

Hero's Handbook

# DRAGONBORN

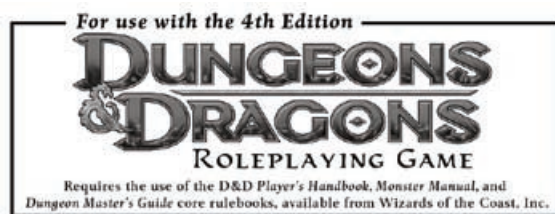




# Hero's Handbook

# DRAGONBORN

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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	4	Clan Aratos .....	31	Blackvenom Acolyte.....	69
The Dragon Blooded.....	4	The Code of the Dragon.....	32	Chosen of Apophis.....	70
Code of the Dragon .....	4	Clan Aratos Leadership .....	33	Other Servants of Apophis .....	71
The Last of the Warrior-Kings .....	5	The Home of Clan Aratos.....	33	Great Serpent of Apophis .....	71
Clan Kengi.....	5	Clan Aratos at War .....	33	Dire Drakes .....	72
Clan Karkonus.....	5	Aratos Adventurers .....	34	Cobalt Dire Drake .....	73
Clan Daigo .....	5	Paragon Path: Knight of Aratos .....	34	Mercury Dire Drake .....	73
Clan Aratos.....	5	Knight of Aratos Prayers.....	35	Sea Dire Drake.....	74
Clan Saticar.....	6	<b>Chapter 3: The Southland Clans</b> .....	<b>36</b>	Umber Dire Drake .....	74
The Southland Clans.....	6	History.....	36	Dragonborn Atavist .....	75
Clan Durisshk .....	6	Clan Durisshk.....	37	Dragonborn Atavist (White).....	75
Clan Kthonan.....	6	Organization .....	39	Frostrager.....	75
Clan Maahksarith.....	6	The Silent Keep .....	40	Frosthurler .....	76
The Minor Clans .....	6	The Code of the Dragon.....	40	Dragonborn Atavist (Black) .....	77
<b>Chapter 1: Culture and History of the</b>		Durisshk Adventurers.....	41	Gloomstalker.....	77
<b>Northclans</b> .....	<b>7</b>	Paragon Path: Mistral Knight .....	42	Foulblade .....	77
The Akeyashik Tablets (Record of Souls).....	8	Sentinel of Ice Prayers.....	42	Dragonborn Atavist (Green).....	78
The Creation of the Dragonborn .....	8	Clan Kthonan.....	43	Blightknife.....	78
The Birth of the Cult of Apophis & the		Peregrination .....	45	Mindscar Adept .....	78
Autumn Turning.....	9	The Code of the Dragon.....	46	Dragonborn Atavist (Blue) .....	79
The Birth of the Tiefling & the Blood Wars.....	10	Organization .....	46	Boltknight.....	79
A Dragonborn's Life .....	11	Kthonan Adventurers.....	47	Bolt Thrower.....	80
Born of Battle .....	11	Paragon Path: Deepseeker .....	47	Dragonborn Atavist (Red).....	80
Apprenticeship and Training.....	11	Deepseeker Exploits.....	48	Firelance Titan .....	80
Culture.....	12	Clan Maahksarith .....	48	Infermatrix.....	81
<b>Chapter 2: The Northclans</b> .....	<b>15</b>	Grottos and Guardians .....	51	Dragonborn of the Great Clans.....	82
Clan Kengi .....	15	Organization .....	52	Clan Aratos .....	82
The Code of the Dragon.....	16	The Code of the Dragon.....	52	Knight of Aratos.....	82
Kengi Adventurers .....	18	Maahksarith Adventurers.....	53	Clan Daigo .....	82
Paragon Path: The Dragonsword Adept.....	18	Paragon Path: Venomancer.....	53	Swordsworn .....	83
Dragonsword Adept Exploits .....	18	Venomancer Spells .....	54	Clan Durisshk.....	83
Clan Diago .....	19	<b>Chapter 4: New Feats</b> .....	<b>55</b>	Mistral Knight.....	83
The Code of the Dragon.....	21	Heroic Tier Feats.....	55	Clan Karkonus.....	84
Diago Adventurers .....	21	Paragon Tier Feats .....	57	Blackspear Hoplight.....	84
Paragon Path: The Swordsworn.....	22	Epic Tier Feats .....	58	Clan Kengi .....	84
Swordsworn Prayers .....	22	<b>Chapter 5: Ancestral Paths</b> .....	<b>59</b>	Dragonsword Adept.....	85
Clan Karkonus.....	23	Table A: Family Destiny .....	59	Clan Kthonan .....	85
The Code of the Dragon.....	23	Table B: Way of the Magister .....	60	Deepseeker.....	85
Clan Karkonus Leadership .....	24	Table C: Dark Secret.....	61	Clan Maahksarith .....	86
The Home of Clan Karkonus.....	24	Table D: Great Duelist.....	62	Venomancer.....	86
Clan Karkonus at War.....	26	Table E: Tragedy .....	63	Clan Saticor .....	86
Karkonus Adventurers .....	26	Table F: The Art of War.....	64	Saticor Bandit Sniper .....	87
Paragon Path: Blackspears Hoplight .....	27	Table G: Ancestral Heirlooms.....	65	<b>Chapter 7: Magic Items</b> .....	<b>88</b>
Blackspear Hoplight Exploits .....	27	Table H: Ancestral Foes.....	66		
Clan Saticor .....	28	<b>Table 6: New Monsters</b> .....	<b>68</b>		
The Code of the Dragon.....	28	Cultist of Apophis.....	68		
Saticor Adventurers.....	29	Darkfang Slayer.....	68		
Paragon Path: Longshot Opportunist.....	30				
Longshot Opportunist Exploits .....	30				

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls, Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt © 2008 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved.



## INTRODUCTION

*"Do not fear death, only the shame of defeat."*

**Bound by honor**, driven by fierce passions, the greatest warriors of legend have always been born of dragons. Once their kingdoms vied for dominion of the Known World, but now the clans of the dragonkin are but a shadow of their former greatness. Hidden high atop wind-scoured mountains and in the hearts of dark jungles, a handful of ancient fastnesses and legends are all that remain of a sprawling empire that was once the scourge of the civilized nations. Today's dragonborn are heirs to a martial legacy unmatched by any of the races. Alas, the sun has set on the age of the dragonborn, and this generation's heroes might well be the last to cast their shadow across the storied thrones of the Known World.

This tome records the tales of this race of warrior-kings and sets heroes on the path to creating their own legends. Herein, readers will discover the codes of honor that define the dragonborn clans, their greatest triumphs and follies, their rigid paths to honor, and their dark paths to infamy.

For though all cowards hope to live forever, the legends told of heroes are immortal.

## THE DRAGON BLOODED

**Every dragonborn** is a warrior, first and foremost. While the dwarves, elves, and humans might lay kin-claim to great warriors, dragonborn alone are born for the battlefield. Whereas other races take up arms in times of peril, dragonborn never put them down. Even the dragonborn that devote their lives to non-martial pursuits attack their goals with the single-minded devotion of mortal combat; to be stripped of weapons is one of the greatest dishonors a Northland dragonborn can suffer.

The second defining characteristic of their culture is the Code of the Dragon, a collection of tenets scored into the runic tablets by the first Dragon Kings, passed down through the ages by the masters of the Great Clans, to be seared into the heart of every young warrior. The original tablets are kept in the Forbidden City, warded over by holy warriors, and

every clan honors its collection of scrolls recording the Code. While other races might aspire to rigorous codes of honor, a dragonborn's life is determined by his relationship to the Code of the Dragon.

Finally, his clan defines each dragonborn hero. To some, it is a point of pride, to others, a shackle to be escaped, but even those that have forsaken kith and kin cannot escape the spirits of their ancestors.

Above all, honor to one's self and one's clan is paramount, for when the last dragonborn dies, all that will remain of their kind are tales of greatness. Even rebels and exiles judge themselves by impossible standards. Indeed, often, it is outcasts that flaunt death with the greatest abandon, driven to burn their own names and deeds into the sacred register of the Forbidden City.

## CODE OF THE DRAGON

**Universal** to both the Northland and Southland clans, the tenets of the dragonborn are as fixed and unmoving as the mountainous highlands that birthed their race. The Code of the Dragon is the keystone of dragonborn culture, curbing and directing the chaotic passions that would otherwise rule the elemental dragonborn.

While warriors judge themselves by the same standards set by the Dragon Kings, in practice, each clan has its own definition of honor. Does it take more courage to sacrifice yourself in a hopeless battle or to flee – returning to strike the death blow when the time is right? A dragonborn's answer hinges upon his clan of birth.

**Courage:** Fear holds no power over the warrior. To some, this manifests as the embrace of death, freeing the warrior to live life to the fullest. To others, it is the absolute disregard for one's own well-being in the service of a higher good, no matter the consequences. Regardless of the clan, dying in the service of your lord and clan is the highest service any warrior can render.

**Loyalty:** Battle is the truest test of any soul, and a warrior that turns on his brothers is more dangerous than any foe. By extension, no warrior should ever question a command given by his lord. To question an order is akin to hesitating on the field of battle, and any warrior that cannot place absolute faith in his commander is a danger to himself and his allies. Fiercely loyal, the greatest dragonborn heroes were dedicated to a fault.

**Integrity:** A dragonborn's word is better than any oath of fealty, any sacred prayer, or any solemn pledge. There is a saying among other races that while the sun may or may not rise on the 'morrow, a dragonborn will surely live up to his word. Fully aware of their finite lives, dragonborn strive to ensure that every moment is lived in earnestness and unflinching honesty. Epic tragedies are sung of noble warriors that broke their ancestor-oaths – often for love, but sometimes for greed – and of the horrors that befell them.

## THE LAST OF THE WARRIOR KINGS

**Once** there were scores of Great Clans and an untold number of minor clans. The armies of the dragon-blooded rode unchecked across the North, and every spring warlords led their vassals into battle, driving back the wilderness and returning with riches and slaves to support their ceaseless wars of expansion.

Today, only five Great Clans remain in the Northlands, and the Forbidden City's roster of minor clans grows shorter with each passing season. The great fortress-cities stand silent, and the citadels that once defied the world now crumble beneath the unceasing march of time. The time of the last warrior-kings grows short, and the knowledge of this spurs their heroes on to ever-greater deeds. There may come to pass a time when dragonborn no longer tread the Known World, but the stories told of their deeds will live forever.

### CLAN KENGI

*"Defeat yourself, and no foe can stand against you."*

Flying the banner of the solemn kenku, the warriors of Clan Kengi are legendary for their single-minded dedication to the study of the blade. Regarded as sword-saints, these wandering warriors seek mastery of self through the discipline of the blade. Some wander the Known Realms, practicing their skills in defense of the weak, but others will fight for any cause – good or evil – so long the conflict promises worthy opponents.

### CLAN KARKONUS

*"All things fade with time, but the Legion is forever."*

The warriors of Clan Karkonus are renowned for their discipline and nearly undefeatable tactics on the battlefield. Their grand army, the Blackspear

Legion, is perhaps the finest fighting force in the world. Karkonus dragonborn are proud and honorable, but cling tenaciously to their ancient traditions and the fading legacy of their once great clan.

### CLAN DAIGO

*"Death cannot deter me. Good will prevail."*

Flying the banner of the Platinum Dragon, the sons and daughters of Clan Daigo stand watch over the Forbidden City, while their champions roam the Known Realms. The clan has no living bloodlines; instead, each member of the clan is handpicked from the finest, most virtuous warriors of the other clans. These champions forswear their old families and friends, taking the name of deceased clan heroes for their own. Paragons of honor, whose lives have no value save what they can offer up in the service of good, the scions of Clan Daigo are responsible for the bulk of the ballads sung of dragonborn heroes. Consequently, the most infamous of villains also hail from the ranks of this noble clan. The dread dragonborn anti-paladins, thralls of infernal powers, were all once heroes of Clan Daigo.

### CLAN ARATOS

*"The spirits of a thousand ancestors guide my blade."*

All dragonborn look on their ancestors for strength, but only the warcasters of the Aratos clan fight beside the spirits of the dead. Bizarre mystics and unnerving mediums, these dragonborn walk with one foot in the material world and one in the world of the spirit. Sometimes mistaken for crude necromancers, nothing could be further from the truth, as the Aratos don't regard their ancestors as truly dead. Instead, the spirits of their kin inhabit the world around them, offering omens, signs, and, sometimes, direct assistance to their living brethren. The occult truths of Aratos are concealed behind elaborate rites of passage, in which initiates forswear ever breaking the clan's cloak of secrecy. This secrecy is needed, say the dragonborn, to protect those foolish enough to dabble lightly in the ancient magic used to contact the sacred spirits of the dead.

## **CLAN SATICAR**

*"Hide in the shadows of your fallen fathers. I choose to walk in the sun."*

Flying the banner of the raven, Clan Saticar is composed of the exiles and outcasts of the Great Clans and the desperate scions of the minor clans. United in their disdain for tradition and honor, the dragonborn of Clan Saticar take pride in their individual strengths and the renunciation of all that the other clans hold dear. Unpredictable and capricious, these dragonborn are as varied as their reasons for exile. Though commonly reviled as villains, not all of the clansfolk are wicked. Many that begin simply living their lives as rebels and exiles are driven to evil by the scorn of their kinsfolk.

## **THE SOUTHLAND CLANS**

**Reigning** in the lost lands far to the south and west, the three clans of Durisshk, Kthonan, and Maahksarith are all that remain of the great kingdoms that once thrived on the borderlands of the empire. The Southland Clans have lived for centuries in isolation, freeing them from the cultural hegemony that dominates so much of the North.

### **CLAN DURISSHK**

*"Ours is a vigil of unrelenting ice, as old as all the ages of this world."*

A blue-white phoenix adorns the banner of Clan Durisshk, though the peace-loving dragonborn are loath to raise it for war. Known as mystic knights who guard the secrets of the great Dragon Kings themselves, these spiritual warriors work to bring peace to a world rife with bloodshed and warfare. Some descend from their cold mountain homes to bring their legendary vigilance to foreign lands with spells, blades, or prayers of ice.

### **CLAN KTHONAN**

*"Though we walk beneath your open sky, we are destined for a deeper realm."*

A tarnished copper dragon adorns the seldom-seen banner of Clan Kthonan, whose vagabond families endlessly wander the roads and wilds of the Known Realms. Considered gypsies and eccentric lorekeepers, these homeless "lairseekers" are, in fact, devoted pilgrims searching the world over for signs of the mythic Sanctum Draconic. Many lend their services as dungeoneers and subterranean guides,

but all of them scout the ruins and caves for the true home of all dragonkind.

### **CLAN MAAHKSARITH**

*"The Reign of Dragons will come again, and we are its harbingers."*

Raising their banner of a fiendish wyvern only upon conquest, the marauders and demon-wed warlocks of Clan Maahksarith are feared for their cunning traps and cabalistic pacts. Regarded among seamen as marine-dwelling pirates who merely hoard wealth like their legendary forebears, these black-scaled dragonborn actually seek to purge their race of the weaknesses that brought down the original empire. Some travel abroad for the acquisition of magic weaponry, while others seek to warn the other clans of Maahksarith ambition.

## **THE MINOR CLANS**

**While** the overwhelming majority of dragonborn belong to one of the eight Great Clans, some heroes hail from minor clans – family lines that were elevated to clan status through great deeds in the distant past. Each has the right to fly its own war banner, lay claim to new realms, and place their dead in the Forbidden City.

Without exception, every minor clan has only a dozen or fewer living members. Many have only one heir: the last of a line. While all dragonborn are driven to acts of heroism, the single-minded obsession of the Minor Clans knows no equal. Every adventure could be their last, every battle their final moment of glory. The scions of the Minor Clans lead grim, determined lives, knowing that if their clans are to live on in the annals of history, it is their deeds that must be worthy of the telling.



# CHAPTER 1: CULTURE AND HISTORY OF THE NORTHCLANS

**The dragonborn** have a rich culture dating back hundreds of centuries. Ancient traditions and rites permeate their lives, and each dragonborn considers himself a living testament to his family, clan, and race. When rogue dragonborn break with their clans, more often than not, their rebellion is born out of a refusal to accept the filial and racial responsibilities their heritage demands of them.

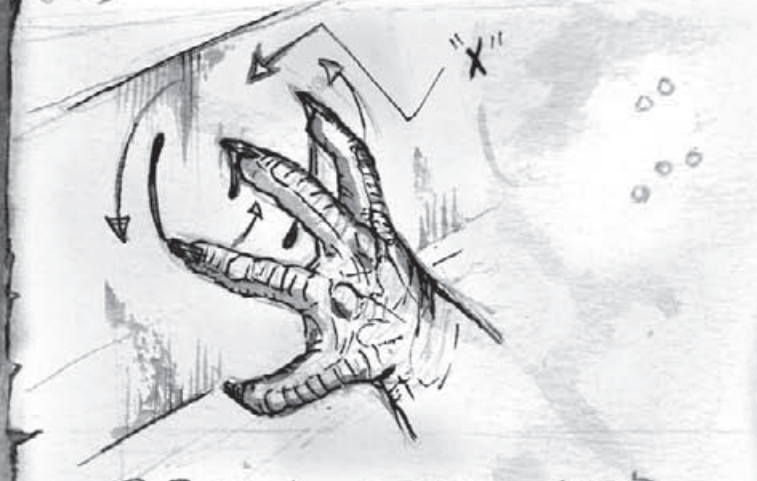
To the uninitiated, the clans' reverence for the past and their ancestors borders on idolatry. Dead heroes and old practices are held in high regard, forcing present day dragonborn to strive in all they do. To non-dragonborn, this questing after impossible ideals seems a foolish waste, but, to the dragonborn, it is the foundation of their entire culture. The sons and daughters of the dragon see little point in attempting something that be accomplished easily. Given a finite life, a hero should always strive for the impossible.

It is no coincidence, then, that in song and ballad, dragonborn are regaled as the race of heroes. This epithet is born out more in taverns and alehouses than in real life, but it is founded in the kernel of truth that rests at the heart of dragonborn culture.

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L	𐄂	U	𐄂	5	𐄂
M	𐄂	Y	𐄂	6	𐄂
N	𐄂	CH	𐄂	7	𐄂
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## THE AKEYASHIK TABLETS (RECORD OF SOULS)

1

The history of the dragonborn race is scrawled into series of enormous stone tablets. Arranged as a maze, sealed behind guard and ward in the Forbidden Palace, the tablets represent a living history of the race. Dedicated scribes add to the tablets, recording deaths, births, and momentous events, and ensuring that the legends of their people will exist long after the last dragonborn has fallen in battle.

Each clan maintains a collection of scrolls taken from the slabs. Moreover, while each clan regards its own selection of scrolls as superior, no single collection accounts for all the tablets and, thus, there is no single canonical iteration of racial history. To further muddle matters, timelines overlap and scribes contradict one another time and again. Dragonborn scholars accept each scribe as the absolute authority of his or her tale. Thus, even though two tablets, both equally ancient, might cite different victors in a battle, both are regarded as absolute, incontrovertible fact. This creates a confusing web of events that causes no end of frustration to non-dragonborn sages and scholars. The dragonborn, however, see no difficulty whatsoever and often cite examples demonstrating the veracity of two contradictory tablets.

Following, then, are excerpts of tablets that are regarded by non-dragonborn to record events that are crucial to understanding the history of the dragonborn race. While the tales are not free of contradictions, they are generally accepted as providing relatively accurate and objective histories.

## THE CREATION OF THE DRAGONBORN

— *As faithfully recorded in the eighty-first year of the reign of his Golden Eminence*

**And so it came to pass**, O' Mighty Lords, that the dragons sought a boon of their mighty kings. Wyrms and drake united, until so great was their number that they darkened the skies. Alighting upon the Vault of the Dragon Kings, they were granted an audience with their masters.

Recixnous the Tombbrood was the first to seek an audience. "O' masters," the black wyrm hissed, "the gods have fashioned elves in the likeness of their favored daughter, but who have we in our likeness, to worship our majesty, and offer up sacrifices to our altars?"

And the Dragon Kings denied the black wyrm's boon, saying, "The gods alone are to be worshipped. You reach too high."

Valinos Sintillos spoke next. "O' masters," the silver drake spoke, "surely it has not escaped your notice that the gods have fashioned the dwarves in the shape of their most industrious son. But who have we in our likeness, to tally our hordes and count our riches?"

The Dragon Kings denied the drake's boon, speaking, "What drake or wyrm does not know every coin and gem of his horde? If you have too much to count than you should, instead, count yourself blessed."

Aurum the Great, spoke next. "O' masters," the gold drake thundered, "witness man, weaker than his peers, yet triumphant above all others. Who have we in our likeness, to stride across the mountain, plains and forests, claiming kingdoms in our glory?"

The Dragon Kings shook their heads sadly. "Nothing we might create, even in your likeness, can take the place of the gods' chosen ones."

Their arguments spent, the great drakes and wyrms retired from the great throne room, until only Ember the Hateful remained.

"O' masters," the red wyrm whispered, "witness the champions of elf, man, and dwarf who will challenge our rule and lay claim to our hordes. Who have we in our likeness, to drive them fleeing into the night and lay waste to their armies with our fury?"

The Dragon Kings were silenced. And after a time they finally spoke. "You are wise, red wyrm, for it is right for dragons to be feared."

And thus the dragonkin were born. And it was declared that so long as no dragonborn draw the blood of the dragon, their reign would know no end. The dragons would rule as kings of the world, the dragonborn their princes of the world, and all should fear them in the knowing.

## THE BIRTH OF THE CULT APOPHIS & THE AUTUMN TURNING

*-as faithfully recorded in the seventeenth year of the reign of the Argent Serpent*

**So it came to pass** that even as the mighty empire of our people stretched from shore to shore, from glacier to desert, so too did our great masters, the Dragon Kings, retire to their mountain vault. Like a mother thrush urging her chicks from the nest, the once omnipresent titans of Dragonkind left us to find our own way in the world.

But what a glorious world. The Free Companies of the Karkonus were unchallenged on the field of battle, heroes of the Kengi ranged far and wide championing the cause of good, and the sages of Clan Aratos tutored us all in the wisdom of the ancients.

Ever ambitious, we sent our younglings across the great ocean. They returned with treasures – gold, gems, and creatures the likes of which had never been seen before – as tribute to our dragon masters and the indomitable empire that knew no bounds.

But the sea was vast, and whole years would pass without word from our distant cousins. From that silence rose an evil that would one day herald the end of us all.

Lanthorn the White was an unmatched duelist hailing from the folk of Clan Kengi. His haichito flashed quicker than lightning and just as deadly. Seeking the gold and glory of the new world, he rallied a company of kinsfolk and set across the ocean in search of high adventure. Their mighty ship danced across the waves, and it sailed out of sight of the mainland, none could doubt that Lanthorn would soon return triumphant.

As it happened to pass, a young gold dragon was attempting the same passage. Driven from its lair by a red wyrm, the dragon was weak and wounded, its gullet laden with gold and jewels. Unable to

remain aloft and too weak to swim the great ocean, the dragon alighted atop ship's main mast. Waves crashed o'er the ship's deck, the hold took on water, and within moments, the ship was in danger of sinking.

"Great Master," Lanthorn shouted, scaling the mast. "You cannot rest here! Our ship will sink!"

"Loyal princelings," the dragon spoke through a torn throat, "I do not seek to bring you harm, but today you must give your lives for mine."

Though it pained his honor, Lanthorn begged the dragon, "You may have my life, but not those of my people!"

The wyrm turned a single blooded eye towards Lanthorn, then looked away. "Begone, little one."

A rage filled the dragonborn and Lanthorn's flashing blade cut the sky. The dragon's gullet split open, raining an emperor's ransom of gold and jewels onto the deck. The dragon roared and beat its ragged wings. But, even as it took to the skies, Lanthorn scrambled up the last of the mast, his haichito flashing. The searing blood of the drake showered down over Lanthorn, burning his scales black. Lanthorn struck one last time and the gold dragon fell backwards, pitching beneath the lapping blue waves.

Lanthorn's companions watched on in horror. Never before had a dragonborn dared rise up against a dragon, let alone draw its blood. As Lanthorn descended from the mast, the truth of his terrible deed settled over them. A prince had slain a king; the ancient pact was broken, and nothing could be done to restore it.

Fearing dishonor, the other dragonborn drove their jatos deep into their bellies before stepping off the deck into the ocean. In the end, only Lanthorn and three kinsfolk remained.

Torn by anguish, Lanthorn spat at the companions. "Will you not also kill yourselves? My sin was great, but I did it for the good of you."

"'Tis not a sin," the first spake. "The pact is broken, yet we still live." Thus was born the first principle.

"'Tis not a sin," the second spake. "The pact is broken, yet we are wealthy beyond imagining." Thus was born the second principle.

"'Tis not a sin," the last spake. "The pact is broken, yet your blade is no less keen." Thus was born the last principle.

Joining blades over the seething blood of the gold dragon, the four swore never to again abide by the Code of the Dragon, and thus the Cult of Apophis was born, heralding the end of the dragonborn's reign in the north.

