



REMARKABLE RACES

ZIF

PLAYER CHARACTER RACE



ROLEPLAYING GAME SUPPLEMENT

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REMARKABLE RACES: THE ZIF

A New Player Character Race For the 4th Edition Dungeons & Dragons Game

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An ancient race of mollusks that are enjoying their new life on land

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height: 5'0" – 5' 6"

Average Weight: 150 – 200 lb.

Ability Scores: +2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom

Size: Medium

Speed: 5 squares

Vision: Normal

Languages: Common, Ancient (described later)

Skill Bonuses: +2 Diplomacy, +2 Perception

Inborn Knowledge: You gain training in one additional knowledge skill.

Odd Anatomy: You cannot equip items to your feet slot, as you have no feet. However, you can wear one additional waist slot item.

Retract into Shell: You can use *Retract into Shell* as an encounter power.

Sucker Foot: You gain a +5 on Athletics checks to climb.

In addition, when an attack would knock you prone, you can immediately make a saving throw to avoid falling prone with a +2 racial bonus.



Retract into Shell

Zif Racial Power

You can pull your entire body into the shell on your back to avoid most damage.

Encounter

Standard Action

Personal

Effect: You gain resist 8 to all damage. While using this effect, you are considered blinded, immobilized and cannot take any actions, except to sustain or end this effect. You can end this effect as a free action. You may sustain this effect with a standard action. Increase damage resistance to 13 at 11th level, and 18 at 21st level.

Special: You cannot activate this power if you are immobilized, being grabbed, or taking on-going damage.

The Ancient Language: *By all accounts, the Zif were the first to use this language, which may have been the first language ever invented by a mortal race. Originally, the ancient tongue was scribed in a tactile-based writing that was meant to be read much like Braille. Later, the zif adopted lokharic, the script of the dragons. This was likely a measure to better interact with the newly emerging sentient races of their world. Outside of zif and mahrog settlements, Ancient would only be found inscribed in extremely aged ruins and easily mistaken for Draconic, but undecipherable in that language. Ancient was the common dialect of distant ages ago. If it were not for the return of the mahrogs and the emergence of the zif, Ancient would have been a language that has been dead for eons.*

OVERVIEW

In the primordial eons of forgotten times, before any beast roamed on land, the sea was teeming with life. Some of these creatures are still around in similar forms such as the shark, the horseshoe crab, and the sea slug. Others fell into extinction. Among those were the ammonites. Ammonites were squid-like creatures with spiral shaped shells. We know them by countless fossils suggesting that they were once quite prolific.

With their general simplicity, one would assume ammonites were simple creatures; not much more intelligent than the modern octopus or cuttlefish. This is only partially correct, however. During the age of the ammonites, another creature was also quite successful. This mollusk did not have teeth like the shark, nor did it have a hard shell like the crab. It could not swim very fast, nor did it have particularly good camouflage techniques. It did have two amazing abilities, however, that helped it to survive the countless ages. First, it was a parasite. It could attach itself to the nervous systems of other mollusks and assume control over the host's body. The zif, as they came to call themselves, were also extremely intelligent.

The zifs preferred the ammonites as hosts. With the ammonite forms, they built great cities. In the course of a million years, they had a thriving undersea civilization. They ruled the world for ages, until a terrible and mysterious

force from beyond threatened their existence. The peaceful world that the zifs created ended in a cataclysmic apocalypse of fire, ice, and lightning. The ammonites were wiped from the realm. The zifs, however, retreated and survived.

For the next several eons they would survive in the bodies of colossal deep sea squids. At oppressive depth and darkness, they could continue their civilization unmolested. For millions of years they persevered through countless rises and falls of their civilization, which was accompanied with ages of great discovery and dark times when much knowledge was lost. At the dawn of the age of man, the zif had declined into a race of nearly solitary individuals, teetering on the edge of extinction.

They first learned of mankind from its shipwrecks; and a new movement had sparked. They began to once again dream of roaming free in the world. To do this, they would have to shed their bulky forms and inky lairs. They searched far and wide for a new host that would suit their needs.

Their travels brought them to the snillorgs; a cowardly species of primitive snail people. Snillorgs were a pest on the tiny island that they inhabited. They were known for nocturnal raids of farmland, their timid nature, and their deplorable stupidity. At the time, the entire snillorg population was only about two thousand individuals. This changed immediately after the zif began an aggressive breeding program.

