by opening a secret flap of skin, insert it into a special cavity within your own chest. Harvesting a heart in this way requires you to kill its owner by making a coup de grace with a slashing weapon. When enjoying the benefits of a second heart you may make two rolls whenever you must make a saving throw or check modified your Constitution (Toughness, Fortitude, Recovery, etc) and use the better of the two. However, living with two hearts, and discordantly warring heartbeats, comes with one significant drawback. Whenever you fail both of these saving throws the ill effect, if any, of this failure increases in some noticeable way. If not immediately obvious (for instance, increasing a damage condition by one additional step) Narrators should either use their imagination or give you one or more levels of fatigue to represent this failure.

SKIN SWITCHER

You may peel a person’s entire skin off of his body and slip it over your own so long as he or she died no longer than one minute prior to when you harvested the skin. Special muscles and enzymes produced by your own body allow you to, by spending one hour in total stillness, alter your physiology to match that of whose skin you harvested. Once you acclimatize your body to this second skin you gain a +10 bonus on any Disguise checks made to assume the identity of the person whose skin you harvested.

HOST (SEMYAD)

Your body supports and sustains a symbiotic creature or creatures that perform useful tasks for you. The nature of this symbiosis makes it impossible to rid your body completely of the creatures you host. Even if you send these creatures from your body to perform some mission and they fail to return you replenish your stock within 24 hours. Depending on the nature of the creatures you host this replenishment could stem from the hatching of a fresh batch of eggs, an embedded “queen” giving birth to a new generation, or some other reason. The creatures you host grow more dangerous as you advance in levels. The Difficulty of any saving throw to resist an effect caused by these creatures is equal to 10 +1/2 your level + your Constitution.

BLOAT TOADS

You may cause your skin to exude tiny green droplets of sweat that, when exposed to any sort of liquid, rapidly

swell in mass and volume until they take the shape of frogs about the size of your thumbnail. These frogs may leap on any living creature you designate within 10-feet unless the target succeeds in a Reflex save to avoid them. Once they make contact, they swiftly burrow beneath the skin and rob the creature of fantastic quantities of moisture by absorbing blood, sweat and other liquids into themselves. While burdened by these frogs, the creature suffers all the effects of dehydration; save that it must make a Constitution check each round instead of each hour. These frogs continue to rob the creature of moisture until it either succeeds in four consecutive checks or suffers lethal damage from any sort of energy (fire, electricity, etc) at which point they all drop off and expire. If the frogs succeed in killing the creature they emerge, grossly swollen and manage to hop a few paces before dying and almost instantly evaporating. Each day you may exude only a certain number of these frogs. Enough to affect one creature sized huge or greater, two large creatures, four medium creatures, etc.