## THE BIRTH OF THE TIEFLING & THE BLOOD WARS

– *As faithfully recorded in the two hundredth and seventy-first year of the reign of the Ashen Master of the West*

1

**And so it came to pass**, O' Mighty Kings, that the Priest-Kings of Nimoria rose from the chaos of the warring tribes to form a nation of unbridled ambition. Having put down all threats, the Nimorians warred against themselves, each Priest-King striving to become the sole emperor of his land.

Seeking to undo their brethren, the Priest-Kings struck foul bargains with infernal powers, selling their souls to devils and worse. Thus the race of the tiefling was born, sprung from the unholy pairing of man and devil. Unleashed upon the Known Realms, armies of devils clashed against armies of men. Wherever the demon blood was spilled, the land died, and soon the verdant lands of Nimoria were naught but seething wastes.

Chief among the Priest-Kings was the dread lord Ktho-Raxis. Though stronger than any one challenger, he lacked the strength to reign over the combined forces of his foes. Seeking to end the bitter stalemate, Ktho-Raxis sought a secret audience with Prius the Blood Spear, captain of one of the 10 free companies of Clan Karkonus. Ktho-Raxis played to the dragonborn's own ambition, promising Prius a kingdom and a ransom in gold in return for the service of his soldiers.

Questing for greater triumphs, Prius accepted the Priest-King's offer, marching south into Nimoria with his company of heroes. In addition, whereas the legions of devils had triumphed when they fought against the chaotic mobs of the Nimorian tribesmen, they shattered against the Karkonus phalanxes. Prius' army drove to the heart of Nimoria: a cold iron spear driven into the heart of the devil-worshippers.

However, Prius' war did not go unnoticed. The other captains saw the success of their fellow and called a congress of the Free Companies. It is said that some were envious of Prius' success, while others reviled him for ordering noble dragonborn to fight alongside devils and worse. Regardless of their individual motivations, the congress of Karkonus spoke with a single voice: Prius and his kin were declared parakthus, and their lives were forfeit. The united forces of the Karkonus marched on their brothers, intent on cleansing the stain on their clan's honor.

What followed, O' Lords, was a slaughter the likes of which the dragonborn have never known and, gods

willing, will never see again. Karkonus stood against Karkonus, and nearly invulnerable phalanxes ground one another to a halt. Dragonborn scholars reasoned that the combined forces of Clan Karkonus would bring a swift end to Prius and his rebels, but the Priest-King Ktho-Raxis, fearful of losing his sole ally in the Nimorian wars, came to the aid of the rebels, unleashing terrible spells and flights of devils upon the forced of Clan Karkonus.

After months of maneuvering and minor battles, the forces of Prius and Ktho-Raxis met the armies of Clan Karkonus in the shadow of the Ul Dominor Mountains. What followed would be known as the Summer of Spears. When, at last, autumn came to the foothills, the united forces of Karkonus had triumphed, but at a terrible cost: of every 10 Karkonus, only one lived to tell the tale.

On the return march home, the surviving members of Clan Karkonus were horrified to learn the true cost of their war. In their absence, the dread Apophis had raised an army of cultists that fell upon the Forbidden City. The folk of Clan Daigo gave their lives in the battle as a tragic rearguard, buying the city's people the chance to flee, but at great cost to themselves.

The returning Karkonus, seeing the Forbidden City aflame, fell upon the cultists of Apophis like starving wolves. For the Daigo, it was already too late – not a single member of the great clan had survived.

It took nearly 500 years for the Karkonus to rebuild their forces, but the slaughter of the Daigo and the terrible attrition of the Karkonus marked a turning point for the race. No longer would the empire of the dragonborn dream of ruling the Northlands. Instead, their people turned inward, nevermore to seek conquest.

## A DRAGONBORN'S LIFE

**While dragonborn** – like any race – hail from a variety of circumstances, their reverence of the past lends a certain homogeneity that extends across clans and lands. This familiarity, despite differences of status or prestige, is a common comfort and reassuring touchstone in an ever-changing world. Dragonborn who might otherwise be bitter enemies find solace with one another when encountered far from their homelands. The formal name for this is hagi tak. There are not words in the Common tongue for a direct translation, but the phrase equates to the concept that “Against a foreign foe, the familiar enemy is my ally.”

## BORN IN BATTLE

**The hatching** of any dragonborn is cause for great celebration. The eldest dragonborn attending the birth is responsible for giving the hatchling its birth-name, usually a reference to some aspect of nature or the day of the dragonborn's birth. When there are sufficient warriors present, the hatching is accompanied by vicious raids on nearby foes (though sometimes the celebrating raiders are less than particular about who they determine to be “foes”).

The raiders return with bloody trophies to offer to the hatchling. When raiders fail to return from the Red Hunt with trophies, it is considered an ill omen for the child; whereas trophies taken from powerful foes are said to herald a life of heroism. The mother chooses the most worthy trophy (a great honor to the raider) and marks her infant's face with the blood of the slain. The trophy (usually a horn or piece of bone) is then given to a sword smith.

The smith forges a special blade for the child, incorporating the birth trophy (typically in the pommel or set into the blade). The forging of this weapon is a sacred act replete with ritual and ceremony. The finished blade, called a jato (or little fang), resembles a heavy fighting dagger and is presented to the dragonborn in his twelfth year of life during a grand ceremony marking the dragonborn's ascension into adulthood.

The dragonborn's youth is a carefree one, with little responsibility placed upon the child. The children pass their days playing at war games and raiding, and they pass their evenings seated around their elders as they recount the history of the clans. This informal education is derided as wasted years by some races, but it suits the dragonborn perfectly; the youth spend their days living the epic tales, ensuring that seeds of heroism take root in the clan's children.

## APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING

**Upon receipt** of his jato, a dragonborn is an adult under dragonborn law. The dragonborn surrenders his birth-name and takes the name that he will be known by for the remainder of his years. (Close family members and childhood friends might still refer to the birth-name, but it is a mortal insult for others to assume this familiarity.)

Having put his childish days behind him, the dragonborn now takes up his formal study. Depending on the clan, this can be a simple, stern affair, like that of the Karkonus accepting an initiate spear brother; cause for a great celebration, like that of the Kengi sword-schools accepting a new class; or mysterious, like the Daigo, accepting the “death” of another clan's hero to swell their ranks. The dragonborn's sponsoring clan begs a boon of the master; if the master accepts the student, the clan is in the master's debt, and the apprentice, an indentured servant.

The next several years of the dragonborn's life are filled with ceaseless training, beginning with menial tasks designed to humble the prideful youth. This can be an arduous transformation, sometimes taking years, but once the dragonborn relinquishes his personal ego and accepts the master's primacy, the real training can begin. The apprentice is drilled mercilessly and is expected to be on his guard at all times, day or night. Woe to the sleeping apprentice that allows himself to be surprised.

For the masters, the merciless testing is not simply a matter of pride. By taking on a student, the master becomes responsible for his student's life – the harder the master drills his pupils, the better chance they have of surviving in the dangerous world. Dragonborn lore is filled with cautionary tales of masters that cared for their students and were kind in their lessons. In these stories, the students die quickly once exposed to the harsh realities

of the world. Thus, while many tutors come to care for the students entrusted to them, all are careful never to show their affection or allow it to pollute their teachings.

Depending on the school and the master, this period of apprenticeship can be as short as three years or as long as the master demands. But there always comes a time when the master has no more he can pass on to the student, or, more correctly, no more he can pass on to a student without worldly experience. The teacher grants his student the title of master and sends him out into the world. Like the dragonborn's acceptance into the school, this graduation can be very elaborate or very Spartan, depending on the clan and the tradition of the school.

Upon his master's commendation (literally, fulfillment of his debt to his master), the dragonborn becomes a freeman once more. As his last act as master, the teacher presents his student with a weapon specially forged for the dragonborn. Regardless of actual size or weapon type, this weapon is known as the dragonborn's haichito (or great fang). Armed with his haichito (representing the dragonborn's schooling) and jato (representing the dragonborn's birthright), the nascent hero is, at last, prepared to enter the world.

## CULTURE

**Great Fang and Little Fang:** Over the course of his life, a dragonborn will likely wield many different weapons. A warrior's haichito will change many times; a warrior might earn the right to carry his clan's sacred blade, be awarded a weapon in recognition of his heroic services, or even discover an ancient, magical weapon in a long lost treasure hoard. The dragonborn's jato, however, remains as fixed and unchanging as the North Star – a mark of his heritage. Together, the two blades symbolize the idealized dragonborn warrior: rooted in the honorable traditions of the past, yet armed with the skills needed to meet an ever changing, chaotic world.

It is often believed that a master smith places a portion of his soul in each of his creations. Legendary haichito are assumed to have personalities and spirits matching those of their creators and previous wielders. Non-dragonborn often mistake this for sentience in the vein of wisecracking longswords that refuse to obey their wielder, but a dragonborn

would be appalled by any such weapon. (Taking another's life, the express intent of a sword, is never something done lightly or with humor, except by the most vile and wicked of dragonborn villains.) Rather, these legendary weapons possess the personality traits of their creators. A legendary sword might be regarded as bloodthirsty, cruel, or just.

A nicked or scarred haichito reflects poorly on the dragonborn's commitment to discipline. Similarly, if a jato is allowed to become rusted, it indicates a dragonborn's failure to honor his past. Conversely, when a rebellious dragonborn defies his clan, his first act is to break his jato in two.

**On Love and Marriage:** With perhaps fewer than a dozen generations remaining, marriage between dragonborn takes on an importance that can be daunting to even the most courageous of heroes. All marriages are arranged by clan elders and are often political in nature. A minor clan can secure a place for itself by wedding its fortunes with one of the Great Clans; similarly, oftentimes warring clans can only achieve peace through the marriage of their scions.

Love has little to do with these marriages. And while it is accepted that a dragonborn might chance to fall in love outside of the clan's arranged marriage, it is understood that a dragonborn's spouse – and, by proxy, her clan – must always come first.

Dragonborn myth is replete with cautionary tales of romance gone awry. Popular among nobility, these fables reinforce the belief that love born of passion rather than duty must always end in tragedy.

**Garb:** Traditional dress varies according to geographic region, but, in general, dragonborn clothing tends towards the austere and functional. Demure earth tones prevail, with restrained patterns for use during celebrations. This stands in radical contrast to dragonborn armor, which often incorporates dramatic colors and unique designs intended to draw the attention of the enemy. Like battle standards (see below), a warrior's armor should ensure that a warrior can be recognized by his foes through the haze of battle.

**Standards:** Perpetually intent on earning martial honor, dragonborn never go to war without their battle standards. Whether simple or elaborate, each standard is designed to announce a warrior's rank, family and clan, so that enemies can recognize their foes and seek them out in battle. By carrying a standard, a dragonborn singles himself out as a target, thereby declaring disdain and contempt for his foes.

Battle standards tend to fall into two broad categories: company and champion. Company standards stand between 9 and 15 feet in height and represent an entire company or band of warriors. (Sometimes bands of dragonborn brigands, rogues otherwise devoid of honor, still insist on carrying a standard). In battle, it is the goal of every dragonborn to capture his foes' banners, so the duty of carrying one's standard into battle is an honor second only to that held by those chosen to defend the standard-bearer.

Champion standards are smaller and designed to be worn by mounted heroes. These standards can be strapped to the rider's back or carried, like an adorned spear or vexilloid. Champion standards can never be bought, but only earned as rewards for exceptional valor on the battlefield. In rare instances, the sole survivor of a defeated band may take up the company's standard as his own, but these grim soldiers seldom have the will to carry on after the slaughter of their friends and family.

Both sorts of standards are typically adorned with trophies taken from vanquished foes. Grisly companies hang their standards with skulls, fangs, and hides, whereas the more refined dragonborn simply stitch or dye an emblem of the defeated foe. (Insulting a band's banner by questioning the truth of their defeated foes is an affront on par with spitting in a dragonborn's face.)

Standards of either sort are woefully unsuited for most dungeon exploration, and so explorers seldom bear standards. Veteran champions stow their banners by rolling them up inside large leather tubes designed specifically for this purpose.

**On Defeat:** To slay a dragonborn, it is not enough to feather him with arrows, split his gut with a blade, or strike him down with eldritch fire. Legends tell of mythic warriors that struck a flurry of blows even as they fell dead, and it is common for dragonborn masters to drill their students until every strike and defense is unconscious so that – even once beheaded – a dragonborn warrior might still strike one last blow. The heart of a warrior is the center of his being and is neither mental nor physical. True warriors move from this place of spirit, immune to the temporal threats that deter less determined soldiers.

Death in pursuit of one's goal does not equate to defeat. This accords dragonborn a great deal of security, for so long as a dragonborn does his utmost, he can be neither defeated nor shamed.

Stopping short of death or success, however, is regarded as a terrible dishonor. Other dragonborn often choose to ignore a defeated warrior. To his own family and kith, it is as if the defeated warrior

is invisible or simply doesn't exist. They continue to go on about their daily lives in complete disregard of the defeated warrior in their midst. A few days or weeks of this treatment are often all that any dragonborn can tolerate before returning to the field and attempting to win back his honor so that he can return home. Those dragonborn that cannot muster the courage to regain their honor often become de facto exiles, taking up with Clan Saticor.

**The Forbidden City:** Once the summer court of the reigning dragonborn emperor and his retinue, the Forbidden City now serves two functions: as a library, recording the history of the dragonborn race, and as a necropolis, where members of the great and minor clans are buried with honor.

The city was nearly destroyed during the Blood Wars, when the army of Apophis – composed of evil dragons and cultists – overran the city walls and set fire to its ancient palaces. Clan Daigo succeeded in delaying the invading force long enough for the citizens to escape the city, but every member of the clan died in the rearguard action, earning the clan a place in the immortal annals of dragonborn history.

In the centuries since, the city has remained largely in ruin, though with the decline of the race's fortunes, the city's necropolis has grown exponentially. The Daigo maintain each of the other clan's mausoleums, with shrines honoring their ancestors and fallen heroes. A typical shrine is composed of a simple stone idol, the dragonborn's jato, and a series of candles lit in honor of the dead dragonborn.

The Forbidden City is also home to the Record of Souls – a living compendium of the history, myths, and legends of the dragonborn race. The annals are scored into hundreds of stone monoliths. Clan sages make copies of the records by laying sheets of parchment over the panels and then lightly use their breath weapons on the sheets, leaving a relief on the sheet. Each of the clans maintains a collection of scrolls from the Record of Souls, but no clan can claim to own a collection recording every panel in the city.

The city is watched over by the members of the Daigo clan. Respecting the city's sacred grounds, the clan makes their home atop the high walls and ruined towers. It is said that when the last scions of the Great Clans have fallen in battle, and the last solemn procession marches down the city's solemn halls, the surviving Daigo will draw closed the gates of the Forbidden City one last time. The great gates will be barred, the final enchantments cast, and the Forbidden City will vanish from the Known Realms. Just where the city will be taken once the

last dragonborn has passed through its gates is unknown to all but the Daigo.

**The Cult of Apophis:** Born from the disciples of Lanthorn the Black, the cult of Apophis is a cancer that has eaten its way into the very heart of dragonborn culture. Though reviled by nearly every clan and hunted to extinction wherever its disciples are uncovered, the cult continues to spread.

At their worst, the cultists of Apophis are outright demon worshippers, offering up unholy blood sacrifices to the Father of All Monsters. But these true thralls are few and far between. Instead, many work the will of the cult without ever knowing that their seemingly harmless choices undermine the very foundation of dragonborn society.

The cult recruits by appealing to a dragonborn's drive for greatness. Publicly, the cult aims at restoring the dragonborn to their former glory by doing away with the slavish adherence to the Code of the Dragon. In the Code's place, the cult offers three simple aims: survival, wealth, and martial prowess – at any cost. Through attaining these goals, the cult avows, the dragonborn people will return to their former greatness and retake their rightful place as rulers of the Known World.

The cult works by offering its devotees a future to match the race's romanticized past. All the cult asks in return is that its followers give up the archaic and outdated code of honor that has kept the race in thrall for so long.

Of course, Apophis' true aims have nothing to do with returning the dragonborn to power. The Father of All Monsters aims to bring the dragonborn into true subservience as soldiers of his demonic army, but this can never be accomplished so long as the race holds true to the tenets of the Code of the Dragon. This goal is far from completion, but every time a dragonborn shirks his duties, no matter how slight, or twists the spirit of the Code to his own ends, the demon Apophis inches closer to success.

The cult can take on many forms. In cities, it is the linchpin behind cabals of dragonborn merchants, eager to make a quick copper piece, no matter the scheme. On the battlefield, it is the fierce lieutenant who disregards honor in favor of bloodless victory. And in the borderlands and ruins of the world, it is the explorer who casts aside the old ways to emerge triumphant, no matter the cost.



## CHAPTER 2: THE NORTHCLANS

### CLAN KENGI

*The two warriors faced each other across the dusty city gate. Flies buzzed in the dying heat of the day, settling on the remnants of bruised fruit and smoked fish. All around the pair, the dirty crowd sweated in silence, scarcely daring to breathe.*

*Donar eased back, shifting his stance. Before his opponent could respond, he lunged forward with a deafening war cry, his wooden sword hissing through the thick air.*

*Azibo's practice sword flicked out, brushing his opponent's neck as lightly as a dragonfly. An instant later, the Donar's sword cracked home on his ribs, splintering the thick boken. Azibo saluted his opponent, wincing slightly with each breath.*

*Donar laughed aloud, holding the broken blade aloft to the applauding crowd. As Azibo turned to leave, the larger dragonborn called out, "Let that be a lesson to you, young one. Learn it well, lest I run out of sticks!"*

*Azibo turned back. "My blow struck first," he said, plainly.*

*Donar tossed aside the splintered boken and drew his bastard sword from over his shoulder. "I have stood atop the gates of Al'haznar and turned back a horde of orcs. I have ridden through the Great Swamp and slain a trio of ogres with naught but this blade. I have weathered the flames of dragonfire and lived to tell the tale. And I say I have won."*

*The crowd grew silent once more, as the smaller dragonborn walked back to the center of the square. Donar settled into his stance, bastard sword raised high.*

*Azibo never broke his stride. Before the crowd could complete the circle, his paired blades appeared in his hands, darting like silver fish through sun-dappled water. Once, orange in the dying sun, then red in Donar's blood.*

*The large dragonborn crashed to the dusty ground, blade falling from his lifeless hand, and Azibo turned his boots towards the city gate.*

While the Daigo produce far more noble heroes, and Karkonus warriors are uncontested on the field of battle, the finest dragonborn swordsmen have always hailed from Clan Kengi. Dedicating their days to the exclusive practice of their chosen weapon, Kengi warriors view the study of the blade as a path to enlightenment; through mastery the blade – a discipline worthy of a thousand lifetimes – they acquire mastery of all things.

A passionate, fierce people, every dragonborn is his own greatest enemy; each waking moment is spent warring with his passions and fleeting desires. Similarly, a swordsman's mind is a distraction to be tamed. A Kengi's chosen blade is a masterpiece of craftsmanship, capable of taking life with a single blow. It is the task of the swordsman to improve himself to provide a match for the blade. Once a duel is begun, a swordsman's mind should simply be as a disinterested observer, with neither intellect nor fear rising to interfere with the Kengi's training. His aim is to become a perfect extension of his weapon; if this is achieved, then the outcome of the battle is inconsequential – the dragonborn has already triumphed.

This single-minded dedication is founded upon the self-discipline only found in solitude. Many of the finest Kengi swordsmen sojourn in the wilderness, pitting their skills against the beasts of the uncaring wilds, before returning to civilized lands. These wild swordsmen, dirty and uncouth in the eyes of their more cultivated brethren, are matchless with the blade and eager to test their skill before any challenger.

The dedication cultivated by the Kengi stands above simple morality. Many masters forgo all social mores to live unfettered lives, discarding the niceties of good or lawfulness for the goal of self-perfection. Yet, many, too, are the Kengi heroes that travel the world, using their blades to right wrongs and defend the weak. When champions of these two schools cross paths, the duels are tests of belief and will as much as skill.



Legend holds that the clan descends from a headstrong warrior named Tsogi, who was left for dead on the battlefield after his tribe was slaughtered by a marauding band of ogres and giants. Crawling off the battlefield, Tsogi sought shelter inside a small cave. There he was discovered by a wandering kenku who nursed the dragonborn back to health and taught him the way of the sword. Through his single-minded focus on mastery of the blade, Tsogi discovered that his own headstrong passions lessened. More accurately, he learned to put his passions to work for him, instead of against him. Tsogi took the name of Kengi, and ventured out into the world to test his newfound skills against any rival. In short order, a school of followers formed around the sword master. Leading his disciples into the wilderness, Kengi won lands, riches, and a mountain fastness from the same giants that had slaughtered his tribe.

To this day, the elders of Clan Kengi make their home in the high mountain fortress, welcoming all who would come to test their skills. Kengi spend their lives perfecting their strength of will, a challenge for any dragonborn. To those they deem worthy, they offer this simple philosophy: By taming the mind and defeating fear, a dragonborn becomes one with his blade – the ideal swordsman. Nothing but the dragonborn himself can interfere with this end, and once freed of worldly distractions, the dragonborn can press through to achieve martial perfection.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The Kengis'** interpretation of the Code of the Dragon places an emphasis on discipline and self-reliance. Those unfortunate souls that must rely on the generosity of others for their wellbeing do not deserve the title of warrior. Only by testing oneself against the world – alone – can one know the true mettle of a master.

**Courage:** The reckless Kengi are often regarded as one of the most courageous of the clans, second only to the Daigo. Kengi dispute this, believing that if a warrior needs to draw on courage to overcome his fear, he has already lost the battle. Conversely, a swordsman who has mastered his fear of death has no need of courage. As a sword has no fear of battle, nor should the warrior who wields it.

**Integrity:** Though predisposed to neither good nor evil, a Kengi's soul is echoed in his sword, and any oath uttered over his blade is sacred. It is said that a Kengi's worth and integrity can be measured by the condition of his jato. A scarred, nicked, or rusted blade indicates a flawed dragonborn, whereas a jato polished to a razor's edge reflects the soul of dedicated warrior.

**Loyalty:** Of the tenets set down by the Dragon Kings, the question of the Kengis' loyalty is the most disputed by other clans. The Kengi need only point to their doggedly devoted sword saints as

evidence, but Daigo scholars are quick to note the many instances when Kengi champions traded sides in the heat of a conflict. The truth is that Kengi are unflaggingly loyal to the matters that concern them and disregard everything else as fleeting and spurious wastes of their finite lives.

### Organization

The Kengi are born into families typically led by a matriarch or patriarch with unquestioned rule over all his or her descendents. However, a Kengi disagreeing with the elder's rule is free at any opportunity to leave the clan holdfast, and many do in their early years. While freedom and self-determination are prized, there is no tolerance for disrespect towards the family's elders, and an elder's goodwill is essential to any Kengi hoping to study under a skilled teacher.

Even more important to the destiny of any Kengi than his birth family is the master responsible for his training. The more successful and respected masters organize their pupils into schools, sometimes establishing small fortresses or holdings for this purpose. Entrance into the most prestigious schools is a daunting challenge; an aspirant must come with an endorsement from his family, no small sum of wealth to offer as a gift to the school's master, and the talent necessary to pass the master's tests. While the gift of wealth is essential, few are the schools willing to take bribes in return for accepting talentless pupils.

For every school of swordsmanship or wizardry, there is a lone master wandering in exile. While studying beneath a lone master seldom wins the student much prestige, few dragonborn would slight such a student's skill with the blade.

Following is a list of some of the most prominent schools and masters:

- **Krivikage Warrior School:** Among the oldest of the traditional duelist schools, the Krivikage masters teach from a lonely mountain citadel high in the UI Dominor mountains. Theirs is a school rich with tradition and ritual, extending back thousands of years, and the library of scrolls maintained by the school's monks is unmatched in its lore of the art of the sword. The school is led by Master Balascann, better known as the Scarred Master for the hundreds of scars criss-crossing his scales from decades of dueling.
- **Torenth the Black:** Once a tutor in a prestigious fencing school, this dragonborn was exiled for his radical fighting techniques. Now he wanders the Northlands, a mendicant and vagabond, rarely deigning to take apprentices. His aged form conceals a brilliant mind, and he is a master of the deadly heavy weapon style.
- **Master Cothsolan:** A legend among Kengi sword masters, Master Cothsolan is the kenku responsible – according to legend – for teaching the first Kengi the principles of the sword. Whether the current kenku using the name is that same creature or simply an heir in a line of mythic tutors is unknown, as few dragonborn have encountered the deadly duelist, and even fewer can claim to have studied beneath him. A master of the twin-blade style, Cothsolan is said to wander in the guise of an aged man of any race; aspirants might know him by his raven-black cloak or his bone handled haichito.

## KENGI ADVENTURERS

**The life** of an adventurer comes naturally to the Kengi. Wandering from adventure to adventure, testing his blade against all challengers – these are things that the Kengi live for. These same attributes can also make them difficult companions. It can be difficult for a Kengi to refrain from challenging every swordsman he comes across. This attitude is tempered somewhat with age, but youthful Kengi, eager to prove their skill, often travel the Known World spoiling for a fight.