The population of snillorgs grew in secret, while all the zif of the world congregated, plotted, and dreamed. Suddenly and without warning, the land was inundated with countless snail creatures. While it had all the appearances of a wide-scale invasion (and many land creatures mistook it for such) the zif were on a mission of peace. In exchange for new concepts, commodities, and secrets the zif only wanted a place in the world. Most areas welcomed them and greedily accepted all of the strange new elements that only a race as old as time could offer. In areas which would not accept the zif, they simply retreated apologetically.

Play a zif if you want...

- ◆ to play a snail-like creature.
- ◆ to be able to avoid massive damage.
- ◆ to be able to climb walls with ease or avoid being knocked prone.
- ◆ to be both smart and wise.
- ◆ to be a member of a race that enjoys the wizard, cleric, druid and ranger class.

PHYSICAL QUALITIES

Zifs as they are today are known by their snillorg forms. These odd creatures have all that one would expect from a humanoid snail. Standing about 5 feet tall, they glide along on one muscular foot. This motion is powered by succeeding waves of muscular contraction which move down the ventral of the foot. A small flat shell known as an operculum rests on top of this foot. They have a long, thin body with arms that are almost skeletal in width. These arms end in equally long and thin three fingered hands. A larger four-foot diameter spiraled shell protrudes from their backs, much like a backpack. Their heads extend practically neckless from their torso and have wide and flat mouths filled with smooth, grinding teeth. Two bulbous antennas protrude from where their nose should be. Their heads are capped with two long eye stalks. Zif eyes are simple black orbs. The most remarkable aspect of the zif's body is that it is entirely retractable, and fits snugly into the shell that they wear on their backs. When retracted into their shell, the foot shell fits neatly over the main shell's opening providing maximum protection.

Zifs speak in gurgling voices and smell a bit musky, but not as terribly unpleasant as one might expect. Their yellowish brown skin is particularly slimy as it exudes purplish mucus that aids in movement and maintains the elasticity of their skin. Their shells vary in color and pattern, but are typically black, white, pink, brown, or yellow. Unlike the zif's previous

forms, the snillorg form is primarily terrestrial, and lacks the biology necessary for prolonged underwater life.

ECOLOGY

Zifs are mollusks, and like many of this category they are also functional hermaphrodites. Any two zifs can get together to create children. It is even possible for a zif to spontaneously create children without a mate, though this is generally reserved for times of very low population. Beyond this, zif biology is extremely complicated.

First, zifs are actually two distinct organisms in one. The intelligent part, the actual zif species, starts life as a tiny squid-like mollusk that burrows into the base of another mollusk's tail and effectively hijacks its nervous system. Once attached, it begins to root itself permanently into the other creature. In the matter of a decade, the zif matures and becomes an enduring feature of the host individual. The host's original brain and the parasite's internal organs both atrophy into oblivion and the two organisms effectively become one. The zif parasite (referred to as a larva by the zif) can only attach to other mollusks.

The current host species is the snillorg. A zif can be discerned from a common snillorg by the operculum feature; the zif brain resides under this smaller shell. Snillorgs, and most terrestrial snails in general, do not have an operculum. Snillorgs start life as shellless slugs, about the size of a large cat. They mature quickly, reaching adulthood at age five, at which point they are chosen as hosts for the zif larva. Snillorgs are very prolific, but do not typically care for their young. Naturally, many more snillorg children die than live to grow to maturity. They are voracious herbivores, and love the taste of cultivated food. Before the zif, however, the snillorgs lacked the intellect required for horticulture and often resorted to

stealing and raiding. Barring a violent death, which the pre-zif snillorgs were pretty much assured, snillorgs can live for about 80 years without signs of old age. Afterwards, their health declines sharply. The zif die with their host.

One might assume that zifs would choose a variety of host organisms. However, this has never been the case. Zifs often refer to a “collective intellect” that prevents this as an option. While they cannot read each other’s mind, they do have some uncanny sense of each other’s status, knowledge, and memories. When many zif die, the entire race feels it. Inborn knowledge comes to them through this bond, and they are often well-versed on matters that they never studied themselves. Apparently, if they choose hosts that are not similar, the connection that they share becomes interrupted. Therefore, it is customary for the vast majority of zif to all agree on a new host species before they decide to use it. Because of this, the zif have had only three different species of hosts in their entire existence as a species, which spans hundreds of millions of years.