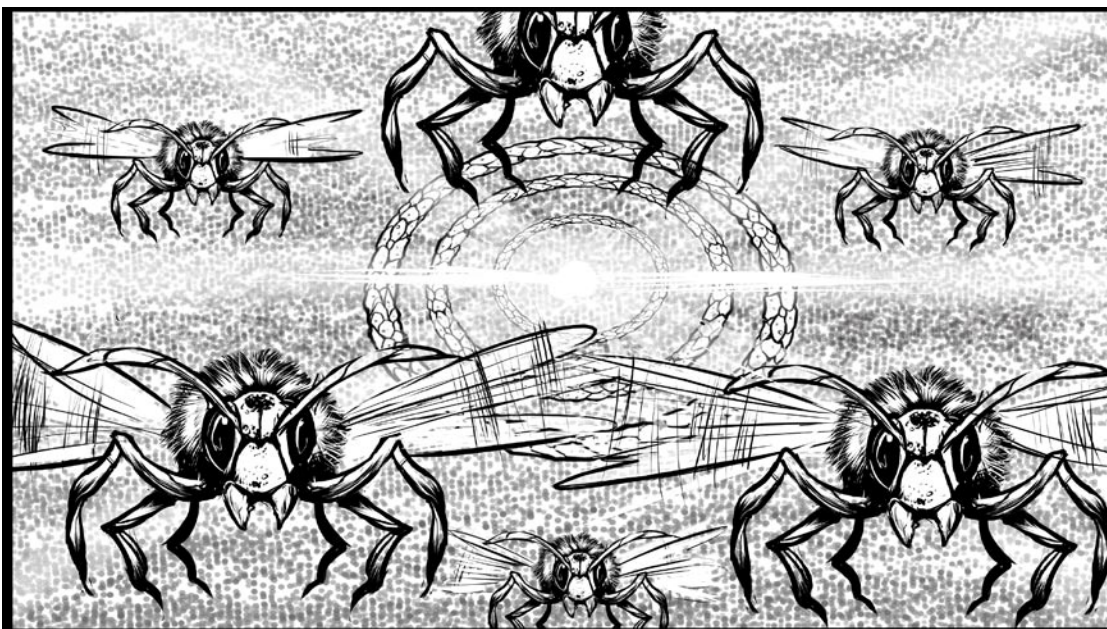
SEGMENTED WORM

A venomous wormlike creature lies rooted in your stomach and esophagus. You may, as a standard action, spit the upper portion of this creature out, tearing it like you might a roll of paper towels, and send it bite your enemies. Once released in this way your segmented worm dies within one minute plus one round/level. However, while it lives you may order it to bite any living creature (using your base attack bonus) and release a lethal contact poison each time it succeeds. Creatures bit by your worm must succeed in a Fortitude save to avoid taking 2 points of Constitution damage and gaining one level of fatigue. Your worm, which uses your Dodge bonus +4 (due to its size) to avoid attacks, dies the instant a creature actually manages to strike it. The portion of the worm left behind, still

rooted in your stomach, grows back in one day. However, you may, by succeeding in a Difficulty 15 Constitution check, cause the worm to return in one hour instead. Each time you fail this check you suffer 1 point of Constitution damage.

WHISPER BEES

Your lungs house a swarm of bees able to receive and duplicate sounds heard by the queen of the hive, even if separated. You may spit out one bee each round and dispatch it to climb into the ear of any creature within sight. If the creature resists letting the bee wiggle into its ear it may make a Reflex save to catch it and crush it. Once embedded in the creature's inner ear removing a bee proves much more difficult and dangerous. It requires a full-round action and deals a +6 lethal wound to the creature. While inside the ear the bee, somehow still in contact with the queen embedded in your lungs, uses its wings to create a buzzing, but still recognizable reproduction of your own voice. The creature hears every word you speak, even those you would rather it did not, for the next hour at which point the bee dies and rapidly decomposes. While this does allow you to issue commands, instructions, or advice to the creature it does not permit an actual conversation since the creature has no way of communicating back to you once out of your sight. Though used mainly to coordinate strike forces or issue instructions to a mind controlled thrall, this power is excellent for doling out harassment. You may release up to thirty bees in any given twenty-four period.



APPENDIX B: (BLIGHT ELVES AS OPPONENTS)

BRUTE ELVES

The Shaper Guild's dream of subordinating all life to their whims extends even to their fellow blight elves. They imagine that one day, brute elves, bred for combat and heavy labor, shall act as a lower caste, obeying the orders of an aristocracy of blight elves. Though not expressly forbidden to experiment on their kind the Shapers Guild nevertheless feels a certain amount of caution. This prompts them to hide the brute elves' existence from most the public. The leaders of the other greater guilds all know about the experiments of course, but so far remain content to wait and see how things develop.

While still recognizably of elf heritage brute elves possess a much more powerful frame than normal for their kind. Taller and wider, their thick bones wrapped beneath a layer of inflexible skin, they enjoy greater strength and endurance but pay the price through slower wits and poorer senses. Bred with a savage, innate ferocity that sometimes leaves them indifferent to their own well-being they also find it easy to shrug off the effects of injuries.

Ability Adjustments: +2 Str, +1 Con, -1 Int, -2 Wis

Bonus Feats: All-Out Attack, Rage, Tough

Mandatory Favored Feat, Blighted Touch: Just like their blight elf rootstock, all brute elves must take Infect as a supernatural power (see page 112 of the *Survivor's Guide To the Age of Blood* for complete information about this power). This automatically occupies one of the feat slots they gain at first level.