Traditionally, Kengi tend towards the martial classes. Fighters and rangers are prominently typical choices, followed by wizards and paladins. Rogues and warlocks are less common, and clerics are almost unheard of.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

##### BLADE SOUL STYLE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Kengi, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Whenever you use an encounter or daily power that has the weapon keyword, you gain a +1 feat bonus your Fortitude, Reflex, and Will defenses until the end of your next turn.

At 11th level, the bonus increases to +2. At 21st level, the bonus increases to +3.

#### *Paragon Tier*

##### STEEL BUTTERFLY STYLE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15, Clan Kengi, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You may add your Dexterity bonus to damage rolls with heavy blade attacks if you move at least half your speed before making the attack.

#### *Epic Tier*

##### WYRM TALON STYLE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Str 15, Clan Kengi, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Whenever you score a critical hit with a heavy blade, the target of your attack takes a penalty to AC equal to 1 + your Strength modifier until the end of the encounter (save ends).

## PARAGON PATH: THE DRAGONSWORD ADEPT

*“Within my blade lies the soul of the dragon-kings.”*

### Prerequisites

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Fighter

**Feat:** Weapon Focus (heavy blade)

Through intense study and martial training, you have unlocked the ancient sword techniques of the Dragon Kings. Blade, breath, and draconic fury are one within each devastating attack you make.

### DRAGONSWORD ADEPT PATH FEATURES

**Dragonsword Action (11th level):** Whenever you spend an action point to take another action, all adjacent enemies take 1d8 points of the same type of damage as your breath weapon. At 21st level, the damage increases to 2d8.

**Fury of the Dragon-Kings (11th level):** You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls against marked targets when you are bloodied. If you have the Dragonborn Frenzy feat, these bonuses increase to +3.

**Dragonsword Critical (16th level):** Whenever you score a critical hit with a heavy blade, you may immediately use your breath weapon as a free action, even if you have already used it in the encounter.

### DRAGONSWORD ADEPT EXPLOITS

#### BLADE OF THE DRAGON-KINGS

Dragonsword Adept  
Attack 11

*Your blade flares to life with elemental power.*

**Encounter** ♦ **Weapon, Acid, Cold, Fire,  
Lightning, or Poison**

**Standard Action**      **Melee weapon**

**Target:** One creature

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a heavy blade (not a polearm).

**Attack:** Strength vs. AC

**Hit:** 3[W] + Strength modifier damage plus 5 ongoing damage (save ends).

**Effect:** Your blade inflicts the same type of damage as your breath weapon. The ongoing damage is also of the same type as your breath weapon.

**DRAGON SCALES**Dragonsword Adept  
Utility 12*Your scales thicken and harden, warding away blows like the mighty dragon-kings of old.***Encounter** ♦ **Weapon, Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, or Poison****Minor Action**      **Personal****Effect:** You gain a +2 power bonus to your AC and resistance 5 to the type of damage inflicted by your breath weapon until the end of the encounter. However, your speed is reduced by 1.**MAJESTIC**Dragonsword Adept  
**DRAGON STRIKE**      Attack 20*You manifest the power of the dragon-kings in a single ferocious strike, devastating your enemy and cowing his allies.***Encounter** ♦ **Fear, Martial, Weapon****Standard Action**      **Melee weapon****Primary Target:** One creature**Requirement:** You must be wielding a heavy blade (not a polearm).**Attack:** Strength vs. AC**Hit:** 4[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target is stunned (save ends). Make a secondary attack.**Secondary Target:** Each enemy within 5 squares of you**Secondary Attack:** Strength vs. Will**Hit:** The target is dazed (save ends).**CLAN DAIGO**

The entourage huddled in the center of the dark clearing. Young dragonborn, not yet with jato in hand, cowered inside the palanquin while their mothers readied themselves for battle.

Hasko stood at the edge of their terrified circle, her sharp eyes scanning the darkness of the woods. A young spearman knelt at her side with her shield, his hands trembling in fearful anticipation. Like most of the noble folk, he had never known true battle. And yet, like the mothers preparing to defend their hatchlings, this white-scaled lieutenant was willing to give his life in their defense.

"I count two score torches," the lieutenant whispered. "The brigands outnumber us at least three to one."

Hasko shook her mane. "I don't think so. If they did, they would have attacked us already."

The lieutenant spit on the dewy grass. "Honorless rabble. Do we fight them then?"

Hasko shook her mane again. "Too dangerous," she said softly, as if thinking aloud. "We can't risk the hatchlings."

"Then what?" the lieutenant demanded. Even as he spoke, one of the brigands – a hulking brute dressed in filthy armor – stepped from behind a fallen tree and raised his pockmarked blade in mock salute.

Hasko raised her own blade: an ancient weapon handed down a dozen generations and still as sharp as the day it was forged. "Give me my shield."

The lieutenant almost refused her before he saw the hardness in the brigand's eyes. "It's a trap!" he sputtered against his will even as he helped her strap the shield to her arm.

"Of course it is," Hasko smiled for the first time that night. "Ready the others. When the battle begins, make a break for the King's Highway."

"And leave you to die?"

"It will buy you the time to save the others." She tousled the lieutenant's mane. "Don't fret. The hatchlings will live, and they will grow into greater heroes than you or I could ever be. Now hurry – you won't have much time."

As the lieutenant scurried to alert the others, Hasko tightened her grip on her haichito and stepped into the darkness.

Of the dragonborn heroes celebrated in song and poem, nearly all hail from Clan Daigo. And yet, for all their popularity with audiences across the

North, the Daigo are perhaps the least understood of the Great Clans. The Daigo paladin is a cliché accepted by nearly all the North, save for those that have crossed paths or blades with the mysterious dragonborn.

Of the surviving Great Clans, it is the Daigo that cleave closest to the traditions of the dragonborn. The great Daigo warriors are first and foremost dedicated to self-sacrifice and service. Foolish villains are quick to interpret this as stupidity or meekness, but nothing could be further from the truth. A Daigo lives his life according to an unassailable moral code; however, rather than being restricted by the Code of the Dragon, the Daigo are freed by it, granting them the certainty and decisiveness needed to meet the challenges of a grim world.

The Daigo earned their honor with bloodshed in the legendary Blood Wars, in which every father, mother, and child of the Daigo line took up arms to defend the Forbidden City. Their sacrifice gave the Dragon Kings the time they needed to lead their people from the city to the safety of the highlands. Their sacrifice ensured that the traditions of the dragonborn would live on. However, this boon came at a terrible price: all of the Daigo fell in the battle, their broken bodies littering the ruined city.

In the days following the battle, Herod, the errant son of a Kengi-Daigo dalliance, searched the city for survivors. Finding none, he took up the great helm of the Daigo warlord and foreswore his Kengi heritage. Shattering his jato, Herod took the name of the Zuriel, the dead warlord, and swore his life to upholding the honor of the fallen Daigo.

There are no true-blooded Daigo alive today. Instead, the ranks of the clan are made up of selfless heroes that have elected to foreswear their clan allegiances and take up the banner of the Daigo. Only the most courageous of warriors are deemed worthy of acceptance into the clan. There is only a single trial used to determine an aspirant's worthiness. First, the dragonborn descends into the crypts beneath the Forbidden City. There, amid the bleached bones and dusty sarcophagi, the aspirant encounters the ghosts of the fallen Daigo. If the warrior is courageous and pure of heart, a single ghost will offer the aspirant his jato; however, if the aspirant is found wanting, he is overrun by undead, adding his corpse to the hundreds of other dragonborn that have failed to survive the Trial of the Daigo.

The Daigo see this selection as a form of spiritual lineage, with the dragonborn inheriting the honor, foes, and enmities of the hero's legacy. Emerging from the crypt, the newly reborn Daigo takes the name of the dead hero; for the remainder of his life,

the dragonborn crusades in the honor of his adopted family and clan.

While every dragonborn is influenced by his particular adopted family, the dragonborn of Clan Daigo cleave to a handful of shared goals. The first is to defend and honor the legacy of the Great Clans. By standing watch and guard over the Forbidden City, the Daigo ensure that the Great Clans will always have a place of sanctity, and that – even after the last of the Great Clans has passed from the face of the earth – an enduring testament to their valor will remain.

The Daigo's second duty is to honor the Code of the Dragon. Among all the Great Clans, it is the Daigo that place the greatest emphasis on honoring the code. The Daigo standing watch over the Forbidden City are likened to an order of monks, spending their days and nights in contemplative prayer.

A select few are called to honor the Code of the Dragon by leaving their brethren and taking up the blade against evil in all its guises. Facing the world alone, these wandering crusaders are the iconic dragonborn of myth: unassailable in their belief, undefeatable in combat, champions of the weak and downtrodden.

These Daigo champions are often found with a small group of companions, leading some critics to question the effectiveness of a sole warrior who wanders as the wind blows him. The Daigo see their sojourn in a different light; questing through the known world, they are directed by the invisible hand of fate. Every Daigo champion believes he is precisely where he needs to be. This does not imply a blindness to the needs of the world, for when the war horns are sounded, the Daigo are the first to answer the call. But while en route, the archetypal Daigo is sure to unseat a tyrant (or two) and dispose of any marauding monsters.

Villainous despots, mistakenly believing that they can turn the Daigo's strict moral code to their advantage, are quick to learn otherwise. A Daigo champion holds to an internal knowledge of right and wrong, and no amount of manipulation can sway him from his beliefs. A force unto himself, every Daigo answers first to the Code of the Dragon, second to his clansfolk, and never to a scoundrel. No amount of petty lawyering can dissuade him from his goal when the cause is just.

Many champions are slain during their sojourn, but their sacrifices – like those of the clan's founders – only serve to inspire other to take up the mantle of champion. Few Daigo live to retire, preferring instead to fight the good fight and die a martyr. Whereas most clans see haichito as implements

of destruction and death, the Daigo revere them as weapons of life; by slaying agents of evil, the Daigo permit the forces of good and benevolence to flourish.

The Daigo are also known for their great helms, unique to each warrior. All incorporate masks or visors that conceal the wearer's face, befitting the clan's practice of taking the names of fallen heroes. Most helms incorporate horns or stylized crests, further distinguishing the warriors in battle.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The Daigo** interpretation of the Code of the Dragon emphasizes sacrifice and courage. While few would dare to speak it openly, in private, Daigo are sometimes accused of fatalism. Having given up their lives and honor, other dragonborn reason, what is there to live or fight for? The Daigo know that the answer to this lies in their unswerving loyalty to the ideals of the clan, but few waste their breath arguing this with other dragonborn. To the Daigo, life is too finite and precious to be spent in meaningless discussion; why debate philosophy, while good people huddle in fear of wicked tyrants?

**Courage:** Though not as reckless as the Kengi, or as ambitious as the Saticar, the Daigo are regarded as the most courageous of the Great Clans. Symbolically, the dragonborn ends his old life when he takes up the mantle of the Daigo; all that can be lost, all material or filial attachments that the heart of a warrior fears to lose are given up freely. Thus, every Daigo is a dragonborn with nothing left to lose - the most dangerous of opponents.

**Integrity:** A Daigo's oath is better than any contract. Unfettered by cunning or guile, the honorable warriors speak and act directly from the heart. It is said that a Daigo is never uncertain - once he searches his feelings, a Daigo knows immediately and instantly what must be done, regardless of the cost.

**Loyalty:** A Daigo's loyalty to his clan is never in question, but winning a Daigo's loyalty is another matter altogether. Sworn to the defense of good, very little can coerce a Daigo to subvert that sacred oath by taking up another, potentially conflicting, allegiance. This attitude can lead other clans and cultures to regard the Daigo as aloof

and heartless, when, in fact, it is a product of their unflagging loyalty to the greater good.

## Organization

A small clan, numbering only in the hundreds, the Daigo see little call for extensive hierarchies. Outside of the Forbidden City, every Daigo is his own master. Those serving within the city adhere to a simple, monastic existence, alternating between times spent in prayer, and serving sentry duty upon the city's high walls.

## DAIGO ADVENTURERS

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Paladins are the archetypal Daigo hero, though fighters and warlords are not uncommon. Contemporary Daigo sometimes choose the path of the cleric or monk.

Daigo encountered in the world are typically those heroes that have elected to forgo the relative safety of the Forbidden City and seek their destiny in the world. The cost of such a decision is not to be underestimated, as few ever return.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

OATH OF LOYALTY (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Daigo, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You gain +2 feat bonus to your Will defense against attacks and powers with the charm keyword.

#### *Paragon Tier*

OATH OF INTEGRITY (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Daigo, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You gain a +5 bonus to Insight checks made to counter a Bluff check. When you successfully counter a Bluff check with your Insight skill, the creature making the Bluff check suffers a -2 penalty on all further Bluff check against you for 24 hours.

#### *Epic Tier*

OATH OF COURAGE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Daigo, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Once per encounter, when you are targeted by an attack or power with the fear keyword, you gain an action point.

## PARAGON PATH: THE SWORDSWORN

*"There is no truth beyond the Code and no purpose to life without it."*

### Prerequisites

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Paladin

**Feat:** Weapon Focus (heavy blade)

Every facet of your life is measured by the Code of the Dragon. Its tenets guide you along the path of the warrior and will eventually lead you to a glorious and honorable end. You are a shining example of a dragonborn hero, and you strive to serve as an example for your allies and your enemies alike.

### SWORDSWORN PATH FEATURES

**Swordsworn Action (11th level):** Whenever you spend an action point to take an extra action, one ally adjacent to a target marked by your divine challenge may make an immediate melee basic attack against that target as a free action.

**Gift of Courage (11th level):** When you use your *lay on hands* power, the target gains a +2 bonus to Will defense to resist fear effects until the end of the encounter.

**Aura of Loyalty (16th level):** Allies adjacent to you are immune to charm effects. In addition, adjacent allies receive an immediate saving throw to negate any effect that forces movement (pull, push, or slide).

## SWORDSWORN PRAYERS

### BOUND BY HONOR

Swordsworn Attack 11

*You strike your foe with a resounding blow and force him to face you and you alone.*

**Encounter** ♦ **Divine, Weapon**

**Standard Action**      **Melee weapon**

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Strength vs. AC

**Hit:** 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target may attack no other target but you until it makes a saving throw.

**Special:** If the target was previously marked via *divine challenge*, it suffers a -2 penalty to the saving throw to end the effect of this power.

### FEARLESS SOUL

Swordsworn Utility 12

*The Code teaches that a true warrior does not know fear.*

**Daily** ♦ **Divine, Implement**

**Minor Action**      **Personal**

**Effect:** You gain immunity to attacks and powers with the fear keyword until the end of the encounter. Allies adjacent to you gain a +2 power bonus to their Will defenses to resist fear effects.

### CHALLENGE OF THE CODE

Swordsworn Attack 20

*You manifest the truth in the Code of the Dragon...at the point of your sword.*

**Encounter** ♦ **Charm, Divine, Fear, Radiant, Weapon**

**Standard Action**      **Melee weapon**

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Charisma vs. Will

**Hit:** 3[W] + Charisma modifier radiant damage, and the target suffers an additional affect from the list below, chosen when the power is activated.

**Challenge of Courage:** The target moves its speed away from you.

**Challenge of Loyalty:** The target makes an immediate melee basic attack against an adjacent ally.

**Challenge of Integrity:** The target is marked. It suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls for any attack that does not include you as a target. In addition, it suffers radiant damage equal to 6 + twice your Charisma modifier the first time it makes an attack that doesn't include you as a target before the start of your next turn.



## CLAN KARKONUS

*Argoran shook the blood from his mane, and slammed the spiked butt of his spear into the hard-packed earth. He felt the adrenaline and rage of the last clash slowly ebb from his muscles, leaving nothing but the first numbing tendrils of exhaustion in their wake. Beside him, his spear-brother Dioclene pressed in close, clattering his shield against Argoran's.*

*"Will they charge again, brother?" Dioclene asked softly and stared out over the trampled, blood-soaked plain of Planeva. The plain was choked with the bodies of nearly eight thousand humans, lying pierced and rent by the clans' spears, teeth, and claws; or burnt, frozen, and blasted by the clans' mighty breath. Beyond that, the remaining horde waited; twenty-five thousand fools come to test the might of Clan Karkonus.*

*Argoran spat blood and a bit of broken fang from his mouth; the aftereffect of a single human barbarian that had managed to pull his dying, impaled carcass up the dragonborn's spear and land a glancing blow with a club. "Aye," Argoran said at last. "They will surely charge again. They outnumber us five to one, and that gives the fools courage."*

*"Hah!" Dioclene snorted derisively, a puff of acrid smoke rising from his reptilian nostrils. "Only five to one?" He glanced down the length of the Karkonus line, still unbroken: an impenetrable wall of bright red shields, over which three rows of spears projected, their black iron points gleaming dully in the hot afternoon sun.*

*Suddenly, from across the plain, a ragged howl arose as the human horde broke into a dead run, charging across the field of slaughter toward their draconic foes. Argoran took his spear in an overhand grip and set it upon the rim of his shield. Beside him, and all around, the clatter of ten-foot wooden shafts smacking against the steel rims of the great Karkonus' shields echoed across the battlefield. "Aye, brother. Five to one." Argoran said with a predatory grin. "Good odds for any dragon-blooded."*

Of the five Great Clans of dragon-blooded that remain in the North, Clan Karkonus is the most organized and militant, commanding a professional army of nearly five thousand warriors. From their great walled city of Ionus, the last companies of Karkonus hoplites do their best to uphold the

traditions of a once glorious past in a world that is swiftly moving beyond them. To Karkonus dragonborn, maintaining the traditions of their ancestors is paramount, and each clan member has a strong sense of history and his place in the fading legacy of a once mighty dragonborn nation.

Founded by the mythical dragon-king Karkonus Blackspear, a peerless master of battlefield tactics and warfare, Clan Karkonus still holds (some might say desperately clings) to the martial philosophy of its founder. Dragonborn of Clan Karkonus are fond of quoting their clan's namesake, who wrote hundreds of tomes and treatises on warfare and the life he believed was best suited to the dragon-blooded. One of his most famous quotes, and the one most often quoted, is "Alone you are nothing, a single mote in the great dragon's eye. But with your spear-brother's shield to ward you, and his spear to follow yours, no foe is beyond you." This quote sums up nearly every facet of a Karkonus dragonborn's life: from warfare to the way the clan is governed. The overriding principal of unity in all things is the breath in the lungs of each clan member. It drives them to continue fighting to restore the old ways and places them firmly at odds with the other, more individualistic clans.

Although all of the Great Clans are fierce warriors, highly proficient in the ways of battle, only Clan Karkonus maintains a standing army. Their army, called the Blackspear Legion, is composed of five thousand warriors in ten companies of five hundred. The companies are often called "free" companies because they are a unit unto themselves and may act autonomously when there is no need for an assembly of the entire legion. A Karkonus dragonborn's status within his company is the single most important facet of his life; it is more important than friends, family, and even life itself.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**Like all of the Great Clans**, the dragonborn of Clan Karkonus interpret the Code of the Dragon as best befits their way of life. Clan Karkonus places the most emphasis on loyalty; the cohesive fighting unit, the backbone of Karkonus culture, is nothing without the strictest devotion company and clan.

**Courage:** Courage grows within the warrior's heart; it is nurtured on the training grounds, and it is nourished on the teachings of Great Karkonus. It is born within the maelstrom of battle, and then it ceases to be the warrior's alone. A Karkonus dragonborn is taught to share his courage with his spear-brother, so that he might also share his courage with his spear-brother. In this way, courage breeds within the company, the shieldwall holds, spears find their mark, and the enemy cannot hope to prevail.

**Integrity:** The Karkonus believe that all that you do in this world reflects upon the clan. Each enemy that is treated justly, each spear-brother whose flesh one wards, and all one's deeds are etched into the grand history of the clan. Be loyal to company, clan, and the old ways: fight with honor, die with glory – the Karkonus teach – and let your name be sung in the grand chorus of the fallen.

**Loyalty:** The Karkonus believe that your life belongs to your company, it has no worth elsewhere. Loyalty is the strongest link in the vast chain of the free companies; without it, the shieldwall falters, enemy blades find gaps in the line, and your spear-brothers have none to guard their flanks. Warriors are taught to honor their mates and their companions with faithfulness, but save their truest loyalty for company and clan.

## CLAN KARKONUS LEADERSHIP

**Clan Karkonus** is governed by a loose democracy. A senate composed of five elected officials from each of the ten companies meets on a monthly basis to decide the direction of the clan. Only warriors are allowed to cast a vote in the senate, although both males and females are given equal consideration.

Typically, aging warriors who can no longer serve ably on the front lines are chosen for the senate. This is considered a great honor for the dragonborn elected to represent their companies: a validation of their years of experience and expertise gained on the field of battle.

All issues are decided by means of a simple vote, with a seventy-five percent majority required to pass any new law. Few new laws are passed, however, as the senate is mostly concerned with upholding the laws and traditions already in place, a task that is considered both sacred and absolutely necessary for the survival of the clan.

## THE HOME OF CLAN KARKONUS

**For thousands of years**, the great white walls of Ionus have stood resolute against all who dared challenge the might of Clan Karkonus and the Blackspears Legion. From hordes of barbarians come to plunder the riches of the Dragon Kings, to the jealous ire of the other Great Clans, all were broken before the shining gates of Ionus. Now the city's walls have yellowed with age, and many of the temples and lavish gardens beyond have grown dark and untended for centuries. What was once a thriving city of nearly thirty thousand dragonborn has dwindled to fewer than ten, and the clan has all but abandoned the outer wards of the city to the rats and the cold dark of faded glory.

Today, what remains of Clan Karkonus dwells within the very center of the city. Along with the senate hall, the barracks that house the ten companies of the Blackspears Legion form the core of the city-state, with temples, personal dwellings, and buildings devoted to commerce, learning, and other trades radiating out from this central point. This part of the city is rigorously maintained; the buildings gleam with fresh paint, gardens overflow with scented flowers and herbs, and the roads are smooth and straight. However, beyond this lies crumbling, weed-choked vistas winding their way through a deserted landscape of vermin-infested ruin.

The walls of Ionus are the only other part of the city maintained on a regular basis. The grand gates, although somewhat worse for the wear after nearly three millennia, still stand strong, and an entire company of Karkonus hoplites patrols the walls and wards the city against intruders.

Visitors to Ionus are not uncommon, and the dragonborn of Clan Karkonus welcome the "lesser" races openly into their domain. Many who wish to study the art of war and tactics make the pilgrimage across the plain of Planeva to learn from the warriors of Clan Karkonus, and the spear-brethren are happy to oblige those interested in the old ways.



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## CLAN KARKONUS AT WAR

**The military** expertise of Clan Karkonus is nearly unrivaled in the known world. Despite their dwindling numbers, the Blackspears Legion and its ten companies of spear-brethren is still a potent fighting force, and its discipline and tactics make it a match for armies five to ten times its size.

The Blackspears Legion is organized into ten companies, each with its own name and standard, but still owing allegiance to the legion as a whole. Each warrior in a company is known as a spear-brother, or hoplite in the old tongue, and each company is led by a spear-captain, usually the veteran warrior in the company. Each spear-brother is armored identically with a steel breastplate, steel greaves, a skirt of light chainmail, and a round, oaken shield rimmed in steel and bearing the sigil of one of the ten companies. A spear-brother is armed with a ten-foot spear tipped with a blackened iron head, used in the right hand, and a short stabbing sword for close combat.

In battle, the legion favors the phalanx, with each spear-brother locking his shield against the spear-brother on his left, presenting to the enemy a wall of shields and scales. The first rank of the phalanx hold their spears in an underhanded grip, while the second and third rank grip their spears overhead and extend them over the first rank, creating a bristling array of deadly iron spear points. Once battle begins, the first rank of the phalanx engages the enemy, while those behind push against the first rank with their shields, literally forcing the front line through the ranks of the enemy.

The phalanx is almost impenetrable from the front, especially when you combine the fearsome breath of each spear-brother with his devastating skill at arms. Typically, the dragonborn in the first line of the phalanx unleash their breath weapons in unison once the enemy is in range, sowing chaos and death among the enemy before the first spear can even reach them.

Most spear-brothers are fighters, and spear-captains tend to be warlords. The companies disdain the use of missile weapons and magic, although a few clerics can be found in each company to tend to the wounded and boost morale on the battlefield.

## KARKONUS ADVENTURERS

**The life of an adventurer** is a difficult path for a dragonborn of Clan Karkonus. First, he must abandon his company if he wishes to join an adventuring band, a concept that is both horrifying and psychologically debilitating to most Karkonus dragonborn. There are exceptions to this, and rogue spear-brethren are not unheard of. However, such dragonborn usually consider their adventuring band as a new company, finding stability and unity with their companions, much as they would have among their former units.

The most common classes for dragonborn of Clan Karkonus are fighter and warlord, with cleric running a distant third. Rangers and rogues, with their focus on hit and run tactics, are seen as cowardly and dishonorable, as are any classes that slay their enemies primarily with magic, such as wizards and warlocks. However, as always, exceptions exist, and some Karkonus dragonborn have found ways to fit magic and even missile weapons into honorable combat.

### CLAN FEATS

#### BROTHERS IN ARMS (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Karkonus, dragonborn

**Benefit:** When adjacent to at least two allies, you gain a +1 feat bonus to all defenses.

#### STRIKE THE UNGUARDED (DRAGONBORN, FIGHTER)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Karkonus, dragonborn, fighter

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against opponents with a lower AC defense than you have.