As a mollusk, they lack a skeleton, but do have several floating structures in their body made of hard-but-flexible cartilage. All of their extremities are designed to retract, fold, and generally diminish greatly in size in order to fit neatly into their shell. They exude slime through their pores regularly, and because of this zif generally require about twice as much water

as a human of the same weight. The shell of a zif is extremely hard and resilient. It is designed to take a lot of damage and protect the soft parts within.



PLAYING A ZIF

Zif are a mature race, and usually have a mellow and gentle demeanor. In many ways, they seem to have the attitude of a man in his golden years. This can be a deep wisdom and understanding mixed with childlike wonder, or even a crotchety disposition with a kind heart. While they are a race that is millions of years old, with a strong racial memory, this is their first foray on dry land. Many show great interest in things

that are not useful in the sea; from finesse style weapons to ancient paper books. As a race, Zif are generally good aligned. Zif do not see any wisdom in evil deeds, and many feel they are too sophisticated for “primitive” motivations such as greed, egotism, and vengeance.

However, zif do tend to have a few alien views. The most obvious is their disregard for sentient races that fail to rise above selfishness or evil. Most zif view these races as others view beasts; to be respected as life forms, but also used or disposed of as needed. This manifests as a prejudice against any individual member of these races, regardless of their actions. Drow, gnolls, and even tieflings often feel the cold sting of condescension and disregard from the zif. Zifs look upon the snillorg in the same respect; seeing the race

as cattle to be used for their own purposes. It boils down to an indelible perceptual difference; the zif simply cannot see their disregard for these races as any more evil than a farmer who raises pigs for food, or a knight using a horse for combat. Some translate the zif attitude as extremely arrogant, though it seems absent when dealing with members of races who have proven to be predominantly good.

Zif adventures have a variety of motivations that drive them. Most often, they see a great imbalance in the world and wish to right it. Some feel a sort of responsibility to help out the younger races, and perhaps a tinge of guilt for not being there for them in their infancy. Other zif adventure for the sheer wonder of it; hungering for new sights, new knowledge, and new experiences. Still other zif adventurer solely to catalogue worldly facts for future use. These zif almost seem like reporters that are searching for that perfect “scoop.”

Zif are not particularly strong, nor does armor work well for them. Therefore, most zif avoid the martial classes. Zif warriors are very rare, and usually use light and ranged weapons. Zif rogues are slightly more common than warriors, and prefer to use their skills to explore ancient ruins, lost temples, and dangerous dungeons. Zifs are most often wizards, preferring to rely on arcane knowledge to get by. However, they are usually very open-minded to the plethora of beliefs, customs, and ideas the world has to offer. If a zif finds a cause, ideal, or force that he believes in, he will pursue it with hobby-like zeal. In this spirit, there are many cleric, druid, and warlock zif. Of these classes, however, most zif avoid the darker applications. Zif clerics usually choose deities of good alignment, while zif warlocks most often avoid infernal and star pacts.

The latter aversion comprises a sort of mystery about the zif. The far realm terrifies most zif on an instinctual level, and

many have an inborn loathing of anything to do with it, especially “mind slayers.” Sages of other races have even speculated that the zif race may be the terrestrial ancestor of the mind slayers; based on a similar life cycle, squid-like features of the larva, ancient heritage, and the zif’s strange phobia regarding them and the far realm. Zifs, however, feel insulted by the comparison. Many zif are ardent destroyers of all creatures with an aberrant origin, and seem to have an instinctual insight on how to fight them.

Zif Characteristics: Alien, arrogant, clever, condescending, cultured, eccentric, educated, inquisitive, magical, mature, mellow, mysterious, reserved, smart, sophisticated, wise

Names: Bariarti, Conordrum, Fremestor, Grelesior, Julesti, Kelkestor, Qualestri, Reviarti, Timbledere, Umblebleme, Vevosum, Warsotrum, Zembleblam

ZIF ADVENTURERS

Hecalistor is a wizard, which is fairly common for the zifs. However, this wizard likes to get up close, preferring the heat of combat and the burn of melee. His close range spells certainly help in combat, but his methods are often a subject of worry. Hecalistor’s fellow adventurers think he has a death-wish; he is a frail fighter at best, and seemingly not well suited for taking multiple blows. He is confident however, and his calm approach in the face of adversity mixed with a hard shell have allowed him to persevere where other races would have perished.