TYPICAL BRUTE ELF

Type: 5th Level Humanoid (Elf) (5th Level Warrior)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +4, Dex +3, Con +3, Int -1, Wis -2, Cha -1

Skills: Climb 8 (+7), Stealth 8(+6), Ride 8 (+11)

Feats: All-Out Attack^B, Armor Training (Light), Armor Training (Heavy), Attack Focus (battleaxe), Attack Specialization (battleaxe), Greater Attack Focus (battleaxe), Improved Critical (battleaxe), Rage^B, Tough^B, Weapon Training

Traits: Blighted Touch

Combat: Attack +8 (+5 base, +3 Dex), masterwork battleaxe +11 (+5 base, +3 Dex, +1 Attack Focus, +1 Greater Attack Focus, +1 masterwork weapon) Damage (battleaxe) +8 (+3 battleaxe, +4 Str, +1 Attack



Specialization) (critical on 19 or 20) Defense: +5 Base, Dodge/Parry +3 Dex/+4 Str, Initiative +3 (+3 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +9 (+3 Con, +1 Tough, +5 Plate-mail), Fortitude +7 (+4 base, +3 Con), Reflex +4 (+1 base, +3 Dex), Will -1 (+1 base -2 Wis)

Blighted Touch: A brute elf must take Infect as a mandatory supernatural power at first level just like a blight elf. In addition to the capacities granted to anyone who takes this power brute elves also gain protection from creature with the blighted subtype.

Important Equipment: Battleaxe, plate-mail

TYPICAL BLIGHT ELF

Type: 5th-Level Humanoid (Elf) (5th Level Adept)

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft.

Abilities: Str +0, Dex +2, Con -1, Int +4, Wis +2, Cha -1

Skills: Concentration 8 (+10), Knowledge (supernatural) 8 (+12), Medicine 8 (+10), Notice 8 (+12), Ride 8 (+10), Search 8 (+14), Stealth 8 (+10), Survival 8 (+10)

Feats: Armor Focus (Light), Attack Focus (splitblade) Night Vision^B, Seeping Grip (see below), Talented (Notice and Search)^B, Trailblazer^B

Traits: Blighted Touch, Powers: rank 8, Int, Save Difficulty 17: Blink +12, Drain Vitality +12, Pain +12, Mind Touch +12, Psychic Shield +12

Combat: Attack +4 (+2 base, +2 Dex), +5 Splitblade (+1 Attack Focus) Damage +3 (splitblade) (+7 vrs objects and constructs), Defense: Dodge/Parry 4/2 (+2 base), Initiative +2 (+2 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +1 (-1 Con, +2 Studded Leather Armor), Fortitude +0 (-1 Con, +1 Adept levels), Reflex +3 (+2 Dex, +1 Adept levels), Will +6 (+2 Wis, +4 Adept levels)

Blighted Touch: A blight elf must take Infect as a mandatory supernatural power at first level. In addition to the capacities granted to anyone who takes this power blight elves also gain protection from creature with the blighted subtype.

Important Equipment: Studded Leather Armor, Splitblade (sword dealing extra damage against inanimate objects and constructs)

SEEPING GRIP (GENERAL)

Prerequisite: Blighted Touch

You may, as a standard action, turn a melee weapon into an extension of yourself allowing you to direct your blighted touch through it when making an attack. The first creature you strike within the next minute suffers,

in addition to any damage dealt by the weapon, all the effects of your blighted touch as if you had successfully struck it with a touch attack. Your opponent may still make a saving throw to resist this power. If the weapon ever leaves your hand during the time before you strike an opponent the magical energy you endowed it with immediately dissipates.



APPENDIX C: USING THIS BOOK IN OTHER SETTINGS

While this book works best as a supplement to *Blight Elves: Architects of Despair*, it contains material useful for any setting that assumes deadly fantastical monsters. Whether a world of magic, post-apocalypse horror, genetic engineering run amuck or something even stranger it requires little effort to convert these creatures to suit a particular setting. A Narrator must simply choose which of the three approaches outlined below most closely matches his or her needs.