#### LONG STRIKE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Str 13, Clan Karkonus, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You gain an extra square of reach with all weapons in the spear group. For example, you would have reach 2 with a spear, and reach 3 with a longspear.

## PARAGON PATH: BLACKSPEAR HOPLITE

*"Come, fool. Break upon our shields, die upon our spears; you are dust beneath the feet of the legion."*

### Prerequisites

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Fighter

**Feat:** Weapon Focus (spear group)

You are a member of the Blackspears Legion and have learned the devastating fighting skills of that legendary fighting force. You can thrust your spear through an armored opponent with the flick of a wrist, intercept blows meant for your companions, and annihilate your enemies with discipline, unity, and ferocious combat skill.

### BLACKSPEAR HOPLITE PATH FEATURES

**Spear-Brother (11th level):** You are an expert in the use of the spear. You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with any weapon in the spear group. Additionally, you may wield a longspear in one hand without penalty.

**Unified Action (11th level):** Whenever you spend an action point to take another action, one adjacent ally of your choice can take the same type of action (standard, move, or minor) as a free action.

**Spear-Captain (16th level):** Your expertise with the spear grows to epic levels. You gain a +4 bonus to damage rolls with any weapon in the spear group. Additionally, all weapons in the spear group are considered high-crit weapons for you.

### BLACKSPEAR HOPLITE EXPLOITS

#### UNSTOPPABLE STRIKE

Blackspear Hoplite  
Attack 11

*Your mighty thrust penetrates armor, flesh, and bone.*

**Encounter ♦ Martial, Weapon**

**Standard Action**      **Melee weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a weapon in the spear group.

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Strength vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.

#### SHIELD OF THE SPEAR- BRETHREN

Blackspear Hoplite  
Utility 12

*You intercept a blow meant for your spear-brother, momentarily throwing the enemy off balance and allowing your spear-brother to counterattack.*

**Daily ♦ Martial**

**Immediate Interrupt**

**Close burst 1**

**Requirement:** You must be holding a shield.

**Trigger:** An adjacent ally is hit by a melee attack.

**Effect:** You force the enemy to reroll its attack roll against your AC. If the attack hits, you suffer the full effects of the attack. If the attack misses, your adjacent ally can make a melee basic attack against the enemy as a free action.

#### MIGHTY SKEWER

Blackspear Hoplite  
Attack 20

*You put every ounce of strength you possess into one mighty thrust. Your spear pierces your opponent's body, impaling him and releasing a shower of gore.*

**Encounter ♦ Martial, Weapon**

**Standard Action**

**Melee Weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a weapon in the spear group.

**Target:** One Creature

**Attack:** Strength vs. AC

**Hit:** 4[W] + Strength modifier damage.

**Effect:** You have impaled your target. You may opt to rip your spear free from the target's body (and inflict extra damage) or leave it in the target's body (causing severe pain and debilitation).

**Secondary Attack (pull the spear free):** Strength vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** You rip your spear free from your opponent's body, inflicting an additional 2[W] damage.

**Miss:** You pull your spear free, but the target suffers no additional damage.

**Sustain Standard (leave the spear in the target's body):** You hold onto your spear and leave it in the target's body. The target is considered grabbed (until escape) and suffers 1[W] damage for each round it remains grabbed. If the target escapes the grab, it pulls your spear free (suffering no additional damage). You can end the grab as a free action by pulling your spear free (the target suffers no additional damage).

## CLAN SATICOR

*Kothcin squatted behind the rotting tree and watched the nobles huddle together in the heart of the clearing. The nobles and their entourage outnumbered his brigands, but Kothcin wagered that the Daigo didn't know that – yet.*

*Tomlkin, a young dragonborn, slipped through the woods, fastening torches in trees as he went, until Kothcin and his bandits looked like a small army. The youngling completed the circle and sank down beside Kothcin.*

*“Now what?” Tomlkin asked, a quaver in his voice betraying his nervousness.*

*“Can't take on the lot of them,” Kothcin grunted. “We have to lure the real warriors out.” He waved a thick crossbow quarrel at a fierce-looking warrior with an enormous bastard sword. “That one goes down first.”*

*“How?” Tomlkin asked. He knew the Daigos' legendary discipline; until a few short months ago, he had counted himself proudly among them. But a foolish mistake over a bright-eyed maiden had changed all that.*

*“Honor,” Kothcin spat with disgust, squashing a flea against his armor, “makes dragonborn as predictable as the sun and moon.” Kothcin stood from behind the log, drew his blade in an exaggerated motion, and saluted the fierce Daigo. She returned the salute.*

*Kothcin smiled to the youngling. “Alert the wolves: As soon as the Daigo leaves the circle, feather her with bolts.”*

*Tomlkin blanched in disbelief.*

*“Would you rather be honorable or alive?” Kothcin snarled. “Now go ready the crossbows.”*

Of all the Great Clans, none are as publicly reviled – or secretly admired – as the dragonborn of Clan Saticor. Of all the Great Clans, only they have the personal courage, audacity, or foolishness to strike out on their own. Regardless of their station, Saticor are invariably rebels, outcasts, and lone wolves. In a culture defined by its worship of ancestors and its shared values, the Saticor walk alone.

To most dragonborn, Saticor are little better than roaming brigands. And, indeed, most affirm this stereotype. However, for every band of dirty brigands huddled around a smoldering campfire, there is also a wandering swordmaster, cast out from

his clan and making his own place in the world.

The clan is composed of exiles: dragonborn that either chose to break with their family and clan or were exiled for their misdeeds. To the dragonborn, exile is a punishment crueler than death. For while other dragonborn live their lives by the traditions and rituals established by their ancestors, a Saticor must begin each day anew.

It is this freedom from tradition, anathema to most dragonborn, that the Saticor thrive on. This same freedom is the reason the clan is reviled; unbound by tradition or notions of honor, the unpredictable Saticor stand in opposition to everything the other clans hold dear. Saticor delight using this to antagonize other dragonborn, and many a Daigo and Kengi has been lured into a duel by a mocking Saticor.

As a clan composed of exiles, at present, there are no “native born” Saticor. This is for two reasons: first, no matter how much a Saticor might enjoy a life of freedom, it is invariably a difficult existence, and few are willing to impose the life of exile on their children. Secondly, while the other Great Clans are willing to tolerate the existence of the outcasts, they are unwilling to accept a self-sustaining clan. If ever the Great Clans were to discover that the Saticor were raising hatchlings, they would instigate a slaughter of them bordering on genocide.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The other Great Clans** mistakenly assume that the Saticor disregard the Code of the Dragon. Rather, each Saticor interprets the Code for himself, judging himself by his own highest standards.

**Courage:** Saticor view themselves as the most courageous of all the dragonborn; while other clans hide behind rituals and traditions of their forefathers, only the Saticor have the courage to walk in freedom. While many Saticor are reckless, few are willing to risk their lives with foolish choices or hopeless battles.

**Integrity:** Whereas other dragonborn are bound by arcane laws and rituals, a Saticor must first be true to himself. Other clans allege that Saticor are untrustworthy and deceptive. The truth of the matter is that no Saticor will permit himself to be bound by mere conventions of honor, but when a Saticor chooses to offer his word or oath, it is as good or better than the word of any other.

**Loyalty:** Saticor are unflaggingly loyal to their chosen “families.” This serves two purposes: first, it satisfies the dragonborns’ instinctual need for brotherhood and fraternity. Secondly, it makes the life of an outcast slightly less deadly. This loyalty does not come cheaply; any trust proffered must first be earned.

## ORGANIZATION

**Saticor** are principally organized into small bands known as wolf packs. On rare occasions, these bands can number as many as a few hundred dragonborn, but it is difficult to keep many Saticor focused on the same goal for very long.

A wolf pack is typically formed around a single charismatic leader. Despite the Saticors’ self-serving bent, these leaders are seldom tyrants – each and every Saticor has the freedom to leave at any time, so commanders must work to keep the respect of their followers or risk losing their support.

Few packs survive for very long, driven apart by internal dissent or simply the dangers of life on the borderland. Bands that defy the odds and survive for more than a season or two invariably become infamous among dragonborn circles. This notoriety, in turn, helps to sustain a wolf pack, drawing in new members eager to find a home beside legendary outlaws.

Following is a list of some of the most famous (or infamous) bands:

- **Company of Crows:** By far the largest of the Saticor bands, the Company of Crows is a band of nearly two hundred independent warriors, casters, and rogues joined together by self-interest. The rebels operate from a rough-hewn village atop the mountain fortress of Drath-Quilone, one of the most extensive ruins of the North (second only, perhaps, to the legendary Castle Whiterock). From their crude home base, members of the company launch raids into the surrounding hills and lowlands. The Company manages to hold together because of the depredations of surrounding hill giant and ogre clans. Once a month, or even more often in the Spring and depth of Winter, the giants march on the village of Drath-Quilone, aiming to retake the ruins.
- **The Iron Wolves:** Ranging across the North, few Saticor bands have achieved the notoriety enjoyed by the Iron Wolves. A band consist-

ing of anywhere between 50 to 100 members, the Wolves are best characterized as a horde of marauding raiders. Led by Torrok the Reaver, the Wolves are regularly accused of all sorts of heinous deeds, while, in truth, they typically rely on simple raids and banditry for their sustenance. The key to the Wolves’ fame was a successful raid against a Daigo keep, in which an aged warlord and his entourage were lured out onto the field of battle. The ranks of the Iron Wolves broke before the initial charge, and the warlord – hoping to seize an easy defeat – gave chase. After a night of unsuccessfully attempting to ride down his foes, the warlord returned to his keep to find that it had been sacked in the night and was now occupied by the same brigands he had hoped to put to the sword.

## SATICOR ADVENTURERS

**While the Saticor** are far from the most common dragonborn, they are the most likely to join adventuring companies. The loyalty and independence engendered by an adventuring company – often little more than wandering brigands themselves – can quickly come to seem like home to a Saticor looking for a “pack.”

Saticor can hail from any adventuring class, but rogues and non-aligned rangers are most common. Paladins are nearly unheard of, save for the few legendary fallen paladins that are forced into the ranks of the Saticor as they quest to regain their honor.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

SNIPER’S PRECISION (DRAGONBORN, ROGUE)

**Prerequisites:** Dex 13, Clan Saticor, dragonborn, rogue class

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 feat bonus to damage rolls on ranged attacks against targets you have combat advantage against.

At 11th level this bonus increases to +2. At 21st level, it increases to +3.

#### *Paragon Tier*

QUICK LOAD (FIGHTER, ROGUE)

**Prerequisites:** Dex 15, Clan Saticor, fighter or rogue class

**Benefit:** You may reload a crossbow as a free action.

### *Epic Tier*

POINT BLACK EXPERTISE (FIGHTER, ROGUE)

**Prerequisites:** Dex 17, Clan Saticor, fighter or rogue class

**Benefit:** You do not draw opportunity attacks when firing a crossbow or hand crossbow adjacent to an enemy.

## PARAGON PATH: LONGSHOT OPPORTUNIST

2

*"Honor? Here's my honor...right here on the end of this quarrel."*

### **Prerequisites**

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Rogue class

**Feat:** Weapon Proficiency (crossbow)

You are an outcast, a pariah, and as such, you have abandoned the codes and tenets of the culture that abandoned you. However, you have found a new home, a new family among the other exiles of Clan Saticor. From your new family, you have learned a different way to fight. Now you snipe your enemies from hiding, piercing their bodies with a hail of crossbow bolts, and showing them that honorable combat only gets you dead.

## LONGSHOT OPPORTUNIST PATH FEATURES

### **Longshot Opportunist Action (11th level):**

When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you gain a +3 bonus on all ranged attack and damage rolls until the start of your next turn.

**Dead Eye (11th level):** You may reduce the penalties for attacking a target with cover or concealment with ranged attacks by -2.

**Cripple Shooter (16th level):** You gain an extra 2d6 sneak attack damage with ranged attacks against bloodied opponents.

## LONGSHOT OPPORTUNIST EXPLOITS

### ARMOR PIERCING

Longshot Opportunist

### SHOT

Attack 11

*Your bolt pierces heavy armor like a hot knife through butter.*

### Encounter ♦ Martial, Weapon

**Standard Action**      **Ranged weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a crossbow or hand crossbow.

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Dexterity +4 vs. AC

**Hit:** 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

### SHADOWBOLT

Longshot Opportunist

Utility 12

*You fire a bolt at your target and miss. However, you are still stealthy enough to evade detection.*

### At-Will ♦ Martial

**Free Action**      **Personal**

**Requirement:** You must be trained in Stealth.

**Effect:** You must be hiding to use this power. If you make a ranged attack from hiding and miss, you can make a Stealth check to remain hidden.

### RICOCHETING SHOT

Longshot Opportunist

Attack 20

*You send a bolt careening around the battlefield, striking multiple enemies.*

### Daily ♦ Martial, Weapon

**Standard Action**      **Ranged weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a crossbow or hand crossbow.

**Primary Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Dexterity vs. AC

**Hit:** 3[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

**Secondary Target:** One creature within 5 squares of the primary target.

**Secondary Attack:** Dexterity vs. AC

**Hit:** 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

**Tertiary Target:** One creature within 5 squares of the secondary target.

**Tertiary Attack:** Dexterity vs. AC

**Hit:** 1[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

**Special:** You gain combat advantage against all targets struck by this power until the end of your next turn.





## CLAN ARATOS

Ozun closed his eyes and felt the spirits in the air, whispering around his head in a frenzy of aggravated motion. Names and deeds filled the young dragonborn's mind, each the indelible stamp left by an ancestor whose essence lingered here long after his scales and bones were naught but dust and mold. The ancestors of Clan Aratos did not abandon their living kin, as did those of the other Great Clans of the dragonborn; instead, they remained upon the material plane to guide, protect, and fight the enemies of the clan, just as they had in life.

Ozun would need the help of his ancestors if he was to prevail this day. He had foolishly accepted a duel with a hotheaded hoplite of Clan Karkonus. The larger, more experienced dragonborn had challenged Ozun to a test of arms after a meaningless dispute over the price of a shield in the merchant's square. The merchant, who had been trying to charge Ozun five crowns too much for the shield, had become offended when the young dragonborn warrior had pointed out this obvious fact. Ozun had failed to notice the crest of Clan Karkonus branded upon the merchant's scales beneath his leather jerkin, and he had also failed to notice the hulking form of the Karkonus

warrior standing a few yards from the merchant's stall.

As if the entire scene had been rehearsed in advance, the Karkonus warrior had come striding up at the exact moment Ozun called the merchant a "black-blooded, thieving lizard."

Taking immediate offense at such an egregious insult hurled at a fellow clan member, the Karkonus hoplite had challenged Ozun to a duel to preserve the honor of his clan and his friend. The entire merchant square of Dumarak had stopped to watch the exchange, smelling the potential for blood on the wind, and Ozun, faced with complete humiliation, had been forced to accept the duel.

So here he was in the Strife Pit – the area of Dumarak set aside for such honor-bound squabbles – staring across the sandy arena at nearly three hundred pounds of scale, muscle, and armor. The Karkonus warrior wasn't just big, he was massive; his scales were scarred with dozens of old wounds, and his spear and shield bore the signs of many battles.

Excellent, Ozun! Garkos hissed in the back of Ozun's mind. The old warrior's spirit seethed with anger, and Ozun felt his rage like a thousand stinging needles. That brute of a Karkonus is going to spit you like a suckling pig.

Garkos was the ancestor spirit that aided Ozun in battle, and the grizzled old veteran did so with no small amount of scorn and condescension. Yes, Garkos, Ozun thought back, which is why I need you to help me.

Hah, as if I could help a runt like you overcome a beast like that! Garkos scoffed.

*Fine. Then, when I die, you can spend a century or two in the gray lands waiting for another foolish young warrior to choose a crotchety old ghost as a battle guide. It was a cruel barb, but Ozun needed help desperately, and Garkos was his only hope.*

*After a long silence, Ozun felt giddy energy flow into his muscles, and when he drew his short sword, it felt like a living thing in his hand, agile and swift. I see you've chosen to be sensible, Ozun thought at Garkos, and slid into the fighting stance the old ghost had drilled into him since he was a child: sword high, shield close, left leg forward.*

*Across the Strife Pit, the Karkonus warrior had settled into his own stance, and had taken his long, stabbing spear in an overhand grip, laying the point on the rim of his large, round shield. "Come on, whelp," the big dragonborn hissed. "I've heard Aratos turn into ghosts when you kill them; I want to find out if that's true."*

*Garkos' voice suddenly filled Ozun's mind. I've heard Karkonus bleat like sheep when you let the air of their bladders. Let's find out if that's true.*

*Of course, honored ancestor, Ozun replied, smiling, and stepped forward to do battle.*

From their great mercantile city of Dumarak, the enigmatic dragonborn of Clan Aratos attempt to embrace the rushing pace of the future by remembering the glories of the ancient past. To the Aratos, the accomplishments and trials overcome today are made possible by the mighty feats performed by the clan's ancestors. And who better to guide the young and proud warriors and traders of the clan than the spirits of the very dragonborn who led the Aratos to greatness and prosperity centuries and even millennia ago.

To say that Clan Aratos engages in ancestor worship would be like saying that orcs are a warlike race – a gross understatement, to say the least. From birth, Aratos dragonborn are taught to respect, revere, and, later, commune with the long-dead spirits of their forbearers. Every action performed by a dragonborn of Clan Aratos, from the grandiose to the mundane, requires that the spirits of the ancestors be consulted. This is accomplished not by any lengthy ritual or ceremony, but at the very speed of thought, as the dragonborn communicates with as many as three spirit guides that dwell within him.

When a young dragonborn of Clan Aratos reaches maturity, he undergoes a long and arduous ritual. His soul is cast from his body and sent out into the bleak expanse of the Gray Lands, a plane of limbo where the greatest spirits of the clan linger on after death. The young Aratos soul seeks out one of these ancient spirits to serve as a spirit guide, and then returns to his body, carrying the soul of a

clan forefather with him. The ancient spirit dwells within the body of its dragonborn host, providing counsel, advice, and even raw magical power when needed. When the host dragonborn dies, the ancestor spirit is allowed to claim its eternal reward in the Platinum Halls of Bahamut, while the spirit of the host travels to the Gray Lands to await the soul of a young warrior to serve.

Clan Aratos relies heavily on the council of its spirit elders, and the mightiest of these spirit guides dwell within the leaders of the clan. This bizarre practice of allowing ghostly entities to inhabit one's body has caused the other clans of Dragonborn to distrust the Aratos, or, in the case of the militant Karkonus, outright despise them. For their part, the Aratos dragonborn hold no special animosity toward any of the other Great Clans and are one of the few clans to openly welcome other races into their great trading city of Dumarak.

Although founded by the great dragonborn warrior, Aratos Demonhammer, the clan has all but abandoned warlike beginnings. These days, Clan Aratos focuses its energies into expanding trade, and its craftsmen and merchants have grown a trade empire that spans the world selling and buying goods in all lands. This has made the clan quite wealthy, which is, of course, yet another thorn in the side of the other Great Clans, who have long been in steep decline since the glorious years of dragonborn dominance.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The Code of the Dragon**, while integral to the dragonborn of Clan Aratos, has taken on a slightly different meaning for its people. Since Aratos has largely abandoned its military roots, the Code is interpreted in a way that many of the other Great Clans find distasteful, or even outright sacrilegious.

**Courage:** Courage is drawn from the memories and feats of one's ancestors, and it takes many forms. It is not only the faith one has in his allies upon the battlefield, or the unyielding valor a warrior displays when confronted with a superior foe. Courage also lives within the heart of the trader, making his way into new and foreign lands to bring prosperity to the clan. Courage dwells within the soul of a dragonborn that accepts and embraces new ideas, peoples, and customs. Let the spirits of your forefathers guide you, and their ancient wisdom will

lead you into a bright and prosperous future.

**Integrity:** The Aratos treat others with honor and honesty in all things. They believe that their actions not only reflect Clan Aratos today, but also resonate through the centuries, bringing honor or shame to all their ancestors have wrought before them. By listening to the spirit guides, an Aratos cannot be led astray.

**Loyalty:** Loyalty to the Clan is paramount. Loyalty not just to those in one's life in the present, but also to all those who have come before, back to the distant past of the honorable spirits that guide and protect the clan. Aratos do not reserve their loyalty for the dragonborn and clan members alone. They believe that they should seek out allies and friends of all races and affiliations; they are worthy of loyalty as well.

## CLAN ARATOS LEADERSHIP

**Based in the trade city** of Dumarak, Clan Aratos is ruled by a council of three elders, each responsible for overseeing one area important to the clan. In turn, these elders receive the council of the greatest and most influential ancestors of the clan who have forsaken the Platinum Halls to return again and again and guide the course of their clan.

Hyrkos Ironfang oversees the military matters of Clan Aratos, commanding the Knights of Aratos, of which he is the most senior member. Hyrkos is counseled by the mighty spirit of Nazok Demonhammer, brother to the mythical clan founder, and is rumored to be the most deadly creature with a short sword in the known world.

The plump and loquacious Uveron Brightbelly is the master of trade for Clan Aratos and, although he is a boisterous lout concerned primarily with drink and young females, he is also incredibly shrewd in areas of business, trade, and the making of money. Uveron calls upon the ancient wisdom of Osha Goldscale, the first of the clan to hold Uveron's current position.

The ancient and withered Ilorak Aratos, a direct descendent of Aratos Demonhammer, is responsible for the spiritual matters of the clan. He ensures that the ancestors receive proper reverence, and he is aided in the task by none other than the spirit of Aratos Demonhammer himself.

## THE HOME OF CLAN ARATOS

**The bustling trade city** of Dumarak serves as the home of Clan Aratos. Although not large by the standards of human cities, Dumarak is one of the most prosperous of the great clan holdings. Situated on the banks of the Twin Tongues River, the dragonborn ply the swift moving currents in sturdy barges, buying and selling goods all over the known world.

The walls of Dumarak are sturdy, but not so great as those of warlike clans such as Karkonus and Kengi. This is by design, as the dragonborn of Clan Aratos wish to welcome visitors to their city to trade. However, the vigilant Knights of Aratos are always ready to repel those with hostile intent.

Inside the walls of Dumarak, visitors will find a clean, well-ordered city, with simple yet appealing architecture and streets wide enough to allow even the largest wagons to negotiate them easily. A massive bazaar lies at the center of the city, offering all manner of goods from across the known world. This huge market has no name and is simply referred to as "The Bazaar."

The Aratos dragonborn make their homes largely on the outskirts of the bazaar, as many are craftsmen and merchants themselves. Near the walls are the barracks of the Knights of Aratos who guard the city and keep the peace within its walls. Shrines to various ancestors can be found throughout Dumarak, as well as a few temples devoted to deities of war and trade.

## CLAN ARATOS AT WAR

**Although Clan Aratos** does not place the same importance on military strength, as do the other Great Clans, it is by no means inexperienced in the art of war. Those who come into conflict with Clan Aratos are most likely to encounter the famed Knights of Aratos, an order of paladins that can call upon ancient warrior spirits to aid them in battle.

The Knights of Aratos currently number three hundred and are broken up into companies of 50 knights each. The knights are easily recognizable, as they are identically armed and armored. Each knight carries a short, double-edged thrusting sword, a small round metal shield, and is armored in a steel breastplate and greaves, enameled in the

bright blue of Clan Aratos.

The Knights of Aratos protect the city of Dumarak, but they are also tasked with guarding the clan's traders as they travel about the world buying and selling goods. Typically, a merchant caravan of Clan Aratos is escorted by half a dozen knights who are more than capable of dealing with brigands, monsters, and any other dangers encountered on the road.

2

## ARATOS ADVENTURERS

**The wide-ranging merchants** of Clan Aratos offer ample opportunity for young dragonborn to experience the world. Clan Aratos merchant caravans are always on the lookout for guards, assistants, and even eager youngsters willing to learn the caravan master's trade. Many Aratos adventurers get their start in this fashion; the experience gained on the road can be invaluable to a hero later in his career.

Fighters, paladins, and clerics are the most common classes associated with Clan Aratos. The Knights of Aratos are exclusively paladins, and the ancestor worship that is so integral to Aratos life creates an easy transition into the life of a cleric. Merchant caravans looking for guards are always eager to take on another blade, and many a dragonborn fighter has begun his career as a caravan guard. Arcane magic is relatively rare among the Aratos, and, as a society of traders and merchants, they have a dismal view of rogues and their light-fingered ways.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

#### SPIRIT GUIDE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Aratos, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Once per encounter, *as a free action*, you may call upon your spirit guide to aid you, granting you a +1 feat bonus on any single skill check, attack roll, or damage roll.

At 11th level this bonus increases to +2. At 21st level, it increases to +3.

#### *Paragon Tier*

#### BATTLE TRANCE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Aratos, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You draw upon the might of an ancient warrior spirit of Clan Aratos and allow him to guide your actions in combat. You may use the battle trance power as a daily power.