Milunglam worships Avandra, the god of change. He is both an effective cleric and an agent of change for the better. Where most zif express prejudice, Milunglam sees opportunity for growth. He sees a time when the zif must even allow the snillorgs to grow

beyond their lot in life. He adventures alongside both a drow and a tiefling, who have similar ideals. While he does sometimes resort back to typical zif ways, the others view him as a fairly tolerant zif with many keen insights. In his spare time, Milunglam preaches to other zif on the virtues of a higher level of respect to all sentient life. Most zif, however, just think he is a little crazy.

Zelobini has been a ranger from the time his first arrow plunged into the dark abomination that called itself an “illethud.” He relentlessly scours the underdark for any sign of mind slayers or their allies. A bit stronger and more nimble than his kin, Zelobini still fights with all the cleverness and sophistication of any zif. He has recently joined a small band of adventurers with similar goals. Together, they form an effective team. All benefit from Zelobini’s calculating ways and expert tracking and survival skills. Zelobini welcomes the company and realizes this is one fight he should not face alone.

RACIAL FEATS

Zifs have a number of feats all their own.

HEROIC TIER FEATS

These feats are available to any zif characters who meet the prerequisites.

ELUDE GRASP [ZIF]

Prerequisite: Zif

Benefit: You have learned to use your slimy skin and retractable body to help you escape from enemies that have grabbed you. You gain a +3 feat bonus to Acrobatic or Athletics checks to escape a grab.

FLAYER SLAYER [ZIF]

Prerequisites: Zif

Benefit: You gain a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls against creatures with the aberrant origin.

FLEE TO SHELTER [ZIF]

Prerequisites: Zif, Dex 13

Benefit: You may use the *retract into shell* power as a move action rather than a standard action. For example, now you can make a standard action and then *retract into shell*.

PARAGON TIER FEATS

These feats are available to any zif character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

STRONGFOOT [ZIF]

Prerequisites: Zif, Str 15, *strong foot*

Benefit: When an effect forces you to move because of a push, pull, or slide action, you can move 1 square less than the effect specifies. If the effect forces you to move only one square, you do not move at all.

In addition, you are considered to be of Large size in regards to effects that lift or carry you from your current position. For example, a roc cannot target you with its *claw snatch* power, as that can only be used against Small or Medium targets.

ROLLING SHELL [ZIF]

Prerequisites: Zif, *flee to shelter*

Benefit: While under the effect of *retract into shell* you may shift up to 2 squares. All other effects remain the same.

EPIC TIER FEATS

These feats are available to any zif character of 21st level or higher.

COLLECTIVE INTELLECT [ZIF]

Prerequisite: Zif

Benefit: Gain a +5 feat bonus on all knowledge related skill checks that you are not trained in.

QUICK RETREAT [ZIF]

Prerequisites: Zif, *flee to shelter*

Benefit: You may use the *retract into shell* power as a minor action rather than a move or standard action.

THE RITES OF THE ANCEINTS

The rituals detailed below are a small sample of the knowledge that the zif used to weather countless ages.

CRYSTALIZE

With a touch, a greenish glow encircles the dying sage and he is suddenly encased in hardened crystal. His wisdom will endure until the time is right.

Level: 9 **Component Cost:** 100 gp
Category: Warding **Market Price:** 200 gp
Time: 10 minutes **Key Skill:** Arcana
Duration: Instantaneous

One willing subject that you touch at the conclusion of this ritual and up to 200 lbs of equipment becomes encased in magical crystal. The subject is effectively *petrified* and gains additional resistance to all damage (in addition to the 20 gained from being *petrified*) according to the result of the Arcana check and the chart below. The subject's *petrified* condition can be removed with a *Remove Affliction* ritual or when conditions you set are met.

Arcana Check Result	Additional Resistance
0 or lower	none
1-9	+10
10-19	+20
20-29	+30
30 or higher	+40

EXTRACT KNOWLEDGE

The mind slayer's corpse rests among expertly placed glowing crystals. He vowed in life never to disclose the whereabouts of his lair. He cannot keep that vow in death.

Level: 8 **Component Cost:** 300 gp
Category: Exploration **Market Price:** 500 gp
Time: 10 minutes **Key Skill:** Arcana (no check)
Duration: Instantaneous

You touch the disembodied brain of the corpse of any sentient being and instantly know details related to one specific person, place, or thing as the subject knew them in life. This applies only to information directly related to the particular subject at hand. For example, if the subject is the mind slayer's lair, you could get directions to the lair and a list of contents inside the lair. However, it will not convey things about the lair that the mind slayer did not know, or about any hazards along the way, or what the contents in the lair are used for. Access to the information gained through this ritual fades from the caster's mind after an extended rest.