CHERRY-PICKING INDIVIDUAL MONSTERS

Heroes never lose their appetite for new creatures to battle. This means the book works quite well as simply a collection of monsters. Each one comes with a detailed description and a comprehensive discussion of its special abilities, combat tactics, ecological role and an adventure hook. Narrators should experience little difficulty in finding a foe that presents a memorable challenge for heroes of many different levels.

Since this approach assumes that the monsters exist in isolation, not beholden to any organized group of masters or controllers, the blighted subtype serves little purpose. This means every effect stemming from that subtype, particularly commands issued using Blight Speak, no longer apply. However, individual heroes who use other methods to gain influence over a particular monster (e.g. magical mind control) could, at the discretion of the Narrator, still cause them to carry out one of these special commands.

AS SERVANTS FOR SOME OTHER POWER (DARK OR OTHERWISE)

Virtually every one of these monsters exists to fulfill a specific niche in the blight elf war machine. It takes little effort to convert some or all of them into servants of someone—or something—else more suited to a particular campaign. This essentially removes the blight elf “head” while leaving the “body” intact. The exact nature of this master depends upon the needs of the Narrator. On the smallest scale, the monsters could exist due to the efforts of one specific person and respond to commands from their creator alone. A slightly larger approach gives them over to the control of an organized group with wider interests and perhaps even its own territory to defend. Alternately, they could simply function exactly as described in the book, save with a different race or nation to replace the blight elves as their masters.

This approach makes the blighted subtype critically important since it gives whatever individual, group, or race the Narrator wishes to rule the monsters a simple mechanic to control them. For an interesting twist, the Narrator could promote the Semyad from the most senior servants of the blight elves to villains in their own right and give them dominion over the other monsters in the book. This requires no change to the Semyad entry except, of course, removing the blighted subtype from them.

AS SERVANTS FOR TRANSPLANTED BLIGHT ELVES

At their core the blight elves, and their servant creatures, borrow upon universal themes of despair and corruption. Every world, and every soul, serves as a battleground in the war between hope and despair. Blight elves exist to make others surrender to hopelessness and dread; particularly by driving them to suicide. For this reason, they make wonderful villains, and find little difficulty carving out their own little niche upon any realm unfortunate enough to include them.

The material in this book, particularly when used in conjunction with the information found in *Blight Elves: Architects of Despair*, gives Narrators everything needed



to make blight elves truly memorable antagonists. Their origin story, while ostensibly rooted in the early history of Simmara , translates easily to other worlds with minimal effort. Any setting that assumes evil elves, or even a schism amongst an elder race leading to the formation of vile faction, lays the groundwork for blight elves to make an appearance.

CLOSING NOTE: UNDERSTANDING BLIGHT ELVES

Every one of us, though we might not want to admit it, harbors some tiny portion of a blight elf deep within our souls. No, we don't spend our lives devising ever more fiendish tortures or hatching schemes to drive others to suicide. However, we all, at some point in our lives, come face to face with overwhelming grief and misery. It takes many different forms. The death of a loved one. Getting fired. Going bankrupt. Divorce. A sickness that leaves us helpless and miserable. The simple realization that nothing we do truly matters in a universe so vast and uncaring. Whatever its origin, when the pain comes for us it casts us into darkness so deep that escape seems impossible.

Often only one thing rouses us from this soul rending anguish; rage. Think of it as that dark urge to wipe the stupid grin off someone else's face. Call it the drive to punish those still capable of feeling pleasure while we suffer.

Magnify that feeling a thousand fold and you begin to understand what blight elves live with every single day. A hatred of anything still capable of experiencing joy defines their lives. Compelled to face the futility of existence without flinching, the notion that others still manage to find happiness so infuriates them that they dedicate themselves to snuffing it out. This, more than anything else, explains why they see little point in merely sowing death and mayhem. Killing a victim gives them little satisfaction when compared to watching him crumble, piece by piece, until he finally proves them right by taking his own life.



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