#### BATTLE TRANCE

Feat Power

*The strength of the ancients fills you, making you stronger, faster, and harder to hit.*

**Daily** ♦ **Martial**

**Minor Action**

**Personal**

**Effect:** You gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and AC until the end of the encounter.

**Special:** You must take the Battle Trance feat to use this power.

#### *Epic Tier*

#### SPIRIT ARMOR (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13, Clan Aratos, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You call upon the spirits of the ancients to shroud your body in protective energy. As an immediate interrupt, once per encounter, you can negate any single successful attack against you.

## PARAGON PATH: KNIGHT OF ARATOS

*"The might of the ancients guides my blade."*

**Prerequisites**

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Paladin class

**Feat:** Spirit Guide

As a member of the Knights of Aratos, you have allowed fierce warrior spirits to inhabit your body. These spirits, ancient ancestors of the Aratos clan, make you faster, stronger, and guide your blade in battle. You can draw upon the power of these ancients to smite the enemies of Clan Aratos and punish the wicked.

### KNIGHT OF ARATOS PATH FEATURES

**Might of the Ancients (11th level):** You add your Wisdom modifier to the damage bonus gained from the *divine strength* class feature.

**Awe of the Ancients (11th level):** Whenever you spend an action point to take an extra action, the ancient spirits that guide you become visible for a

moment, causing adjacent enemies to take a –2 penalty on attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

**Spirit Shield (16th level):** Your gain a +2 bonus to all defenses against attacks and powers with the divine keyword.

## ***KNIGHT OF ARATOS PRAYERS***

### **SPIRIT BLADE**

Knight of Aratos  
Attack 11

*Your blade is suddenly shrouded in wisps of spectral energy. A chorus of chanting, ghostly voices fills the air, freezing the wicked in place with terror.*

**Encounter ♦ Divine, Fear, Weapon**

**Standard Action**      **Melee weapon**

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Strength vs. AC

**Hit:** 2[W] + Strength, and the target and all enemies within 3 squares are immobilized until the beginning of your next turn.

**Special:** This attack ignores the incorporeal immunity.

### **GUIDE MY BLADE**

Knight of Aratos  
Utility 12

*The spirits of your ancestors guide your hand and the hands of your allies, allowing you to strike your enemies with unerring accuracy.*

**Encounter ♦ Divine, Weapon**

**Minor Action**      **Close burst 3**

**Target:** You and each ally in burst.

**Effect:** You gain a +5 power bonus on your next attack roll, and all allies within the burst gain a +2 power bonus on their next attack roll.

### **SPIRIT STORM**

Knight of Aratos  
Attack 20

*You unleash the wrath of your ancestral spirits to smite your enemies.*

**Encounter ♦ Divine, Implement, Psychic**

**Standard Action**      **Close burst 3**

**Target:** Each enemy in burst

**Attack:** Charisma vs. Will

**Hit:** 4d10 + Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

**Miss:** Half damage, and the target is not dazed.

## CHAPTER 3: THE SOUTHLAND CLANS

### HISTORY

*As faithfully recorded in the second year of the reign of his King of the East*

**Know, O' lords**, that long before the War of Divine Right, at the height of the Dragonborn Empire, many clans marched west into the wilderness in search of a new home for their people. These clans believed that the Northland continent, dominion of their mighty empire, was being strangled by tradition and smothered under the weight of ancient laws and obscure rituals. The Code of the Dragon, they concluded, was the only true constant – the only solid foundation in a turbulent world. If the land over which the Code once reigned was no longer fit to be defended, the dragonborn would find a land that was.

Two of the greatest clans – the Durisshk and the Maahksarith – made this journey against all odds, along with a collection of minor clans. A small flight of powerful dragons, called the Silver Lords, sympathetic to the fate of their smaller brethren, guarded the clans as they ventured west, scouting their path, defending against predators, and providing counsel to the warlords.

In this age, the western coastline near the Bay of Asur gave way to a natural ice bridge formed of colossal glaciers. Yet, even these mighty icebergs could not span the vastness of the Empyrean Ocean. The dragonborn, undeterred by such barriers, labored to cross the remaining distance toward the western shores. The clans' mightiest wizards called upon elemental powers of cold and ice, while the Silver Lords used their arctic breath to freeze the very seawater in their path and fashion drifting bergs of their own. The task was momentous. It spanned months, then years, while the clan warriors fended off hazards of the ocean itself: krakens, leviathans, and serpents of the deep lured to the surface by the promise of dragonborn flesh, treasures, and magic. The few priests and druids

that numbered among the clans worked to calm the storms that scoured the surface of the ocean and all who dared to venture across it.

At last, the dragonborn reached the nameless lands just north and west of what are today known as the Southlands. Some of the minor clans disappeared from history at this point in time, though legends are still told among the bards that those clans wandered until they reached the Shadowed West. Both the Durisshk and the Maahksarith crossed Scragtooth Strait in search of a more hospitable realm. The warlords deliberated at this point, for they were weary of their journey and many desired to make their home on the monstrous island of Tarras. The Silver Lords advised against this, for they knew that dragonkind had been forced to relinquish their hold on Tarras when the Dragon Kings had fallen from power. The beasts that roamed the island had overtaken it.

Heeding the Silver Lords' counsel, the clans turned away from Tarras and continued south along the shoreline. Soon they entered the virulent lands of Dujamar, a realm even then teeming with exotic life both beautiful and dangerous. Tensions between the two clans reached a breaking point, and some of the Maahksarith warriors challenged the Durisshk for perceived insults. The Silver Lords warned them both against bloodshed, citing the Code of the Dragon and the need for unity in their race.

The enmity rising between them was also held at bay in the face of common foes: the monsters and hidden raiders of Dujamar required their full attention to survive. Sahuagin, sea hags, and other marine predators emerged from their lairs and set upon the dragonborn newcomers, unwilling to hand their territories over to the hated "draconic aggregate" who had reigned for far too long already.

When their enemies had fallen back, the tensions between Durisshk and Maahksarith returned again, now bordering on warfare. The wise among Durisshk believed the discord between them had been sowed by demonic spirits that dwelled within the land of Dujamar itself, but the voices of the

young and angry were louder still. The subsequent death of the Maahksarith clanmaster – an alleged assassination at the hands of Clan Durisshk – forced them apart forever. A vicious battle erupted between the two clans, a conflict that could have spelled the death of them both; however, the Silver Lords intervened, driving them apart with terrible and solemn fury. When the battle was ended, the silver wyrms took to the air and departed, renouncing their cousins.

The casualties of the conflict were minimal, and both clans had been humbled by the words of the Silver Lords. Shamed, the Durisshk turned away, leaving the hostile lands of Dujamar to the Maahksarith. Both Great Clans found a home here in the Southlands, lairing in very different realms and adopting very different customs. Millennia later, a third great clan would emerge from the Underdeep and rediscover their lost brethren.

## CLAN DURISSHK

*Tava rose to her feet with a snarl, her heavy sword still firmly in hand. Solid footing was hard to come by on the dais, with fine streams of acid flowing out from the Abyssal portal across the stone in uneven rivulets. With a single stroke, Tava struck down the fiend that had knocked her to the ground. She stared across the dais. A few more minor demons were slipping through the hideous planar door, which dripped with foul slime like a huge, festering maw.*

*Her body ached from grievous wounds; her muscles were beginning to cramp. She couldn't take much more of this. Her heavy plate mail was splattered with blood, much of it her own.*

*Tava turned her eyes toward the rest of the room to see how her companions were faring. Both elven priestesses were holding their own against the horde, but could not progress without some relief. The Halfling scout had been laid low – she hoped he was not dead. Dorven, the human knight, stood firmly against the demon horde, holding them back.*

*The gods have made that one mighty, Tava thought. Bless him for his courage this day. But even the formidable Dorven was losing ground, inch by inch.*

*The Criestine prince, Loran – a human boy who was their reason for being here in this fell temple*

*– stood behind them all with the talisman in hand. Terrified and waiting. If the boy couldn't reach the Abyssal portal, this battle would never end.*

*Tava stepped down from the dais, away from the portal. She'd fought hard to reach it, but her advance would mean nothing if her companions couldn't close it. She beheaded another lesser demon with a sweep of her blade, and then paused when she saw a new, larger fiend step through the portal. A vrock, a vulture-headed demon of ruin.*

*"Choranus," Tava mouthed.*

*Bolts of divine power arched across the room as her elven companions blasted the vrock with the green fire of Ireth, goddess of woodlands and the night sky. The demon screeched and an explosion of poisonous spores burst from its body – a sign that it was already weakening. But that was the elves' most powerful spell. Her companions' resources were running thin, and Tava herself was nearly spent.*

*Then she knew what she needed to do.*

*"Demon!" she spat, presenting herself in challenge. Opening her mouth, Tava expelled a cloud of frigid ice crystals into the air. Her icy breath froze two of the lesser fiends in her path, dropping them to the ground. She'd cleared a path to the greatest foe. But the vrock spared her only a brief glance, for the elves had drawn its ire.*

*No, Tava promised, you will face me.*

*She strode up behind the towering fiend. "Demon of the Abyss!" she called out. "The light of the Triad is upon you now. Face judgment!" The vrock screeched again and turned its attention fully upon her, the purest rage in its soulless, avian eyes. Tava lifted her sword in salute to the demon, then she pointed her weapon down again in submission. She relaxed her shield, as if in surrender...presenting herself.*

*"Phoenix of the Seer Father," she whispered. "May I live to fight again."*

*Seeing Tava standing defenseless, the vrock turned its fury upon her – along with three of its remaining demon allies.*

*Tava felt ironlike claws tear into her, heard the jarring crack of sundered armor, and felt the world spin beneath her – along with the warm spray of her own blood. The pain was incredible, but it was immediately overwhelmed by the soothing cold of her god's blessings. She heard the scream of the demons as they were washed in the Seer Father's divine fire. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw her companions surge forward, the horde decimated before them.*

*Consciousness fell away from Tava, but she smiled.*

*I will live to fight again.*

Rising between hidden peaks in the Anduran Mountains, the majestic donjon of the Silent Keep marks the stately presence of the Durisshk dragon-born. The clan held quiet sovereignty in this part of the Known Realms centuries before the arrival of any humans or elves, treating with the white and silver dragons who lair in frozen mountain caves and consulting with intelligent, goodly creatures wherever they found them. The ancestors of Clan Durisshk once served the Dragon King of Ice in the first ages of the world, and his wisdom is today embodied in the rulers of the clan.

The Durisshk are mystics and stargazers, dwelling in their lofty mountain home, reflecting on all that they've ever seen or experienced. Even abroad, they maintain an epic vigil over the lands they survey that, according to their legends, they were once tasked with by King of Ice himself. While they are, perhaps, the most pacifistic of all dragonborn clans, the Durisshk study the martial arts as if spoiling for the greatest of all wars. Theirs is a seemingly paradoxical point of view: extol the virtues of peace and extend the hand of fellowship, but sharpen the hidden blade in case the former are rebuffed. The Durisshk do not strive for earthly enlightenment, only the freedom of choice, and the power to defend those who require protection. They crave peace like no others but prepare for apocalypse. They have observed the cycles of violence that echo throughout the ages and throughout every society and have come to understand that aggression cannot be cleansed completely from the world. Yet they toil for peace.

Ever since the Reign of Dragons and the prophetic words of the King of Ice, Clan Durisshk maintains that they will be needed one day to forfend an event of great destruction. Some believe that this event will be the work of the entropy god Zhühn, while others believe it will be a time of unimaginable conflagration. The neighboring humans of Xulmec, who live in the mountains and the valley below the Durisshk's home, believe they must offer sacrifice to the Southland overgod Madrah so that he will have the strength to keep the sun from crashing into the earth. This frightening belief and its parallel to the Dragon King's prophecy have not gone unnoticed to the Durisshk. And so they watch, listen, and learn the stories of all faiths so that they will be ready for this inevitable conflict.

To the dragonborn of Durisshk, the strength of one's own will is paramount – with it, one can resist temptation, circumvent the path of corruptive power, and irrevocably save the world. It is their foremost belief that every intelligent being,

whether predisposed to good or evil, was born with the power of choice. With it, there is very little that cannot be achieved. The Durisshk maintain that one's choices in life will determine one's place in whatever afterlife the gods have prepared, and that the apocalypse to come can be averted if enough people choose to defy it.

The Durisshk observe the importance of the gods in the lives of mortals and respect all faiths that do not seek to dominate or destroy. While many deities may exist, the clerics, priests, and paladins of the Silent Keep turn their prayers almost exclusively to the Triad – Choranus, Ildavir, and Centivus – the three great creation gods who first set the Dragon Kings upon their thrones. Druids of Durisshk observe the Old Faith, revering the Mother of Essence, Ildavir, and her earthly creations.

Most families of the Durisshk clan carry the lineage of the King of Ice in their veins, and, therefore, expel elemental frost with their dragon breath. Known as the Teyorel, the dragonborn of this bloodline have scales that range in color from dark brown to pale sepia, or even dusky white, while their eyes are gray or red. Because of the part silver dragons played in their history, the Durisshk have a strong affinity for the cold-breathing wyrms, a large number of whom lair within the Anduran Mountains. The snowy climate of their home and the preserving properties of cold have given the Durisshk a spiritual view of the element. Ice, they surmise, can be used to preserve and to purify, or it can be fashioned into a killing weapon.

A minority subset of the clan have rust-colored, dark bronze, or deep umber scales and eyes of livid red or gold. Known as the Halaar, it is thought that these families once dallied with planar elementals generations ago, for they now breathe, without exception, elemental fire. Despite this contrast, most Halaar are Durisshk through and through and accept the King of Ice's prophecy with a different sort of charge: fight fire with fire. In fact, this dichotomy of fire and ice has given rise to experimentation in magic, cultural spiritualism, and a greater respect for the elements of the world.

Nevertheless, a subtle schism has been steadily growing between the two bloodlines, counter to the Code of the Dragon and the cultural mindset of both. Fomented by a sinister faction of Halaar dissidents, the divide is the work of a nameless Halaar arcanist who believes that a red dragon god slumbers in the neighboring Atlauhtli Mountains, also known as the Canyon Peaks. There the humans of the Xulmec city-state Chuzec perform blood sacrifices to a god of fire. This Halaar arcanist



maintains that this so-called god of fire is, in fact, an ancient red dragon newly ascended to divinity. The destiny of the Durisshk, he believes, is to serve this god, and those who resist will be incinerated by the dragon god's own fiery breath.

The true identity of Clan Durisshk begins with the actions of the Dragon Kings who ruled the first age of the world during the Reign of Dragons. Known as the King of the South and the King of Ice, he embodied patience, endurance, and resolve, and he imparted much of his wisdom to his most loyal servants. Such a one was a valiant soldier named Arlec of Clan Durisshk, one of the King's royal guard. On the eve of his own murder at the hands of the rebellious red wyrm Sevrylascarethiin, the King of Ice gifted Arlec with a secret and a warning of things to come, and then relieved him from duty. Humbled by his liege's prescience, he fled the Vault of the Dragon Kings and took his clan with him.

Though his instincts told him to stand by his King, the King's words – that have since been engraved in Aykaesik in several locations throughout Silent Keep – gave Arlec the courage he needed to turn from his duty as a royal guard: It is not cowardice, but honor, to survive and return again. There will come a day when your sword, and your sacrifice, will be needed. Live today, for you and your clan will be needed when our reign is nothing more than a memory. The Dragon King, whom Arlec had loved and respected, had told him what was about to happen, and what was to come in the far distant future. The King of Ice had known his own fate and had chosen death for the sake of the future. The dragons and dragonborn were not meant to rule forever, so goes the legend, but were destined to serve Áereth in a more important role in days to come.

Clan Durisshk joined up with Clan Maahksarith and together they fled the rebellion that consumed the land. Long before the fall of the Old Naga Empire of Zimala, the two clans, at last, reached the shores of the Southlands and went their separate ways. Searching for the Silver Lords who had helped them cross the Empyrean Ocean, Clan Durisshk ascended the Anduran Mountains where their home has remained evermore.

## ORGANIZATION

**Three offices** govern the Durisshk: the Patriarch, Matriarch, and Mysteriarch. These clanmasters make monumental decisions in concert, though each holds greatest authority in matters of their own province. The Matriarch has the final word concerning the security of the Silent Keep, while the Patriarch determines how the clan interacts with the outside world and maintains its borders. Finally, the Mysteriarch is given a province over the education of the clan. The acquisition and dissemination of arcane knowledge is in his hands. When any one of the clanmasters dies, the other two appoint a replacement.

The Patriarch must be a male paladin who embodies and serves the Code in the interests of both clan and race. He must exemplify all that the dragonborn aspire to be. The Patriarch is a master of both combat and diplomacy, and personally leads the greatest hunts, clan expeditions, and imperative quests. He marches in the vanguard of the Durisshk army whenever the clan must submit to war. The current Patriarch is Ohmak, a charismatic, if solemn, hero who spends more nights patrolling the mountains outside of the Silent Keep than within its sheltering walls. He is the idol of every young dragonborn, a pious commander with a profound respect for the Xulmec humans who live within and around the Anduran Mountains.

The Matriarch is the chief warden of Clan Durisshk, the martial and spiritual defender of the Silent Keep and all its holdings. She must be a holy warrior or cleric, serving her clan by maintaining security with blade or prayer. The Matriarch commands the Reverent Guard, an order of knights forbidden to leave the Keep or the chambers beneath it. The current Matriarch is Zerya, a stern but compassionate warrior-priestess who has earned the devotion of her people and, some believe, the heart of Ohmak himself. Such intrigue is the talk of the clan, for the Patriarch and Matriarch of Clan Durisshk are not traditionally consorted in romance or marriage. Zerya is a disciple of Ildavir, the creation goddess of the natural world.

The Mysteriarch is the keeper of the clan's secrets and histories – a chronicler, counselor, and loremaster of magic. He or she must be a wizard or warlock and an astrologer of the celestial and planar realms. While the Mysteriarch has traditionally been male, any dragonborn with sufficient knowledge can be a claimant to this noble office. The current Mysteri-

arch is a cunning wizard named Lord Narshem, a Halaar dragonborn that some theorize is the arcanist behind the schism between Halaar and Teyorel. He is a master of fire and destruction, but outwardly teaches that the power to destroy must be held in check, and that the study of death is as important as the study of life.

## THE SILENT KEEP

**A massive edifice** of stone and ice, the Silent Keep is the Southland home of Clan Durisshk. When the dragonborn first climbed into the Andurans, they were waylaid by a contingent of demons and undead abominations who had plagued the mountains since the fall of the dragon empire. Decimated by the unending attacks, the surviving members of Clan Durisshk sought refuge in a hidden canyon where the undead mysteriously refused to venture.

Within, a single cave mouth offered the only defensible position. Once the lair of a great silver dragon, it was now a solemn tomb for the remains of the wyrm and the treasure upon which it lay. The paladin-patriarch of the clan demanded that none of his people touch the wealth of the dead dragon, despite the astonishing glitter of gold and the shimmering haze of magic accoutrements it offered. He maintained a day-long vigil over the massive skeleton as the rest of Clan Durisshk prepared for the inevitable advance of the fiendish horde. Cornered by the demon army, the dragonborn made their stand. Midway through the conflict, when the tide of battle had begun to turn against the Durisshk, a spectral dragon emerged from the mouth cave. The silver wyrm, in ghostly form, spewed frost from the grave and the demon horde was all but destroyed beneath its fury. The act of summoning the spirit of the dragon claimed the life of the patriarch of Clan Durisshk, and his own body fell among the treasures of the dragon's hoard. In times of great need, the clan believes, the spirits of both the dragon and the paladin can be awakened; so, too, can the enchanted weapons of the hoard be lent at the behest of either ghost.

Around the lair of the silver dragon, the Durisshk built the Silent Keep, a great fortress wrought of both mountain rock and supernaturally reinforced ice. The caves beneath the citadel guard the clan's greatest vaults and the hatcheries. The central

donjon, a triple-towered spire mortared with magic infusions and layered thick with Aykaesik tablatures of ice, houses the chambers of the clanmasters. The highest chamber serves as an observatory for the Mysteriarch and his apprentices. Surrounding the Keep, a collection of monasteries built near the cloud-wreathed summits serve as watchtowers.

Although no dragons live within the Silent Keep itself, three benevolent silver wyrms lair within a day's march of the Durisshk fortress, one of whom, Lyrondraxel, is a direct descendant of the Silver Lords. Only in direst need do the dragonborn call upon these wyrms for aid. Ohmak himself names Lyrondraxel a personal friend and often visits the great dragon in his cave to exchange gifts and news of the larger world.

The Silent Keep is considered the ancestral home of their clan, but the Durisshk do not believe anyone – save the Matriarch herself and her Reverent Guard – should be permanently bound to it. The open road, the cities of the Known Realms, and the wilderness all beckon to the valorous Durisshk. Forging one's own destiny is an endeavor respected by the elders of the clan, even if it carries one across unimaginable distances. The dragonborn of Clan Durisshk are concentrated in the mountains and the hills of the Southlands, but adventuring youths can be found anywhere on Áereth. Most are drawn, inevitably, back to the Silent Keep in their twilight years, in order to join their ancestors in the frozen ancestral crypt.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The Durisshk** have not forgotten the Code that once held their great empire together, nor the other clans who would hold them accountable to it. They have, however, allowed the influence of their Southland neighbors to alter how they view the world. In short, the Code is still very much alive within the heart of Clan Durisshk, but they have found a new lens through which to regard such sacred truths.

Carved into the very walls of the Silent Keep, the Code reminds every scholar, warrior, and humble servant that theirs is an ancient and noble lineage. They do not believe the dragonborn, nor any dragons, should rule the world. They do not wish to bring about the Reign of Dragons again. The Dragon King of Ice, their ancestor's own liege,

had willingly submitted to death and had thereby stepped down from his throne to allow the world to change. By this example, the dragonborn know themselves to be a race of lords who choose to be servants and guardians, even willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good. There are more important roles than that of king, after all. When war comes to any kingdom, it is not the king who drives the enemy back.

**Courage:** Durisshk believe that bravery in combat is as important as the courage to make difficult decisions. Better to liberate only one slave and survive to free the others than to risk death at the hands of their captors. Remaining steadfast against one's enemies is important, but not at the expense of annihilation. Durisshk teach their kin to live and grow stronger and fight again. But, if martyrdom is inevitable, they go fearlessly into death.

**Integrity:** Whether good and evil are merely abstract ideals or primal forces, Durisshk believe that one must choose a path that observes free will. Without the power of choice, even the greatest of quests is without meaning or purpose, and even the greatest of treasures is as dust. Hatchlings are taught to choose mercy and compassion before selfishness, but that even the most altruistic of deeds must be carefully questioned in the context of will.

**Loyalty:** Durisshk believe that obedience to the clan and family is paramount, but even loyalty must be set aside if courage, integrity, or freedom of choice is compromised as a result. They serve, but of their own free will.

## DURISSHK ADVENTURERS

Once the young are old enough to make important decisions, they are given free reign over their own lives. A number of dragonborn who do not believe in the prophecy, or the attitude, that drives Clan Durisshk have left the Silent Keep to find paths of their own. The elders shake their heads but make no move to stop them. They refuse to give in to hypocrisy.

Even so, the young and the martially skilled are encouraged to explore the world far from the Silent Keep. Most Durisshk believe they will have an important place in the coming conflicts of Aëreth and ever strive to see it before it comes. Durisshk adventurers naturally take it upon themselves to identify the greatest threats and champion the weak, not content

themselves with a mercenary lifestyle earning gold and fighting for someone else's cause. The Durisshk see the bigger picture, striving to right the greatest wrongs, even if they risk all that they have. Many Durisshk who are encountered abroad are carrying out a mission on behalf of the Patriarch, searching for a lost dragonborn relic or evidence of a suspected threat.

As they possess an honest approach to combat, the Durisshk usually choose the fighter, paladin, or warlord class. An inherently spiritual clan, cleric is also not an uncommon choice. Yet one of the classes that epitomize the mindset of the Durisshk is the monk – a disciplinary master of her own will, striving for placidity and balance, yet ready to dish out violence if necessary. Wizards often favor cold-based spells as a point of metaphysical interest, while warlocks choose the star pact as part of their interest in the celestial and lofty.

The Durisshk are bold combatants, choosing heavy armor and large weapons if suitable for their class. No matter what their vocation, in battle, a Durisshk is mindful of his allies and is willing to put herself in harm's way to protect them. They are vocal about decisions made by their adventuring parties, particularly as relates to what quests are accepted, but seldom take a leadership role. As the King of Ice himself stepped down from his rulership in ages past, so the noble dragonborn must set aside her natural lordship in favor of the vigil she must make against all threats.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

##### ICE-BLOODED (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Durisshk, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You gain a +5 bonus on all Endurance checks to resist the effects of environmental dangers related to cold.

#### *Paragon Tier*

##### BREATH OF THE AVALANCHE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Durisshk, dragonborn, breath weapon deals cold damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power are pushed 2 squares.

#### *Epic Tier*

##### MINDFREEZE (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13, Clan Durisshk, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Once per encounter, when an opponent attacks you with an attack or power with the charm or psychic key words, it suffers damage equal to your dragon breath power.