DISENTHRALL

The aboleth servitor squirms helplessly in its chains, hissing curses in accursed deep speech. Suddenly, all vestiges of evil vanish, and the pinkish hue of health returns to his flesh. The human rests peacefully.

Level: 14 **Component Cost:** 500 gp
Category: Restoration **Market Price:** 1000 gp
Time: 1 hour **Key Skill:** Heal
Duration: Instantaneous

This ritual works exactly like *remove affliction*, except that it removes all enduring effects (instead of just one effect) on the subject that were placed there by a creature of aberrant origin, such as an aboleth or mind slayer. However, much like with *remove affliction*, the subject may not survive.

SHELTER OUT OF TIME

The paladin standing in the circle of runes suddenly vanishes into a realm without time. He will return in a few days as if he had just left.

Level: 12 **Component Cost:** 1000 gp
Category: Exploration **Market Price:** 2500 gp
Time: 1 hour **Key Skill:** Arcana
Duration: Special

During the ritual, you inscribe runes around a single square of space. All creatures and objects within that square at the conclusion of the performance of this ritual are instantly transferred to a temporary demiplane in which time does not pass. Once the ritual ends, the demiplane disappears, and any creatures or objects in the demiplane appear in the nearest unoccupied space to the original square exactly the same as when they left. Duration lasts according to the result of the Arcana check, or less if so designated by the ritual caster during performance of the ritual. The ritual caster cannot end the spell before the designated duration expires.

Arcana Check Result	Duration
0 or lower	1 day
1-9	2 days
10-19	3 days
20-29	4 days
30 or higher	5 days



SNILLORG

"Me like cabbage!"

Slobbering viscous slime and behaving much like a timid dog, this snail-like creature has none of the grace, charm, or wit of a zif, though it looks very similar.

* Snillorg	Level 1 Lurker
Medium Natural Humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +1	
HP 28; Bloodied 14	
AC 15; Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13	
Speed 5	
⊕ Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs AC; 1d10+3 damage	
Combat Advantage	
The snillorg deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Retract into Shell (standard, encounter)	
The snillorg gains resist 7 to all damage. While using this effect, the snillorg is considered blinded, immobilized and cannot take any opportunity or immediate actions. The snillorg may sustain this effect with a standard action.	
Alignment: Any Languages: Common	
Skills Stealth +8, Thievery +8	
Str 16 (+3) Dex 13 (+1) Wis 13 (+1)	
Con 16 (+3) Int 9 (-1) Cha 11 (+0)	
Equipment: club	

SNILLORG TACTICS

The snillorg ambushes its victims and then attempts to flee. If that fails, it will retract into its shell and attempt to wait out the danger. A snillorg will rarely attack large groups or intimidating adversaries. Instead, they prefer to attack those solitary individuals that appear weak or injured.

ZIF ENFORCER

"What you cannot enforce, do not command."

Brandishing a rapier and a short sword, this educated zif fighter appears ready for anything despite an evident lack of equipment. He wears a few trinkets on his

shell and a condescending smirk on his face.

* Zif Enforcer	Level 11 Soldier
Medium Natural Humanoid	XP 600
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +10	
HP 117; Bloodied 58	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 24	
Speed 5	
⊕ Rapier (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs AC; 1d6+5 damage	
⊕ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs AC; 1d6+5 damage	
† Combination Strike (standard; recharge ☰☱☲☳) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs AC; 4d8+5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the enforcer's next turn.	
Retract into Shell (standard, encounter)	
The zif gains resist 13 to all damage. While using this effect, the zif is considered blinded, immobilized and cannot take any opportunity or immediate actions. The zif may sustain this effect with a standard action.	
Alignment: Any Languages: Common, Ancient	
Skills Intimidate +11, History +13	
Str 21 (+10) Dex 18 (+9) Wis 20 (+10)	
Con 21 (+10) Int 22 (+11) Cha 18 (+9)	
Equipment: rapier, short sword	

ZIF ENFORCER TACTICS

The zif enforcer fights directly, utilizing both blades simultaneously. When the chance arises, he will use his combination strike to mark a foe. He will not hesitate to go after stronger foes, retracting into shell if he is getting too low on hit points, waiting for the pounding to stop, and then coming back with a vengeance when least expected.