## PARAGON PATH: MISTRAL KNIGHT

*"The might of the winter storm flows through my veins and guides my weapon. Like an ice phoenix, even in defeat I will rise again."*

### Prerequisites

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Paladin class

**Alignment:** Any non-evil or unaligned

You become a true paragon of Durisshk pride, a paladin devoted to the ideals of the Dragon King of Ice. You exemplify patience, stamina, intuition, loyalty, and unyielding resolve, and so your god has rewarded you with the power and fury of the winter storm. As champion of Clan Durisshk, you are a chosen sentinel for the coming age, a disciple of self-sacrifice for the greater good. When you witness acts of cruelty or evil, your chosen weapon is wreathed in the livid blue light of the ice phoenix's flame.

### MISTRAL KNIGHT FEATURES

**Mistral Knight Action (11th level):** When you spend an action point to take an extra action, all adjacent allies may spend a healing surge.

**Selfless Challenge (11th level):** As a free action, when a creature under the effect of your *divine challenge* power attacks an ally within line of sight, you may reduce the damage dealt to the ally by half, taking the remaining damage yourself.

**Ice Phoenix (16th level):** When you are reduced to 0 hit points, all adjacent enemies suffer 2d8 + Charisma modifier cold and radiant damage.

### SENTINEL OF ICE PRAYERS

#### WINTRY SMITE Mistral Knight Attack 11

*You strike your foe and ward the minds of your allies with icy resolve.*

**Encounter** ♦ **Divine, Cold, Weapon**

**Standard Action** **Melee weapon**

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Strength vs. AC

**Hit:** 3[W] + Strength modifier cold damage, and each ally within 5 squares gains immunity to charm effects until the end of your next turn.

#### SACRIFICIAL WRATH Mistral Knight Utility 12

*You selflessly draw the attacks of your enemies away from your allies, smiting your enemies with the divine power of sacrifice.*

**Encounter** ♦ **Charm, Divine**

**Standard Action** **Close burst 1**

**Target:** Each enemy in burst

**Effect:** The targets make a melee basic attack against you as a free action. If an attack hits you, you take half damage, and the target takes the other half. In addition, each target in the burst is stunned after making its attack until the end of your next turn.

#### FROST HEART Mistral Knight Attack 20

*You smite the enemies around you with the cold purity of your devotion. The energy that bursts from your holy symbol freezes and weakens the wicked.*

**Daily** ♦ **Cold, Divine, Implement, Radiant**

**Standard Action** **Close burst 10**

**Target:** Each enemy in burst

**Attack:** Charisma vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 2d8 + Charisma modifier cold and radiant damage, and the target is immobilized and weakened (save ends both).

**Miss:** Half damage, and the target is not immobilized or weakened.

## CLAN KTHONAN

Luressk looked up from his mug, aware that his vision was beginning to blur. He found a cool detachment from it, deciding to study the effects of alcohol on his system instead of his fate. His companions had left him here in the corner of this human tavern; his gray hide, rimed with scales of muted red – the mark of a Kthonan – had already drawn too much unwanted attention in this town. After five weeks on the road of taking mercenary jobs that tarnished his clan honor, Luressk almost welcomed the stupor this beverage offered him. Before drowning his sorrows, he'd given his travel companions a new decision: no more mercenary work. At least, not until they quit this gods-forsaken valley in search of something better.

*This wasn't supposed to be his destiny...was it? Was he a true Lairseeker, or just another glorified grave-robber touting the word "adventurer"?*

*"Tell him!" he heard someone across the room whisper excitedly – that halfling who'd joined up with their band last week. "Tell Luressk. He can't refuse!"*

*I certainly can, Luressk thought.*

*Arjus, a human priest of Gorhan and the closest thing their band had to a leader, appeared in Luressk's field of vision. Luressk liked him. Arjus was honest, pragmatic, and spoke vehemently about the things he believed in. Moreover, he was honorable. But he'd also been the one to choose their recent jobs – and Luressk was tired of them all.*

*"Luressk," the priest said, placing his hand on the dragonborn's shoulder. His voice was surprisingly soft and very serious. "We've just been asked to investigate the hauntings of Hordren Keep...that castle we saw on the way in to town. Do you remember it?"*

*Luressk stared into his drink and narrowed his eyes. "Now we're being called upon to chase off local spooks?" he asked, mildly alarmed to hear his own voice somewhat slurred. "You know my answer, Arjus. Leave me alone."*

*"I'm not finished." The human sat down and forced Luressk to meet his eyes. "I spoke with the keep's lord himself. Something has stirred up the catacombs beneath it, something borne of the Depths."*

*Luressk sat up straight, eyeing the priest suspiciously. But he felt a fire take hold in his gut. Arjus*

*would not lie to him. "How do you know?" he hissed, words coming clearer.*

*"There was an earthquake last week...while we were off in the forest, remember? The tremors broke apart a wall in the catacombs of Hordren Keep, and they found an open passage...and a stairwell spiraling down. They sent a pair of servants down to see where it went. One never returned at all, the other did – almost two days later."*

*Arjus smiled. "It goes deep, Luressk. Will you come?"*

*Luressk threw the mug away as if it had burned him. He stood and placed his hand instinctively on the hilt of his blade. "I will." A smile crept to the corners of his snout as he returned his companion's gaze.*

*Could this passage lead to the Sanctum? What if this was the one?*

Many assume that the Kthonan are a clanless variety of dragonborn, a loose confederation of families unsure of their place in the larger world. The rarity of encountering an entire Kthonan caravan does little to dispel this rumor. Even other dragonborn know little about them, for, since the collapse of the dragon empire, many clans have written their Kthonan brothers out of history. Less than two generations ago, the Kthonan were little more than a lingering myth, described as pale-skinned, sinister counterparts of the noble dragonborn race much in the way that drow are often compared to surface-dwelling elves. But little could be further from the truth. The Kthonan are a friendly, if reserved, clan of dragonborn with a predilection for dark places, good company, and quiet introspection. They have a voracious appetite for worldly experiences under the open sky, even when displaced from their element, steadily rediscovering the world their history had nearly forgotten.

Clan Kthonan, formerly Clan Raathen, remains one of the least understood of the disparate dragonborn clans and also one of the most scattered. Often referred to as Lairseekers – originally a derogatory term that they have happily adopted as their own – they are pilgrims obsessed with finding a place they call the Sanctum Draconic, a mythic cavern far below the surface of Áereth. While they hold to the principles common to all dragonborn, adherence to the faith of the Sanctum is paramount. Their ancestors once looked upon this cavern of legend, far beneath the surface of the world, and lost it again. In time, they emerged from the subterranean realms and returned to the world that dragons had once lorded over. The Kthonan consider their clan's descent into the Underdeep and subsequent ascent

to be a spiritual and physical rebirth of the clan.

Whether on the open road or in the depths of a dungeon, Kthonan are usually encountered alone or in pairs. When they come of age, the Kthonan are driven by the words of their elders or the spark of their own wanderlust to set out in search of the Sanctum Draconic. If they do not find it (or fail to find even a rumor of its location), they will at least find adventure, experience, and knowledge. Pursuit of the horizon is the Kthonan's best education.

The dragonborn of Clan Kthonan are leaner of body than most of their race, with scales ranging in color from slate or pale gray to tarnished bronze. Centuries of nomadic life spent in the depths of the Underdeep have darkened their scales and adapted them to subterranean exploration. They travel lightly and carry only what they need to survive and protect themselves. Perhaps paradoxically, the Kthonan search for an ascendant state of permanence like dragons searching for the perfect lair, but they eschew the wealth that true dragons covet and hoard. Theirs is a transient, ascetic way of life. Only if – or when – they find the Sanctum Draconic will they begin to hoard, as is their instinct.

Of the many rumors that do circulate about the Kthonan, one truth is universal and undisputed: the Kthonan are master dungeoneers. An adventuring party seeking to explore a hidden tomb or mysterious catacomb would do well in hiring a Kthonan scout, for these dragonborn have a passion for subterrestrial expeditions and require minimal incentive. They typically ask for less reward than more “professional” dungeon scouts, and should they befriend other adventurers, they may require nothing at all. After all, it is in a Kthonan's interest to delve belowground. Every single venture into the deep is another opportunity to find the Sanctum Draconic.

When the Reign of Dragons ended and the draconic empire lay in ruins, the dragonborn of Clan Raathen retreated into the deep caves beneath their crumbling city. Into the Underdeep itself they descended, abandoning the surface of the world that they believed had been scourged by the powers of entropy. In the subterranean darkness, they found peace from the discordant world above, as well as unimaginable danger. The Raathen were beset by denizens of the Underdeep and their numbers were thinned by their ignorance of this nether realm. But they endured, as dragonborn are known to, and, in time, the rhythms of the depths soothed their hearts and granted new vision to their elders.

For generations the Raathen wandered, a nomadic people adapting to the alien environs of the Underdeep. It wasn't until sometime during what the

sages today refer to as the Reign of Cats – when the sphinx empire of Khonsuria dominated much of the surface world of Áereth – that the patriarch of Clan Raathen, a powerful cleric named Kthonan, made his legendary discovery. Along with his wife, a warrior-general of the clan named Arissak, the legends say that a dream guided him one day to an incredible and mystic domain: a cavern so vast that it could easily have housed the collected cities of the empire all in one. Kthonan and Arissak returned to their people and told them about their discovery, calling it the Sanctum Draconic, the final homeland of all dragons and dragonborn. Several days later, they led the rest of the clan to the outskirts of this breathtaking cavern. There, on a high stone shelf, they looked down upon a beautiful, sunless realm with iridescent stalagmites and breathtaking protean forests. The dragonborn looked upon the Sanctum Draconic for the first time. And the last time.

The legends remain unclear, but most agree that an attack drove the clan away. A mighty foe with wings of darkness and eyes of godlike malice forced Kthonan and his people to retreat. Arissak and her finest soldiers held their enemy at bay long enough for their escape, but neither the general nor her warriors joined the regrouping clan. Kthonan himself, grief-stricken by the loss of his wife and sick with the creature's incurable venom, began to waste away. In the months that followed, he tried to lead his people back to the Sanctum, believing it to be the destiny of his clan and, in time, all dragon-kin. But he was unable to find it again and eventually he perished.

But the clan had seen the Sanctum with their own eyes and believed in the visions of their patriarch. They took his name as their own, becoming Clan Kthonan. After searching for the Sanctum Draconic in vain for several years, deprivation forced them to move on again. Resources had grown thin and the dangers of this deepest realm had increased. Countless generations of this nomadic lifestyle wended their path steadily, almost unknowingly, toward the surface world again. They emerged at last in what are today known as the Canyon Peaks (locally, the Atlauhtli Mountains) on the Xulmec peninsula. In their millennia-spanning exodus far beneath the world, the Kthonan dragonborn had crossed the Empyrean Ocean itself!

Though they had adapted well to the World Below, the Kthonan delighted again at the feel of the cold mountain wind and the soft caress of moonlight. Dragons and dragonborn were once the lords of all Áereth, after all, and were meant to pass through all terrains and climates. They did not shrink from the burning sun or hide from the

strange flora of the surface world. The clan made the mountainous caves their temporary home and began to scout the new world – first in small teams, large bands, and then full-scale expeditions.

And it was much to their surprise, and reserved delight, that they soon after discovered at least two other dragonborn clans living nearby, Clan Durisshk and Clan Maahksarith, along with a region whose human population had become the most dominant of the lesser races. The dragonborn of Clan Durisshk welcomed their long lost cousins, while Clan Maahksarith sought only to dominate or annihilate them altogether. The Xulmec humans, who lived among the arid hills and steamy jungles below the mountains, intrigued the Kthonan most of all. In particular, they found great interest in Xulmec theology and in their beliefs in Mictlan, the Underworld, a realm as spiritual as it is physical. Since first meeting with the strange, brown-skinned humans, the Kthonan dragonborn have often ventured down into the valley to learn the old stories of their faith. Could this Mictlan lead back to the Sanctum Draconic? The world was not the same as the one the Kthonan dragonborn had left behind millennia ago. For less than two generations now, the clan has dwelt on the surface of Áereth again. The elders have not given up their hope of finding the Sanctum again, and they have passed their stories and traditions on to their children. The mythic homeland of all dragons has been seeded into their culture and their hearts. Now, the youngest generation is conflicted: should they try to find their place on the surface of Áereth, as the other Great Clans have, or should they delve beneath the earth again in search of the paradise their great ancestor had found? No matter their choice, every dragonborn of Clan Kthonan hears the siren cry from the depths of the world, calling them to search again.

The prophetic words of Kthonan himself still resonate today, along with the belief that the gods have provided paths to the Sanctum Draconic, no matter how far from “home” they have wandered. Finding any of those legendary passages is the overarching goal of the entire clan and the personal dream of every descendant of Kthonan.

## PEREGRINATION

**The Kthonan** believe there is only one true lair for their kind, and, until they find it again, they consider themselves homeless. Since reaching the surface of Áereth many years ago, the families that comprise the clan have scattered to the winds of the Known Realms. Some see them as gypsies or refugees, dragonborn families wandering in ragtag caravans with no geographic foundation of their own. The Kthonan prefer to see themselves as pilgrims in search of their true, gods-given home. They can be found in any part of the world, from the humid jungles of the Southlands to the burning deserts of the Lostlands to the cold grasslands of Northlands – listening, watching, and delving every ruin and dungeon they can find for passages into the Underdeep. Some families still wander almost exclusively beneath the surface, but most clan elders believe that the answer to finding the hidden paths to the Sanctum Draconic will come from studying the histories and cultures of the modern kingdoms.

Despite their cultural peregrination, several extended families of Clan Kthonan still dwell in the Canyon Peaks of the Southlands. Many Kthonan families believe that the stories of Mictlan, the Xulmec Underworld, may hold the secret to the Sanctum Draconic and work patiently on maintaining ties with the more benevolent human priests precisely for this purpose. These families live in series of natural caves at the base of the mountains, and they’ve expanded them only partially to accommodate their numbers. From the outside, these caves are concealed within the mountain terrain and accessible only through secret doors in the rock face. From the inside, the caverns are beautiful, elaborately sculpted wonders of draconic artistry, as defensible as they are comfortable for a dragonborn, anyway.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The Kthonan** view the Code of the Dragon as an ideal that runs parallel to their pilgrimage. Where other clans see the Code as a foundation on which to base one's life, the Kthonan see the tenets as prerequisites to finding the Sanctum Draconic. Obeying the Code is vital, but incorporating it into one's own moral base – into one's own heart – is more worthy of admiration. From an early age, the Kthonan are taught by their elders that to achieve his destiny, a dragonborn must possess the courage to face his enemies, integrity to resist the dangers (both physical and otherwise), and unswerving loyalty to his companions.

**Courage:** Kthonan believe that there are many enemies, traps, and obstacles between them and the Sanctum Draconic. Only by raising their weapons – be they blade, spell, or prayer – against all hazards can paradise be won. There is no shame in fear, for it is often a symptom of unassailable odds, a reason to turn away. This is tolerable and expected. But a Kthonan must, in time, overcome it.

**Integrity:** Not all threats are so tangible, and so elders have taken it upon themselves to teach young Kthonans the stories of the past and the values they must acquire to resist the dangers unseen. Many of these tales echo from their clan's history far beneath the surface of the world. Some may wonder if their lessons apply in the World Above. However, their integrity will be proven through resolving the morals of their history with those extolled by the clans beneath the sun.

**Loyalty:** The Kthonan are not meant to find the Sanctum Draconic without help. The labyrinthine tunnels beneath the surface of Áereth hold dangers that even the most undaunted of their clan cannot defeat alone. Kthonan believe that camaraderie and friendship are more essential to their mission than the armor they wear. Better to brave the depths without a weapon than without an ally you can trust with your life – for there will certainly come a day when you must.

## ORGANIZATION

**Clan Kthonan** has no overarching leader. Each caravan, or califen, chooses its own honorary figurehead, usually the eldest cleric or monk. Most califens are comprised of three or four families, and each family has a female figurehead known as riani who speaks for its members.

When one califen crosses paths with another, the two cease their travels and form a moot. During this time, the many maps that each califen has produced are organized, linked together, and copied for the other. These scrolls include maps of dungeons they've found and identified, as well as regional maps and the locations of these dungeons. In this way, Clan Kthonan steadily increases its knowledge of the castles, ruins, and dungeons of Áereth, as well as the placement of each within the context of the Known Realms, so they might better determine the location of the Sanctum Draconic. In addition, many Kthonan make the pilgrimage to the Forbidden City when in the Northlands, in order to archive and crosscheck their maps with others' set into the innumerable archive walls within the Halls of Qae.

When a Kthonan comes of age and has mastered her chosen skills, she is expected to set out into the world on her own, for a time, before returning to her family and califen. Many choose to make this journey alone, but they may, instead, make this journey with one other, usually a sibling, lover, or true friend. Loose plans are made so that she will be able to find her califen again in several years' time, but the Kthonan are skilled in identifying the Aykaesik emblems of their califen. Few are the Kthonan unable to unite with their family again; usually, it is only violence, circumstance, or fate that can prevent this reunion.



## KTHONAN ADVENTURERS

**The nomadic lifestyle** and unified cultural quest of Clan Kthonan compliments the goals of an adventurer very well, and, for this reason, the clan produces more adventurers than any other dragonborn clan. From the moment of birth, the Kthonan are nurtured with tales of adventure.

Almost all Kthonan adventures are rangers, rogues, bards, or monks. Rangers beginning their careers are often pathfinders, hiring themselves out to prospectors or other adventurers to scout potentially hostile or labyrinthine tunnels. In time, they are apt to quietly lead adventuring bands of their own, choosing which missions – and which dungeons – to accept next. Throughout their careers, rogues of Clan Kthonan serve as guides and trapfinders for more adventuring companies, utilizing their dungeoncraft to keep them alive. Kthonan monks serve as spiritual bodyguards for their allies, focusing their destiny as heirs of the Sanctum into martial skill. Monks exemplify the ascetic nature of the clan, choosing knowledge and wisdom over the acquisition of material wealth. Finally, bards of Clan Kthonan are the lorekeepers and storytellers, bolstering their companions with spells of inspiration and glory.

No matter which class a Kthonan chooses, he remains utilitarian in his selection of weapons, armor, and equipment, possessing only what he can carry with him at all times. He maintains only enough gold for the purchase of food and to fund his adventuring lifestyle. A Kthonan is often willing to give his share of the party gold to his companions, so that they might increase their own power. The Kthonan's interpretation of the Code of the Dragon teaches that trustworthy allies are more important than one's own equipment, and the Kthonan take this very seriously. Since they often traverse the narrow tunnels of the World Below, Kthonan favor small or light arms, seldom carrying large weapons or wearing bulky armor.

Other clans often wonder why any dragonborn would choose to spend so much time in darkness, for their race does not possess the darkvision that dragons enjoy. While their eyes are no sharper in the darkness than a human's, the Kthonan dragonborn have perfected the art of illumination. Every califen produces mossrods, alchemical devices crafted with carefully cultivated subterranean lichen, that can illuminate as dimly as a candle or as bright as a torch using colorful bioluminescence. No

adventuring Kthonan sets out without a supply of mossrods in his possession.

### CLAN FEATS

#### *Heroic Tier*

DUNGEON DELVER (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Clan Kthonan, dragonborn, trained in Dungeoneering

**Benefit:** You gain a +5 bonus on all Endurance checks to resist the effects of environmental dangers while underground.

#### *Paragon Tier*

ECHOLOCATION BREATH (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Con 15, Clan Kthonan, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Once per day, you can choose to have your dragon breath power deal thunder damage. In addition, you receive a +2 feat bonus on attack rolls to hit all targets damaged by your dragon breath power until the end of the encounter.

#### *Epic Tier*

CAVESIGHT (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Wis 13, Clan Kthonan, dragonborn, Dragonborn Senses

**Benefit:** You gain blindsight equal to your Wisdom modifier when underground.

## PARAGON PATH: DEEPSEEKER

*"I know the paths of the World Below better than its own children. Even the unending darkness cannot hide you from my blade."*

**Prerequisites**

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Rogue class

**Feat:** Dungeon Delver

**Trained Skill:** Dungeoneering

You are a true pathfinder of Clan Kthonan, able to traverse the depths of the Underdeep with ease and overcome even its deadliest inhabitants. You are a scout and assassin, revealing hidden enemies that lurk in the darkness and guiding your allies to safety in the world's most dangerous terrain.

### DEEPSEEKER PATH FEATURES

**Deepseeker Action (11th level):** When you spend an action point to take an extra action, all allies within 5 squares gain a +2 bonus on their next attack roll, damage roll, or skill check.

**Expert Delver (11th level):** You gain a +2 bonus to Athletics, Dungeoneering, and Stealth checks. These bonuses increase to +3 when you are underground.

**Deep Sight (16th level):** You gain darkvision.

### DEEPSEEKER EXPLOITS

#### INSENSATE STRIKE Deepseeker Attack 11

*You strike a delicate nerve center on your opponent's body, rendering him blind and deaf.*

**Encounter ♦ Martial, Weapon**

**Standard Action** **Melee weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a light blade.

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Dexterity +4 vs. AC

**Hit:** 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is blinded and deafened (save ends both).

#### SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT Deepseeker Utility 12

*You pinpoint your enemies' locations, despite all obfuscations erected to fool you.*

**Encounter ♦ Martial**

**Minor Action** **Personal**

**Effect:** You gain the ability to pinpoint the location of all creatures within 5 squares until the end of your turn. You can target any one of these creatures within line of sight as if it did not have cover or concealment.

#### ROCKSLIDE STRIKE Deepseeker Attack 20

*You use the rocky terrain to push your opponent into another enemy and send them both sprawling.*

**Daily ♦ Martial, Weapon**

**Standard Action** **Melee weapon**

**Requirement:** You must be wielding a light blade.

**Primary Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Dexterity vs. AC

**Hit:** 4[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and you slide the target a number of squares equal to 1 + your Dexterity modifier, and the target is knocked prone. If you slide the primary target into a square occupied by an enemy, make a secondary attack.

**Secondary Target:** One creature

**Secondary Attack:** Dexterity vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.

## CLAN MAAHKSARITH

*Erujik kept his head angled down, allowing only his blunted, dragonlike snout to reveal his heritage. The cool night wind sweeping in from the bay rustled his unremarkable cloak. His appearance conveyed mystery, quietude, and a sufficient measure of danger. Perfect.*

*"You there!" a gruff human voice shouted from above, as expected.*

*Erujik paused, and lifted his head only slightly to look upon the tall, portly, bearded man who stood at the top of the gangplank. The human had an eye patch – was it mere affectation, or evidence that he'd been bested once – and wore a cutlass on his belt that verily glowed with power. This was likely the pirate ship's own captain. Convenient.*

*Erujik said nothing, merely returning the man's gaze.*

*"You one of them Maahks?" the human said with more bluster than his physique merited. "You be knowin' the sea?"*

*Erujik lifted one hand, allowing the distant lamp-light and brighter moonlight to glint off his black-scaled claws. Confirmation enough for this slab of human bacon. Everyone knew that the Maahksarith were the only dragonborn of such coloration, and everyone knew that Maahksarith "knew" the sea better than any human did. In his grip, Erujik held a short blade. A paltry weapon one might assume but it was also, in fact, a remarkable conduit for his pact magic.*

*Erujik shrugged. "I know starboard from port, if that's what you mean." Beneath the bulk of his cloak, he wore the trappings of a warlock and the unrestricted clothing of a swimmer.*

*"My first mate's gone missin', see," the human grunted with irritation.*

*"Missing?" Erujik prompted.*

*"He ain't comin' back." The human looked up at the sleepy port town. "Pro'bly passed out somewhere."*

*Well, yes and no, Erujik thought. He indulged a glance further down the wharf, where a collection of decrepit warehouses hid a filthy alley. There lay the "missing" first mate, dead: a scorched husk, victim of Erujik's demon-gifted fire. But the captain didn't need to know that.*

*"Sorry to hear it," Erujik said.*

*"Right. Well," The human fixed him with an*



appraising stare and, if Erujik wasn't mistaken, a measure of attempted intimidation. The pirate placed one hand casually on the hilt of his cutlass. "So I'm down one deck hand, see. You int'rested in some work, dragon man? I need to set out right quick."

Legitimate privateering, Erujik wondered, or outright piracy? Not that it mattered.

He waited for the appropriate length of time before responding. "There would be suitable compensation?"

"Aye," the human replied, then quoted him a typical crewman's "wage." Lower-tier work, less silver than any self-respecting Maahksarith would accept. This human swine took Erujik for an idiot...for now.

Humans and other slave races always underestimated his kind, regarding them as little more than dull-witted lizardfolk. It was an assumption that Erujik and his clan would one day correct. In the meantime, it worked to his advantage.

Erujik negotiated a slightly higher payment, conveying to the captain only what he wanted to: I am smart enough that you cannot simply gangpress me into crewing your ship, but not smart or dangerous enough that you need to worry about trouble from me.

But I am trouble, he thought with an inner smile.

Erujik had once commanded great respect in his clan, ruling seven families by the power of his infernal patrons. Then he'd been ousted by another, cast out from Dujamar until he would return with power enough to atone for his failing. This pirate ship, a hold full of stolen gold and priceless relics would be that atonement, soon enough.

"Climb aboard the Wave Shark, then, dragon dog!" the captain said with a friendly shout. He beckoned with one meaty hand. "She's yer new home. We'll see if we can't find you a bunk ... or whatever."