ZIF MIND-CRACKER

"What's on your mind, if you will permit the overstatement?"

This zif wears a colorful robe over his shell, and is covered in multiple tattoos of arcane symbols. He looks at you sternly, as if peering into your soul.

Zif Mind-Cracker Level 9 Controller



Medium Natural Humanoid XP 400



Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +8



HP 100; **Bloodied** 50


AC 23; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 22

Speed 5

 **Dagger** (standard; at-will)  **Weapon**
+14 vs AC; 2d4+5 damage

 **Dagger** (standard; at-will)  **Weapon**
Ranged 5/10; +14 vs AC; 2d4+5 damage

 **Mind Spray** (standard; at-will)  **Fear**
Close burst 5; +13 vs Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).

 **Mind Scream** (standard, recharge )
 **Psychic**
Close burst 5; +13 vs Will; 1d6+5 psychic damage.

Secondary Attack

Area burst 1 within 5; centered on a target hit by mind scream's primary attack; targets enemies only; +13 vs Will; 1d6+5 psychic damage.

Retract into Shell (standard, encounter)
The zif gains resist 8 to all damage. While using this effect, the zif is considered blinded, immobilized and cannot take any opportunity or immediate actions. The zif may sustain this effect with a standard action.

Alignment: Any **Languages:** Common, Ancient
Skills Arcana +14, Intimidate +14
Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 19 (+8)
Con 20 (+9) **Int** 21 (+9) **Cha** 20 (+9)
Equipment: 3 daggers, robes

ZIF MIND-CRACKER TACTICS

The zif mind-cracker prefers to avoid getting into melee, preferring to push his enemies into combat with his allies using mind spray whenever possible.

ZIF LEGEND

"Prehistoric is a subjective term."

Aside from the bright star-like sparks for eyes, this appears to be an ordinary zif. He wields a simple quarterstaff, or so it appears.

Zif Legend Level 26 Elite Controller



Medium Natural Humanoid XP 18,000



Initiative +21 **Senses** Perception +22



HP 490; **Bloodied** 245

AC 42; **Fortitude** 41, **Reflex** 39, **Will** 42

Speed 5

 **Sonic Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will)
 **Thunder, Weapon**
+31 vs Reflex; 3d8+9 thunder damage, and the target is deafened until the end of the zif legend's next turn.

 **Blinding Gaze** (minor; at-will)  **Gaze, Radiant**
Ranged 20; +31 vs Reflex; the target takes ongoing 10 radiant damage and is blinded (save ends both).

 **Black Lightning** (standard; at-will)
 **Lightning, Necrotic**
Ranged 10; +30 vs Fortitude; 5d10+9 lightning damage, and the target is slowed and weakened (save ends both). Aftereffect: The target is weakened (save ends).

Retract into Shell (standard, encounter)
The zif gains resist 18 to all damage. While using this effect, the zif is considered blinded, and cannot take any opportunity or immediate actions. The zif may sustain this effect with a standard action. The zif legend may still use move actions while in the shell.

Alignment: Any **Languages:** Common, Ancient
Skills Arcana +15, Diplomacy +24, History +15, Insight +21, Intimidate +24, Nature +21
Str 29 (+22) **Dex** 26 (+21) **Wis** 29 (+22)
Con 29 (+22) **Int** 28 (+22) **Cha** 31 (+23)
Equipment: quarterstaff

ZIF LEGEND TACTICS

The zif legend explodes into a fury of attacks, saving his sonic staff for when enemies come within melee reach. *Blinding gaze* and *black lightning* are used liberally to neutralize the stronger foes on the battlefield. If all else fails, the zif legend retreats to his shell and rolls away at top speed.

ZIFS IN YOUR GAME

Zifs have an unmistakably Lovecraftian quality, and may help to add these elements to the player side of your game. They are an acceptable counterbalance to mind slayers, aboleths, and other strange creatures from the Far Realm. With the zif's expansive and mysterious history, it would be relatively easy to interweave any unspeakably ancient terror or dark eldritch aspect in with this race for added flavor.