"I heard the first mate's cabin is available," Erujik said with a toothy smile.

The captain laughed at his joke and stepped aside at the top of the plank.

And, soon enough, the captain's will be, Erujik mused.

Hidden among the rocky shoals of the perilous islands of Dujamar is a clan of dragonborn unlike any other. Dark-scaled, sinister-minded, and as comfortable in the salty narrows as any Sahuagin, the dragonborn of Clan Maahksarith comprise a hostile collection of tribes interested chiefly in increasing their power and conquering their enemies

– of which they have many. Like most societies in the Southlands, they are driven to be where they are, and do what they do based on spiritual beliefs alone. For Clan Maahksarith, it is nothing less than the purification of their race and the reinstatement of the dragonborn as the true rulers of Áereth. To enact this grandiose ambition they bide their time and acquire the necessary resources. The gold, valuable possessions, and magical trappings of those they ensnare are a good first step.

Dujamar is a land infamous for its inhospitable and deadly environs. Sahuagin lurk beneath the waters in the endless network of shallows and straits, while deadly animal life, natural or otherwise, prowls the islands in search of flesh, blood, and bodily hosts. Rumors of fouler beings – hags and trolls chief among them – are reason enough for most sea captains to give this realm a wide berth. Yet rumor also propagates about the treasures and trappings of sailors and pirates who have braved the waterways. Such tales lure still more adventurers and seekers of fortune into the deadly shallows of Dujamar. Most are instigated by the dragonborn of Clan Maahksarith. Few know about these marine dragonoids, and fewer still connect them to the ancient draconic people who reached the Southlands before humans walked free.

The Maahksarith like it that way. They are the hidden rulers, the spiders at the center of the web who lie in wait, who dream up grander exploits than the Sahuagin ever have. Recently, the Maahksarith have spread the rumor out among pirates and merchants in the nearby Sea of Desperation that there is a “golden passage,” a safe, passable trade route that passes through the otherwise perilous islands of Dujamar and clear through to the Emyrean Ocean. Securing such a trade route would reduce the travel time for such voyages many times over, and would ensure a steady flow of gold for the finder. This ruse has already brought a supply of victims into Maahksarith traps and Sahuagin ambushes.

While the sea devils lurk beneath the waves in their undersea territories, surfacing only to raid the land-dwelling travelers and communities, the Maahksarith live above the waves amid innumerable rocky isles, and use both land and water as their ambushing ground. They lay elaborate traps that combine mechanical and magical ingenuity, vanquishing their victims before they have time to bring their defenses to bear.

Clan Maahksarith has thrown off many of the traditions by which all the other dragonborn clans still live. Foolish traditions, they believe, that brought the entire dragon empire crashing down

in the first place. Nevertheless, the Maahksarith do adhere to the Code of the Dragon, for they still proudly associate themselves with the avatar Dragon Kings, but their interpretation of it is markedly cynical by comparison. The Maahksarith do not see themselves as evil, merely a race wrongly dethroned from the seat of divine rulership. Only by seizing power again can they shape Áereth as it was meant to be, and bring order to the lesser races.

At the core of Maahksarith, culture is an association with infernal spirits who dwell within the earth of the Southlands. Known as the arhuamex (ar-WUH-mesh), some maintain that these creatures are a bodiless fey exiled from their home plane, while others see them as earthbound demons imprisoned by the gods themselves. Without corporeal hosts to carry out their will, the arhuamex are individually impotent, little more than whispering ghosts who congregate and haunt the lands of Dujamar and Tarras. But, when the dragonborn of Clan Maahksarith settled in this region thousands of years ago, the arhuamex had at last found sympathetic allies. The Maahksarith, in turn, found a kinship in these dejected, hateful spirits, and together the two have formed mutual malice toward the world. The Maahksarith do not revere the arhuamex as gods by any means, but do offer them great respect for the power they grant. Those dragonborn who are courageous and skilled enough, permanently bond with these spirits to become warlocks.

The elemental breath of the Maahksarith families is almost exclusively poisonous in nature. Rare families breed dragonborn capable of expelling fire or electricity. Both time and the ancient, equivocal magic of the Southlands have altered the bodies of the Maahksarith, and now they little resemble the rust-colored dragonborn who first arrived in Dujamar millennia ago. Their scaly hides range in color from slate gray to coal to swart black, sometimes offset by subtle patches of red or teal scales. The hornlike scales that hang like hair are thinner and sparser on the Maahksarith, but thicker spines grow from their necks and backs. All of them sport impressive reptilian dewlaps unseen in any other dragonborn clan. The spiny crest that runs across the back is larger in the males. The Maahksarith have red or black eyes set further to the side of their heads than most dragonborn.

The Maahksarith largely subsist on marine algae growing from the rocks and reefs in the shallow waters beneath the waves. But like all dragonborn, meat remains a favored staple of their diet. The Maahksarith have only one caveat to this: they may only consume the flesh of a creature that they personally

kill. On the field of battle, a dragonborn who slays an enemy lays first claim to the enemy's flesh. The only creatures the Maahksarith are forbidden to consume are dragons, dragonborn, or drakes. They have no qualms about devouring the flesh of humans, elves, dwarves, and all the common races; indeed, these "slave races" are considered the children of the gods and are therefore a delicacy. Larders are maintained within Maahksarith holds, so that the young may kill and consume their own meat more easily.

When the clans scattered at the fall of the Dragon Kings' empire, the Maahksarith dragonborn joined up with Clan Durisshk in their flight westward. Naturally gifted with sorcery, they assisted their cousins in the longsuffering venture of quitting the Northland continent altogether. Deadly spells brought down the enemies that rose before them, and elemental spells helped to freeze the seawater that barred their passage. Tensions began to rise between the elders of both clans when they reached the Southland realms. Born of philosophical differences, the enmity rising between them was held at bay in the face of common foes; the monsters and hidden raiders of Dujamar required their full attention to survive. Sahuagin, sea hags, and other marine predators emerged from their lairs and set upon the dragonborn newcomers, unwilling to hand their territories over to the hated "draconic aggregate," who had reigned for far too long already.

When their enemies had fallen back, the tensions between the Durisshk and the Maahksarith returned again, now bordering on warfare. The wise among Durisshk believed the discord between them had been sown by demonic spirits of Dujamar itself, but the voices of the young and angry were louder still. The subsequent death of the Maahksarith clanmaster, a wizard of the Vurlai family – an alleged assassination at the hands of Clan Durisshk – forced them apart forever. After a single, vicious battle with minimal casualties the Durisshk traveled south beyond Dujamar, leaving the hazardous islands in the hands of their Maahksarith cousins.

In truth, the son of the Maahksarith clanmaster, a young wizard named Yarash, had murdered his own father to rid himself of Durisshk influence and seize rulership of his own clan before his time. Yarash had become the clan's first warlock, forming a pact with the arhuamex, with whom he had first made contact. Persuaded by their promises of power and domination, the ambitious dragonborn set a new direction and philosophy for his people, a ripple that would take only centuries to see fruition.

## GROTTOS AND GUARDIANS

**The Maahksarith** have lived in the land of Dujamar for a long time. Even before humans arrived on the peninsula of Xulmec (upon the fall of the nagas' Zimalan Empire), the Maahksarith were there, so they have had plenty of time to shape their lairs accordingly. They have carved comfortable and well-concealed chambers within the islands. From the waterways, or from the air, they appear as nothing more than natural grottos and sea caves. Behind this exterior, extensive tunnels and chambers comprise the homes, larders, prisons, vaults, and training grounds of Clan Maahksarith.

The Maahksarith have little fear of invasion from outside of Dujamar. The naturally treacherous channels between the islands and the insidious traps they lay have never failed them. However, the Sahuagin who dwell in their undersea realm below pose a constant threat. Although the savage sea devils have never been organized enough for a concerted attack against the more cunning Maahksarith, the water gives them the advantage. Therefore, the dragonborn have fashioned their caves to be defensible from both above and below. Many of their chambers serve as treasure-laden decoys; trap-rigged caves that flood with water and magically seal themselves when the Sahuagin raiders enter. Spells that boil the enclosed water or cause it to flow with poison are a Maahksarith favorite. The large number of Sahuagin zombies that now guard Maahksarith lairs are a testimony to the dragonborn ruthlessness.

The deepest and most guarded chambers of the Maahksarith caves are treasure vaults. There they hoard silver, gold, platinum, and magical items. Enchanted armaments not immediately useful to increasing Maahksarith prowess are dissolved into residuum, collected, and stored under the watchful eyes of the warlocks whose servants captured them.

Against the foolish sailors and pirates they have lured into their domain, the Maahksarith employ many ingenious traps. One such method includes layering spiked chains across narrow channels just below the surface of the water. When ships are arrested by the chains, they are drawn back into their rocky alcoves in opposite directions, sawing the hull into splinters. Nets farther below catch the scuttled pieces of the ship and any treasure in their possession. Most of the crew are slain outright, or captured to stock the larders. Maahksarith do keep non-dragonborn slaves, but only in small numbers;

they do not wish to risk a revolt, having learned from other cultures that have made this mistake.

In addition, the Maahksarith have learned to ally and breed some of Dujamar's native predators. Many of the sea drakes who swim through the channels have been charmed, subdued, or otherwise coerced into bearing the clan's patrol warriors and war-time cavalry, while a number of wyverns who lair in rocky aeries have been tamed into submission for aerial patrol. The zairata themselves each own a demon-blooded wyvern bred solely for their use.

## ORGANIZATION

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**Warlocks** are considered the nobility of the Maahksarith for all intents and purposes. They are as shamans to the clan, domineering leaders who employ the power of the arhuamex and defy the gods who betrayed the dragonborn race. The gods have erred, say the warlocks, and will one day be pulled down from the heavens by the Maahksarith themselves.

In addition, the warlocks and their infernal advisors have seeded their society with the belief that theirs is the only dragonborn clan worthy of rulership. As the other clans are sure to defy Clan Maahksarith's destiny, they are to be subjugated or eliminated altogether. All dragonborn who submit to their rule may serve as second-class citizens in the world to come; those who do not shall be killed. The notion of ethnic cleansing has steadily increased over time and has polarized the clan into two philosophical sides. The vast majority of Maahksarith have zealously embraced the warlocks' rulership, while the wisely softer-spoken minority struggles to survive in this one-sided political landscape. This minority clings stubbornly to the Code of the Dragon as it used to be interpreted, and has been known to send out heroes to warn other clans against the growing Maahksarith threat.

Although the Maahksarith were once ruled by the bloodline of Yarash Vurlai, time has worn away the tyrannical grip that family held over the clan. Today, numerous factions – little more than glorified gangs – vie for rulership of Clan Maahksarith against one another. Each faction is led by a zairat, a warlock of considerable power and influence, and each possesses his or her own ideas on how to lead the clan to conquest against all other dragonborn and the world at large. The first step in their schemes involves the defeat of all other factions.

Charismatic and powerful, the zairat of each faction has different ideas about how the clan ought to achieve its goals. A Maahksarith faction cannot fulfill its destiny until all the other factions are subdued, so a savvy political war rages among them. It is considered a crime for a Maahksarith dragonborn to kill another, so the conflict is a series of bullying tactics, humiliations, and formal duels. Although the Vurlai family no longer rules the clan, its warlocks are possessed of sinister powers unavailable to others, and its zairat is without equal. An elder green dragon female named Korasyntaara has recently allied itself with the Vurlai bloodline, which has made the family a greater threat than it has had been for many years. However, rumors abound that this shift in the balance has attracted the attention of other dragons...or worse, that they are seeking to align themselves with rival factions.

Far from lands of Dujamar and the machinations of the zairata, the loyalty to one's own faction inevitably breaks down. A dragonborn encountering another of his clan but of a different faction will find camaraderie easier to come by. Often such dragonborn will work together to bring wealth and magic back to their homeland for the common glory of the Maahksarith clan. When they do return, they must decide whether to maintain their personal alliance or let it dissolve under the charismatic influence of their zairat.

## THE CODE OF THE DRAGON

**The dragonborn** of Maahksarith do believe in a system of honor, but it is not what it once was. Their interpretation of the Code of the Dragon is barely recognizable by all other dragonborn.

**Courage:** Maahksarith believe that you cannot change the world until you control it. To control it you must seize it by force. The end justifies the means. Hatchlings are taught to not be afraid of spilling the blood of those who stand in their way, for the gods have not made a perfect world and such violence is inevitable. Cowardice in the face of those one should govern brings its own reward – death.

**Integrity:** Maahksarith know that the others have betrayed them. The only constants they can depend on are the truths Clan Maahksarith has made for itself. They trust only in the teachings of the wise zairata, and give dominion to no other.\*

**Loyalty:** Maahksarith believe that their race is destined to rule all of the Known World. When the gods abandoned their kind, they renounced all debts owed to them for the gift of life. They give obedience and loyalty to their clan above all, for in time it will be the only clan left standing.

## MAAHSARITH ADVENTURERS

*\*Older incarnations of the Maahksarith Code of the Dragon that escaped alteration read "Trust only in the teachings of the clanmaster of Maahksarith." The very notion that the Aykaesik runes used to convey the Code of the Dragon have ever been altered is enough to infuriate the dragonborn of any other clan...as well as many of the Maahksarith truer of heart.*

**There** are two varieties of adventurers from Clan Maahksarith. The first and most common is he who ventures out into the larger world to acquire wealth, power, and knowledge for his faction, with the ultimate goal of defeating the other factions and uniting the entire clan under his zairat's rulership. Only then can the true Maahksarith conquest begin. The second and less common adventurer from Clan Maahksarith is the renegade who knows she must either warn other dragonborn about her clan's ambitions or acquire the power needed to liberate her clan from the infernal spirits who hold sway over it.

Either way, the acquisition of power is a driving force for the Maahksarith, which makes the adventuring life a logical path for those dragonborn willing to leave their homeland of Dujamar. The cultural obsession with magical trappings ingrains in them the need for power, for power is needed if one is to set the world right. Even the best-intentioned Maahksarith believe she must throw down her enemies if she is to quell all violence under one banner.

Of course, Maahksarith are predisposed to choosing the warlock class. Even those dragonborn who defy the tyrannical schemes of their clan sometimes make a pact with fey spirits to counter the infernal influence of the zairata. The Maahksarith are all too willing to bargain for immediate power. Rangers and rogues are a natural fit for these crafty dragonborn, and even druids, manipulators of the natural world, are seen among the Maahksarith. Clerics and paladins are extremely rare for this god-hating clan, but not so among the renegades. Wiz-

ards are the common selection for those Maahksarith less willing to place trust in other beings, for they know that magic will be needed to bolster or foil their clan's endgame. A large percentage of adventuring Maahksarith embrace the pirate life.

## FEATS OF CLAN MAAHSARITH

### Heroic Tier

SEA BROTHER (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Con 13, Clan Maahksarith, dragonborn, trained in Athletics

**Benefit:** You gain a +3 bonus to Athletic checks that pertain to swimming. You can also hold your breath underwater for an additional minute outside of strenuous situations. In strenuous situations underwater, such as combat, you gain a +2 bonus to the Endurance check made at the end of any round in which you suffer damage.

### Paragon Tier

BREATH OF NULLIFICATION (DRAGONBORN, WARLOCK, WIZARD)

**Prerequisites:** Warlock, Wizard, Clan Maahksarith, dragonborn

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power cannot use attacks or powers with the arcane keyword until the end of your next turn.

### Epic Tier

BORN OF THE DEEP (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Str 15, Clan Maahksarith, dragonborn, training in Athletics

**Benefit:** You gain a swim speed equal to your land speed.

## PARAGON PATH: VENOMANCER

*"My soul is filled with the venom of ancient and terrible powers. Come closer, and let me share its wisdom with you."*

**Prerequisites**

**Race:** Dragonborn

**Class:** Warlock class

**Pact:** Infernal

**Alignment:** Any evil or unaligned

As one of the feared warlocks of Clan Maahksarith, you have made terrible pacts and bargains with the worst of the arhuamex that embody poison and corruption. You draw upon this fiendish power to

poison your enemies, while embracing the same toxins and venoms like soothing ambrosia.

### VENOMANCER PATH FEATURES

**Venomancer Action (11th level):** When you spend an action point to take another action, all enemies currently affected by your Warlock's Curse take ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

**Toxic Blast (11th level):** As a free action, you may change the damage dealt by your eldritch blast power to poison damage.

**Malignant Sting (16th level):** When an enemy under your Warlock's Curse is reduced to 0 hit points, you may, instead of receiving temporary hit points equal to your level, inflict additional poison damage equal to your level on your next successful attack. If multiple opponents are reduced to 0 hit points at the same time or in the same round, the poison damage does not stack.

### VENOMANCER SPELLS

#### POISON THE SOUL Venomancer Attack 11

*You smite your enemy with a perfusion of infernal venom that burns his flesh and scars his soul.*

**Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement, Poison**  
**Standard Action**      **Ranged 5**

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** Constitution vs. Will

**Hit:** 3d8 + Constitution modifier poison damage, and the target gains vulnerability 5 poison (save ends).

#### VIRULENT INVIGORATION Venomancer Utility 12

*The venom that suffuses your soul counters and purifies poison from other sources.*

**Encounter ♦ Arcane**

**Immediate Reaction**      **Personal**

**Trigger:** You are hit with an attack with the poison key word.

**Effect:** You take no damage from the attack, and regain 10 + Constitution modifier hit points. You also gain resist 5 + Constitution modifier poison until the end of the encounter.

#### BREATH OF THE ARHUAMEX

Venomancer Attack 20

*You breathe forth a roiling cloud of toxic vapors that blind and poison your enemies.*

**Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Poison, Zone**  
**Standard Action**      **Close blast 5**

**Target:** Each creature in burst

**Attack:** Constitution vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 2d8 + Constitution modifier poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).

**Effect:** The burst creates a zone of toxic gas that blocks line of sight until your next turn. Creatures that enter the zone or start their turns inside the zone take 2d8 + Constitution modifier poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends). As a move action, you can move the zone up to 6 squares.

3





## CHAPTER 4: *NEW FEATS*

### *Heroic Tier Feats*

Any feat in the following section is available to dragonborn characters of any level who meet the prerequisites. These feats are the only feats permitted to characters of 10th level and lower.

**AWE OF THE DRAGON-KINGS (DRAGONBORN, CLERIC)**

**Prerequisites:** Channel divinity class feature, cleric, dragonborn

**Benefit:** You may use the awe of the dragon-kings power as an encounter power.

### **CHANNEL DIVINITY:** Feat Power **AWE OF THE DRAGON-KINGS**

*Reptilian beasts cower at your feet, recognizing your ancient heritage.*

**Encounter ♦ Divine, Implement**

**Standard Action**      **Close burst 2 (5 at 11th level, 8 at 21st level)**

**Target:** Each creature in the burst with the reptile keyword.

**Attack:** Charisma vs. Will

**Effect:** You push the target a number of squares equal to your Charisma modifier. The target is immobilized and may not attack you until the end of your next turn.

**Special:** You must take the Awe of the Dragon-Kings feat to use this power.

**BLIGHTSTRIKE (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals poison damage

**Benefit:** You can use the blightstrike power as a daily power.

### **BLIGHTSTRIKE** Feat Power

*You lick your blades, coating them with deadly poison.*

**Encounter ♦ Poison, Weapon**

**Free Action**      **Personal**

**Target:** One creature

**Effect:** You deal an additional 1d8 poison damage with a successful melee attack.

Increase the poison damage to 2d8 at 11th level, and 3d8 at 21st level.

**Special:** You must take the Blight Strike feat to use this power.

**COLD-BLOODED KILLER (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals cold damage

**Benefit:** You can use the cold-blooded killer power as an encounter power.

### **COLD BLOODED KILLER** Feat Power

*You slay your enemy with a cold efficiency, and then draw upon your draconic ancestry to smite his allies with icy wrath.*

**Encounter ♦ Cold**

**Standard Action**      **Close burst 3**

**Trigger:** You reduce an enemy to 0 hit points or below.

**Target:** Each creature in burst

**Effect:** All enemies in the burst take cold damage equal to your Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity modifier.

**Special:** You must take the Cold-Blooded Killer feat to use this power.

#### CHAIN DRAGON BREATH (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power.

**Benefit:** When you use your dragon breath racial power you may target up to three creatures. The first target must be within 5 squares of you, the second target within 5 squares of the first, and the third target within 5 squares of the second. You must make an attack roll for each target.

#### CLAN WEAPON TRAINING (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, you must belong to one of the Great Clans

**Benefit:** You gain proficiency and a +2 bonus to damage rolls with a specific type of weapon, based on your clan, as shown below.

Clan Karkonus	Spears
Clan Kengi	Heavy Blade
Clan Aratos	Light Blade
Clan Daigo	Heavy Blade
Clan Durisshk	Heavy Blade
Clan Kthonan	Picks and Light Blade
Clan Maahksarith	Light Blade

4

#### DRACONIC INSPIRATION (DRAGONBORN, WARLORD)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, inspiring word class feature, warlord

**Benefit:** When your inspiring word power causes an ally to spend a healing surge, he regains additional hit points equal to your Constitution modifier.

#### DRAGON BREATH OPPORTUNIST (DRAGONBORN, ROGUE)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, rogue, sneak attack class feature

**Benefit:** You gain combat advantage against targets damaged by your dragon breath power until the end of your next turn.

#### DRAGON KNIGHT'S GRACE (DRAGONBORN, PALADIN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, lay on hands class feature, paladin

**Benefit:** When you use your lay on hands power on a comrade, the comrade gains resist 5 against the type of damage inflicted by your dragon breath power until the end of the encounter.

#### DRAGON MAGE'S IRE (DRAGONBORN, WIZARD)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, wizard

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 feat bonus to damage

rolls when you cast a spell with the same keyword as your dragon breath power.

At 11th level, this bonus increases to +3. At 21st level, this bonus increases to +4.

#### DRAGON STALKER'S QUARRY (DRAGONBORN, RANGER)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, hunter's quarry class feature, ranger

**Benefit:** Your hunter's quarry damage increases by 1 die against targets with either the reptile or dragon keyword.

#### DRAGON WARRIOR'S FURY (DRAGONBORN, FIGHTER)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, fighter, fighter's challenge class feature

**Benefit:** When bloodied, you gain a +2 feat bonus to damage against marked targets.

#### GLOOMBURST (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals acid damage

**Benefit:** You can use the gloomburst power as a daily power.

#### GLOOMBURST

Feat Power

*You fill the area with thick, writhing darkness, trapping your enemies in a cloud of impenetrable gloom.*

**Daily** ♦ **Zone**

**Minor Action**

**Close burst 2**

**Effect:** You create a zone of darkness that remains in place until the end of your next turn. The zone blocks line of sight for all creatures except you. Any creature entirely within the area (except you) is blinded.

**Special:** You must take the Gloomburst feat to use this power.

#### LIGHTNING ROD (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals lightning damage

**Benefit:** You can use the lightning rod power as a daily power.

**LIGHTNING ROD**

Feat Power

*You turn your enemies into highly efficient, living conductors of electricity.*

**Daily ♦ Lightning****Standard Action**                      **Close** burst 3**Target:** Each creature in burst**Attack:** Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity vs. Fortitude**Hit:** The target gains vulnerability 5 lightning until the end of your next turn.

Increase the vulnerability to 10 lightning at 11th level, and 15 lightning at 21st level.

**Special:** You must take the Lightning Rod feat to use this power.**TALONS OF THE DRAGON (DRAGONBORN)****Prerequisites:** Dragonborn

**Benefit:** Each of your hands is equipped with long, sharp talons, allowing you to attack enemies with them. You may make a claw attack as a melee basic attack, inflicting 1d4 damage plus your Strength modifier on a successful attack.

**THICK SCALES (DRAGONBORN)****Prerequisites:** Dragonborn

**Benefit:** Your scales thicken and harden. You gain a permanent +1 bonus to AC.

At 11th level, the bonus increases to +2. At 21st level, the bonus increases to +3.

**WITHERING AURA (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals fire damage

**Benefit:** You can use the withering aura power as a daily power.

**WITHERING AURA**

Feat Power

*The furious power inside you boils over, surrounding you in a shimmering aura of withering heat.*

**Daily ♦ Fire****Minor Action**                      **Personal** aura 1

**Effect:** You radiate an aura of oppressive heat until the end of your next turn. Creatures without fire resistance within the aura take a –2 penalty to attack and damage rolls.

**Sustain Minor:** You can sustain this power as a minor action for one additional round.

**Special:** You must take the Withering Aura feat to use this power.

**WYRM CURSE (DRAGONBORN, WARLOCK)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, warlock, warlock's curse class feature

**Benefit:** Creatures under your warlock's curse gain vulnerability 5 to the type of damage inflicted by your dragon breath racial power.

***Paragon Tier Feats***

Any feat in the following section is available to dragonborn characters of 11th level or higher who meet the prerequisites.

**BLIZZARD BREATH (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals cold damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power are slowed (save ends).

**CORROSIVE BREATH (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals acid damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power suffer a –2 penalty to AC (save ends).

**CHOKING BREATH (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals poison damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power are weakened (save ends).