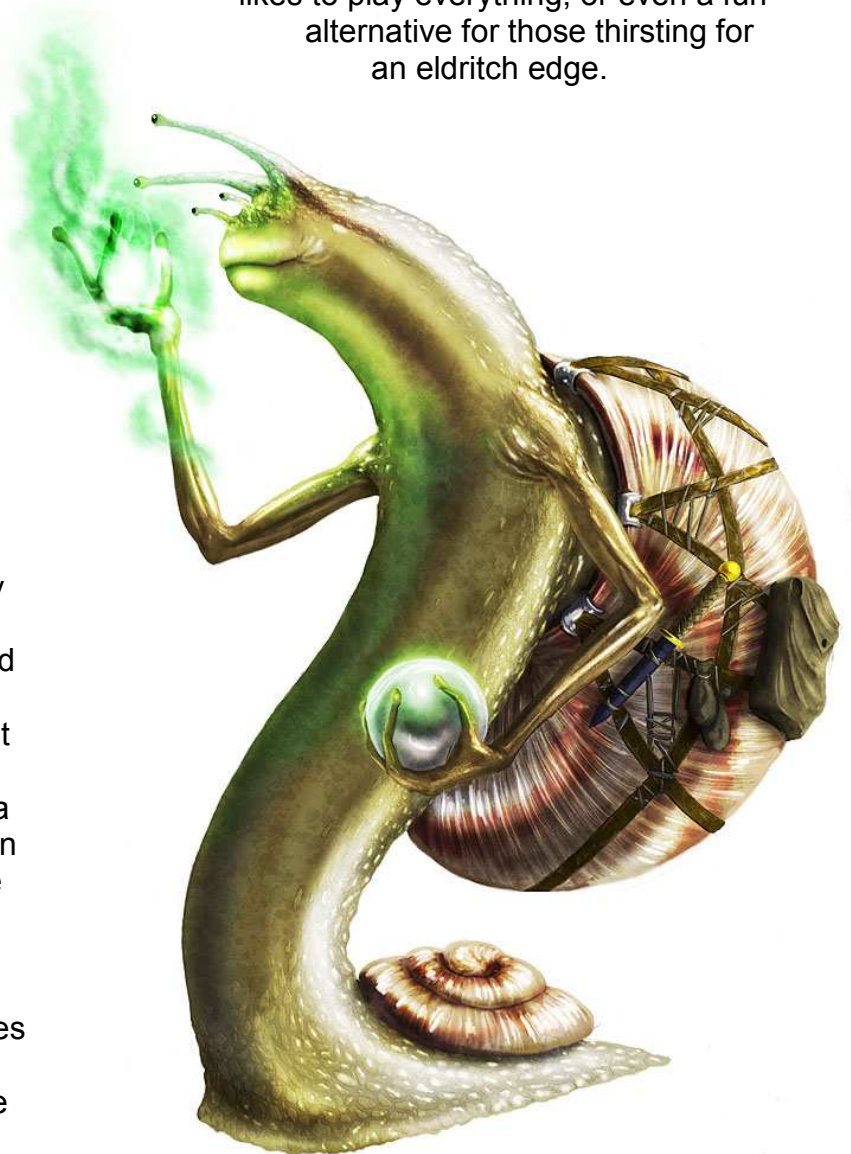
Playing a race without feet may provide some interesting challenges. While they can jump, run, and move like most other races, they do not leave distinctive tracks except perhaps a slime trail. Riding mounts may also pose some questions; special equipment may be required. Their anatomy may preclude them from wearing certain equipment. Alternatively, equipment can be specially designed for them by the Game Master. Perhaps a similar race, or a creature of aberrant origin, has equipment suitable for a zif PC as well.

Despite their prehistoric roots, zifs in this text are presented as a fairly fresh race to the world. While they do have ancient origins, this does not need to be entangled with your existing campaign history. After all, the zif spent nearly all of the recorded history of the other races as reclusive giant deep-sea squids. This allows them to be placed in virtually any campaign setting with little work. As is, they require almost no adjustment to your world to begin play immediately.

However, if this ancient spin does not work well with the concept of your game world, there are alternatives. The zifs could easily be a race that has fled from the Far Realm, invading your world in droves in search of sanctuary from a

sinister and alien force. Or perhaps the zif are recently evolved creatures from the Underdark, hardened with frequent encounters with nefarious races. The zif may also be from another reality; one in which mollusks have evolved as the dominant species.

Whatever the case, the zif will make a welcome addition to any game as a the only player with a shell, an unusual option for a player seeking something entirely different, a challenge for the player who likes to play everything, or even a fun alternative for those thirsting for an eldritch edge.



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