**CYCLONE BREATH (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals lightning damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath racial power are knocked prone.

**DRACONIC RESILIENCE (DRAGONBORN)****Prerequisites:** Dragonborn

**Benefit:** Your healing surge value is equal to one-third of your maximum hit points + your Constitution modifier.

**DRACONIC RESISTANCE (DRAGONBORN)**

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power

**Benefit:** You gain resist 5 against the type of damage inflicted by your dragon breath racial power.

At 21st level, the resistance increases to 10.

#### FANGS OF THE DRAGON (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn

**Benefit:** You have powerful jaws with which you can bite foes. You can make a bite attack as a melee basic attack, inflicting 1d6 damage plus your Strength modifier on a successful attack.

#### IMPROVED DRAGONBORN SENSES (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, Dragonborn Senses

**Benefit:** You gain darkvision. You gain a +2 feat bonus to Perception and Insight checks.

#### INFERNO BREATH (DRAGONBORN, DRAGONIC HERITAGE)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power, breath weapon deals fire damage

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath power suffer ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

#### LINGERING BREATH (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power

**Benefit:** Creatures struck by your dragon breath power suffer half the total initial damage at the beginning of your next turn (round down), in addition to any damage dealt this turn. For example, if you inflicted 12 points of fire damage upon a creature with your dragon breath, it would suffer 6 points of fire damage in the following round, at the beginning of your turn.

#### PRIMAL FURY (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, Fangs of the Dragon, Talons of the Dragon

**Benefit:** As a standard action, you can make a bite and a claw attack against the same foe.

#### *Epic Tier Feats*

Any feat in the following section is available to dragonborn characters of 21st level or higher who meet the prerequisites.

#### EPIC BREATH (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power

**Benefit:** The damage for your dragon breath power increases by 2 dice.



#### EPIC FURY (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, Dragonborn Frenzy

**Benefit:** While you are bloodied, any weapon you wield becomes a high-crit weapon.

#### FLIGHT OF DRAGONS (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn

**Benefit:** You grow massive, leathery wings. You gain a fly speed equal to your base speed, with clumsy maneuverability.

#### REJUVENATING BREATH (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, dragon breath racial power

**Benefits:** Your dragon breath power recharges on a roll of 5 or 6. However, you may not use it more than twice in a single encounter.

#### WING BUFFET (DRAGONBORN)

**Prerequisites:** Dragonborn, Flight of Dragons

**Benefit:** As a minor action, you can make a Strength vs. Reflex attack against a single opponent with your wings. If you hit, the target takes 1d4 damage plus your Strength modifier, and a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the beginning of your next turn.

## CHAPTER 5: ANCESTOR PATHS

**Ambition, greed, and envy** have no hold over the dragonborn. All pale before the sacred call of honor. But no dragonborn stands alone, and even the greatest of heroes walks in the shadow of his ancestors. The lives of these ancestors weigh heavily over any dragonborn's destiny – their triumphs are his triumphs, their failures are his challenges to overcome. Even dragonborn seeking to cast off their past cannot escape their ancestors. Each family has stories that must be learned from...or be told time and again.

Players are encouraged to create their own family backgrounds. Consult the following tables to generate the skeleton of a back-story, and fill in the details to create a fully formed history for your dragonborn hero.

Begin by rolling 1d12 on Table A, modified by the dragonborn's base clan. Apply this clan bonus to each of your character's roles on the Ancestor tables. While some of the tables result in skill bonuses or starting items, neither of these should be the goal of the table. Instead, the purpose is to come up with a back-story of your family and clan that illuminates your PC's motivations, challenges, and foes.

BASE CLAN BONUS	
Aratos	-2
Clanless	-
Diago	+2
Durishhk	-3
Karkonus	+3
Kengi	+1
Kthonon	+2
Maahksarith*	+1
Saticor	-1

\*The destiny tables are intended for good-aligned heroes. Dragonborn embracing the beliefs of the sinister Maahksarith clan should invert the moral descriptors of the table results.

### Table A: Family Destiny

Dragonborn share the belief that members of a family inherit a common destiny. If a great hero won honor defeating terrible foes in the past, dragonborn assume that members of that same family are capable of similar feats. The inverse is also true; families that incurred great dishonor are believed to sire deceitful and devious dragonborn.

**TABLE A: FAMILY DESTINY**

Roll (1d12)	Result
1-2	<b>Legendary Enchanter:</b> Your ancestor rent time and space and shattered the seals of the seven worlds. Even if you have no talent for spell casting, all agree that magic courses through your veins. Consult <b>Table B</b> .
3-4	<b>Dark Secret:</b> An ancestor was a suspected cultist, and the taint has followed your family down through the ages. Consult <b>Table C</b> .
5-7	<b>Great Duelist:</b> One of your ancestors was a distinguished duelist and respected master of the blade. You are the envy of your peers, and fellow dragonborn are always looking to prove themselves against you. Consult <b>Table D</b> .
8-10	<b>Clan Tragedy:</b> Your ancestor is reviled by his own people, and fellow dragonborn constantly suspect you of duplicity, second-guessing your actions. Consult <b>Table E</b> .
11-12	<b>Art of War:</b> Your ancestor was heralded as a master of battle and conqueror of foes. Consult <b>Table F</b> .

### Table B: Way of the Magister

Dragonborn spellcasters are feared for their mastery of the elements, magnifying the potency of their dragon blood to dramatic and deadly ends. Your bedtime stories were legends of eldritch ancestors and their arcane might.

TABLE B: WAY OF THE MAGISTER

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	Your ancestor vanished at the apex of his powers, leaving behind a lost tower hidden in a maze of mountain valleys, protected by deadly dweomers and fell enchantments. The secret of your ancestor's fate is concealed in the coded map you've owned since birth.
2	You've inherited an emerald crystal orb that crackles with arcane lightning. Given to you by a grandmother on her deathbed. You carry it with you to this day, even though mastery of the orb – and the secret of its powers – eludes you.
3	Your family is tasked with protecting a secret hidden deep within a fetid swamp. Every year, one of you is sent into the swamp laden with offerings of gold, incense, and jewels. Typically, the chosen messenger is never seen again, or else returns maddened by the eldritch secrets they have learned. Whether or not you have chosen the path of the spellcaster, your turn to carry on the family's duty is drawing nigh...
4	You received your arcane training at the feet of a wizened gray-scaled caster. Whether or not you are a spellcaster, your broad foundation of arcane secrets grants you a +1 bonus to Arcana skill checks, and you may trade 1 point of Strength or Constitution for 1 point of Intelligence or Wisdom.
5	You are haunted by dreams of dying in a fiery rite amid a circle of standing stones atop some windswept mountain. Though your clanmates assure you that the dreams are meaningless, they cannot account for your missing mother and father, or the strange respect accorded to you by the clan's elders. Of course, not is all as it seems, and the one responsible for the death of your parents now seeks you. Roll on <b>Table H</b> .
6	Your ancestors were much closer to the dragons than most know, and the blood of the scaled ones runs strong in your veins. Your scales bear a bright patina unusual to dragonborn, and you have an otherworldly, predatory aura about you that tends to unnerve strangers, granting a +1 bonus to Intimidate skill checks.
7	Your ancestors founded a secret society dedicated to rooting out the Cult of Apophis. Whether or not you took the sacred rites and joined this order is up to you, but cultists of Apophis are all aware of your family's mission. Cultic assassins dog your steps no matter where the road leads you. Roll on <b>Table H</b> to determine the type of foes driven to bring your life to an end.
8	The secret of your family's arcane talents is much darker than most realize. Whether you embrace your family's dark secret or rail against it is up to you, but the taint of your family's secret deeds follows you regardless. Roll 1d8 on <b>Table C</b> , ignoring any 8s.

### Table C: Dark Secret

Dishonor comes at a terrible price to dragonborn. Wicked secrets and fell deeds that might damage a clan's standing must be concealed – no matter the cost. Regardless of your own path, your family's secret is your burden to carry.

TABLE C: DARK SECRET

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	Ages past, your family made dark bargains with demons and devils, and infernal blood taints your veins. Your scales carry a dark shimmer, though few associate this with a family's dark pacts. The scent of your blood is instantly recognizable to both demons and devils, making it impossible to hide from them, though your shared ancestry grants you a +1 bonus to Diplomacy check made with infernal beings. Roll on <b>Table H, Ancestral Foes</b> .
2	Your father was a thrall of Apophis, sacrificing all but one of your mother's eggs upon a vile altar to the goddess of monsters. Mixed with the blood of slain foes, and burnt offerings, he created a foul salve intended to incarnate the sire of Apophis. The unholy ointment was slathered on your mother's last egg – your egg. Whether the rite was successful or not and whether you embrace your dark heritage or not, one thing is certain; Apophis herself has taken an interest in you. Roll on <b>Table H, Ancestral Foes</b> .
3	You were hatched a weak and sickly dragonborn, and despite the best efforts of all the clan's healers, slipped closer towards death with every passing night. Your father, in a desperate attempt to bargain with the fates, struck a terrible pact with a demonic or diabolic power. You quickly recovered and now you are one of the strongest and healthiest of your clanmates. However, your health came at a terrible price. Each night terrible visions of destruction and slaughter fill your dreams, and only this past week you realized that sharp, knobby horns have begun to sprout from your temples. You fled your tribe, realizing that the sacrifice that your father offered up for your health was you. Trade 1 point of Intelligence or Dexterity for 1 point of Strength or Constitution.
4	As a youth, you discovered a sinister ruin hidden in a quiet wooded glade. You recall sneaking into the ruined vault and discovering something composed of smoke, shadow, and bone. Your memory fades after that, until you awoke in a grassy glade, an ancient, jagged weapon clutched in your hand. You've concealed the weapon from your family and clan, fearful that they might discover the item. Roll on <b>Table H</b> to determine the nature of the weapon and its history.
5	Ages past, your family's tribe fell in battle. With his kin lying dead and dying around him, your ancestor cried out to whatever powers were listening for the chance of revenge. Dark powers answered, healing the dying and turning the tide of the battle. Since that dark day, your family has owed a terrible debt to infernal powers, and soon will be the day that they ask you to make good on your ancestor's promise. Roll on <b>Table H, Ancestral Foes</b> .
6	A heroic ancestor defeated a demon prince in battle, imprisoning the fell creature in a sword of sinister aspect. Since that day, your family has been tasked with guarding the blade, ensuring that the demon isn't freed and that the weapon doesn't fall into the wrong hands. But the demon is far from powerless, and torments those that bear it, egging them on in battle in the hopes that the dragonborn will fall, giving over the weapon to subjects that are more malleable. Roll on <b>Table G</b> to determine the nature of the weapon.
7	When you were a child, you happened upon a group of clan and family elders, gathered together in the heart of a dark wood. Crouched in the underbrush, you witnessed them sacrificing an animal before a bloody idol. You never told anyone what you saw that day, and as all the elders wore masks, it is impossible to be absolutely certain which elders were attending. However, you are certain that someone in the crowd recognized you. Roll on <b>Table H</b> to determine the nature of the foe seeking to silence you.
8	Your family was once part of a cult. Realizing the wickedness of his kin, your grandfather slew your entire family, save for his own wife and children, killing himself last. His noble act purged your family of any dishonor, but few dragonborn know of his sacrifice and they revile you all the same. The cult's progenitor, however, yet lives. Roll on <b>Table H, Ancestral Foes</b> , to determine how the fiend will seek its revenge.

### Table D: Great Duelist

Laying waste to scores of foes as he traverses the battlefield, the myth of the iconic dragonborn warrior is common throughout the world. Nearly every family lays claim to the heroics of a great duelist.

TABLE D: GREAT DUELIST

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	Your ancestor was a legendary warrior, nigh undefeatable in combat. What few know is that his might was due to sinister pacts with dark powers, a failing that runs in your family. Roll on <b>Table C</b> to learn more about the grim destiny that haunts your family.
2	The art of combat has always come naturally to your family, earning you the envy of your peers. The most talented of your generation, you carry your family's heirloom blade. There is no end to the would-be duelists seeking to take it from you. Roll on <b>Table G</b> to learn more about the ancestral blade you carry.
3	An ancestor was a legendary fiend-slayer, traversing the world slaying devils, demons, and infernal powers of every sort. His triumphs earned you and your family great honor, but it has come at a terrible price. Now those same infernal powers stalk you day and night, seeking revenge for past insults. Roll on <b>Table H</b> .
4	Not only was your ancestor a genius with the blade, he was also a military mastermind. Roll on <b>Table F</b> , ignoring all 8's.
5	One of your family's founding elders was trained by a kenku. Most other dragonborn mock the story as apocryphal, but you know better. On your tenth birthday, a black cloaked, feathered master arrived at your doorstep. The next five years of your life were spent in ceaseless training. Trade 1 point of Wisdom or Charisma for 1 point of Strength or Dexterity.
6	Your family has long been known for their bloody ways. Whereas other heroes might stay their blade when the time comes, your family's heroes have never been able to arrest the red fury that overtakes them, earning your people the epithet of bloodthirsty. You suffer a -1 penalty to Diplomacy checks made with good-aligned dragonborn, but receive a +1 bonus to Intimidation checks made against fellow dragonborn.
7	Your ancestor is famed for slaying a dragon with a single, well-placed blow, and ever since your family has specialized in the art of dragonslaying. Whether or not the story is true is anyone's guess, but you know that evil dragons actively stalk your clan, eager to put an end to the line of dragon slayers. Because of your family's extensive history, you received a +1 bonus to Nature checks involving dragons.
8	Your family's honor is founded on a lie. Your ancestor wasn't a great duelist; he was simply the last one standing at the end of the day. To determine more of your wicked ancestry, roll on <b>Table E</b> , ignoring 7's or 8's.



### Table E: Tragedy

Not all tales of dragonborn are stories of triumphant warriors and fearsome spellcasters. For every great hero, there is a terrible tragedy: when the mighty are laid low and the weak triumph over the haughty. Hubris comes quickly to the dragonborn, and the hardest lessons are the slowest to learn.

TABLE E: TRAGEDY

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	Consumed by fear for his family, your ancestor abandoned his clanmates to defend the lives of the dragonborn that he loved. When he fled the line, the dragonborn line broke, leaving thousands to die before the swords of wicked foes. No dragonborn will trust you now, and worse, descendants of those defeated families stalk you to this day. See <b>Table H</b> .
2	Deceived by a tiefling your ancestor surrendered to love, forsaking his guard post for a night of passion. During the night tieflings sacked the clanhold, slaughtering all that stood against them. Stricken by grief at the sight of the carnage, your ancestor committed suicide. To this day you bear an undying enmity towards the half-devils. For better or worse, you've also inherited the accursed sword that your ancestor used to disembowel himself. See <b>Table G</b> .
3	Caught up in a contest of succession one of your ancestors murdered his brother, shattering the family for all time. To this day, the dragonborn of the opposing sect vie against you, seeking to cause your downfall and ultimately your death. See <b>Table H</b> .
4	The captain of a company of dragonborn, your ancestor was responsible for guarding the army's flank. However, offers of a king's ransom in gold bought off your ancestor's loyalty, tainting your family's honor to this day. Sworn to regain the honor lost by your foolish ancestor, you drill ceaselessly (deduct 1 point of Intelligence or Wisdom, in exchange for 1 point of Strength or Constitution).
5	Ages past, an ancestor fell in love with a dragonborn princess of an opposing clan. Defying the decree of his elders, your ancestor rode into her camp, swept up the princess from her marriage bed, and rode off – never to be seen again. To this day, the descendants of the clan stalk your people, looking to avenge the kidnapping of their sister. Roll on <b>Table H</b> .
6	In a heated battle against a dread lich, your ancestor's weapon failed him, sundering into three pieces. Legend holds that, when a noble descendent avenges your ancestor's honor, the sword will re-forged itself. Now you carry that same, shattered sword, hoping for the day when fate will cause you to cross paths with your ancient enemy. Roll on <b>Table G</b> .
7	Your ancestor served with a company of mercenary dragonborn. When his general ordered the company to turn on their allies, your ancestor cut him down, preventing what might have become a terrible slaughter. Roll on <b>Table F</b> to determine the rest of your ancestor's storied career.
8	Championing the cause of good, your ancestor happened across a hamlet besieged by an army of fell monsters. For seven days and nights, the champion didn't sleep. Instead, he made his way silently from guard to guard, slowly slaughtering the band. By the time they realized what was taking place, it was too late. The ogre magi leading the shattered army called out your ancestor into single combat. Exhausted from days without sleep your ancestor fell in battle, even as he slew the ogre magi. One hundred years later to the day, the people of the village sought you out, presenting you with the champion's haichito. Roll on <b>Table G</b> .

### Table F: The Art of War

Dragonborn believe the battle is the greatest test of a warrior's spirit. Surrounded by the crash of foes and the cries of the dying, only the bravest and most courageous persevere. The cost of victory never comes cheap, but the honor accorded to the victor is beyond estimation.

TABLE F: THE ART OF WAR

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	You ancestor led his people to a great victory against overwhelming forces. What isn't recorded in the scroll is the price he paid for his victory: his soul. Striking a deal with infernal powers, your ancestor damned his own descendents to follow in his wicked footsteps. For more of your family's wicked deeds, consult <b>Table C</b> .
2	An ancestor used a cunning mix of tactics and terrain to put down a rampaging army of giants. Since that day, the name of your family has lived in infamy, and giants everywhere have learned to hunt those that bear the standard or heraldry of your family. Roll on <b>Table H</b> .
3	Your ancestor was a great king who reigned for many years, his kingdom an island of civilization amid vast swaths of untamed wilderness. His signature weapon was a mighty bastard sword – the same sword that you received as your haichito. For more information, roll on <b>Table G</b> .
4	The blood of brilliance runs in your family. Though your people have never been the strongest or heartiest, you have always been honored as cunning tacticians, and others turn to you in times of need. You may trade 1 point of either Strength or Constitution for 1 point of Intelligence or Wisdom.
5	Your ancestor chose to sacrifice his company to make a valiant last stand, buying the main force time to regroup and flank the opposition. For his sacrifice, he is lauded in song and legend, and many dragonborn are envious that their lesser deeds are not similarly recognized. Roll on <b>Table H</b> to reveal the depths of their hatred for you.
6	Like your ancestors before you, you have a preternatural awareness in battle, a sense for danger that leaves you rarely surprised. Unfortunately, once the thrill of danger has passed you fall into a lax torpor, waiting for the threat of death to bring you alive once more. +1 to all Perception checks during battle, -1 to all Perception checks outside of battle.
7	Your kinsfolk have always been leaders. You are no different – any battle is like a shifting puzzle, and those that can put their different pieces to the best use will always emerge triumphant. Unless you are already a warlord, you are granted the Student of Battle multiclass feat.
8	Ages past, your ancestors fought a pitched battle against a company of cambions. One of your elders slew the band's infernal commander and took his blade – the same blade that you've received as your haichito. The cambions, of course, will stop at nothing to recover their sacred blade. Consult both <b>Table G</b> and <b>Table H</b> .

### Table G: Ancestral Heirlooms

Ancestral blades, be they haichito or otherwise, are always accorded reverence and respect. They represent the timeless lineage of a family or clan, the continuing thread of courage, skill, and determination that signifies a clan's honor. Specific heroes will rise and fall, but clans and their blades can live forever.

Being asked to carry an ancestral blade is always an enormous honor. The blade never belongs to any

one dragonborn; he is merely caring for it on behalf of his ancestors. Thus, if a dragonborn should ever fall from grace into dishonor, the blade may be taken back. Of course, this is seldom as simple as it sounds, and those dragonborn that elect dishonor are often more than capable warriors eager to keep their blades....

Note, finally, that while this list references the term blades, the specific type of weapon is up to the DM, or the player (with the DM's permission).

TABLE G: ANCESTRAL HEIRLOOMS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	Forged in the infernal fires of the Forges of the Mountain King, this wicked looking blade is reputed to cause bloodlust and cruelty in those that wield it.
2	No mundane forge burns hot enough to melt this skymetal blade. Indeed, it was hammered into shape by storm giant titans, from a single slab of meteoric adamantite.
3	Composed of mithril and black iron, hammered and folded hundreds of times until the individual layers of metal shimmered like moonlit water. The blade was forged by Yenthalas, the famed eladrin weaponsmith, as a gift to the dragonborn.
4	The blade is cut from a single shard of onyx, ground sharp as a razor's edge, serrated, and set with blazing emeralds. Swung with abandon, the incredibly sharp blade hums through the air like a singing sword.
5	Hung on a simple wooden pommel and with no guard, the seemingly humble blade is regarded by experts to be the finest blade ever forged by mortal hands. Crafted by the legendary dragonborn weaponsmith Tacrocho, the blade was intended to be his masterwork, imbued with the courage and skill of a thousand dragonborn warriors. For an unknown reason the arcane rite was never completed and the sword remains a mundane blade, waiting for the right wielder to bring it to life.
6	According to legend, this blade was found in the gullet of an ancient black wyrm. There it had sat for an untold number of years, slowly working its way to the dragon's heart, finally slaying the dragon centuries after its wielder's death. Pocked and pitted by the dragon's acid, the blade remains as sharp as the day it was forged, exemplifying the dragonborn principles of determination, resilience, and perseverance.
7	The smoke-steel blade seems to shift and waver in the light, with wisps of dark smoke peeling away when it is swung in violence. The blade is icy cold to the touch and makes those nearby nervous and edgy. Regardless of the blade's history, all agree that some sinister, infernal power is trapped inside.
8	The blade is cut from an enormous faceted blood ruby. Its serrated edge is designed to easily cleave skin, muscle, and bone. Even rubbing a finger across the blade leaves a lasting cut that takes days to heal.



### Table H: Ancestral Foes

Finally, dragonborn judge themselves on the strength of their foes. Defeating a weak opponent wins no honor, and courage can only be tested when one's life hangs in the balance.

The following table serves two purposes: First, to give the player an idea of the villains stalking

the hero; Secondly, to give the DM a sense of the villains' aims and ends. Note that this does not give the DM implicit permission to kill off low-level PCs "because the book said so." Rather, in the hands of a fair (albeit cruel-minded!) DM, this table sets the stage for years of adventuring to come, as the PC is thwarted and harassed time and again by old foes.

TABLE H: ANCESTRAL FOES

Roll (1d8)	Result
1	The villain aims to destroy everything the PC cherishes: his homeland, his clan, and his family. Nothing is too small to be overlooked if its destruction will bring pain to the hero.
2	The villain refuses to rest until the PC is utterly dishonored. This will be achieved through any number of methods: lies and rumors; challenging the PC to single combat; arranging false charges of worshipping Apophis or Orcus; masquerading as the PC and committing villainous acts; manipulating the PC by magic, false affections or avarice.
3	Simply, the hero must die. Day or night, the villain thinks of nothing else. Be it poison, an ambush from an alley late at night, lurking outside a dungeon waiting for a weakened hero to emerge – no trick is too low, no deception too dishonorable.
4	The villain will dog the PC, destroying or undoing every good deed the PC accomplishes. If the PC saves a village from a band of marauding orcs, the villain will poison the village well a week later. No matter where the PC goes, or what he manages to accomplish, he finds that fate seemingly undoes his work a short while later. It will take an exceptionally attentive hero to notice what is taking place, and put together the pattern behind the events.
5	The hero exists only to be manipulated, like a mindless marionette, for the villain's pleasure. This will take a number of forms, from agents sending the hero on false missions (to secretly work evil ends), to kidnapping and charming beloved family members, and even (at higher levels) creating entire dungeons with the sole intent of capturing and humiliating the arrogant hero.
6	The villain aims to defeat the PC – again, and again, and again. He will work through a number of proxies and seconds of increasing power, always staying just a step ahead of the hero's power level.
7	The villain aims to turn the PC into his thrall. This will be a lifelong effort, beginning with attracting the hero with offers of aid (as if coming from a wizened old wizard or kindly dragon). As the hero gains in power, (the villain earns the PC's trust) greater and greater demands will be made, hidden beneath a false patina of secret missions taken for the greater good. And finally, once the PC succumbs to the lure, becoming the villain's thrall in both body and soul, the villain has the PC slain as an example of his might.
8	The hero must die in single combat, so that none will doubt the villain's superiority or skill. This does not preclude the villain's cheating, but rather it must appear, to all intents and purposes, that the combat was honorable and fair. The villain will not rush this encounter, and may even test the PC's might by sending proxies to do battle first, so that the villain can learn the hero's strengths and weaknesses.



## CHAPTER 6: *NEW MONSTERS*

### *CULTISTS OF APOPHIS*

**Dragonborn of the Great Clans** that forsake the normal deities of their kind, sometimes turn down a very dark path. A path whose end often leads to the great demon serpent Apophis, and the venomous teachings of its blasphemous worship.

Apophis is a deity of evil, darkness, and poison. It is known as the Sun Eater and the Great Serpent, and it is a determined foe of all that is good and righteous. However, Apophis can be a subtle deity, and can seduce even the purest heart with promises of riches, power, and glory; promises that ultimately lead to nothing but emptiness and a lifetime devoted to chaos, destruction, and misery.

Apophis has a fondness for reptilian servants and its cultists often include lizardmen, troglodytes, and other scaly folk. Recently, however, the great serpent has turned its poisonous gaze to the Great Clans of dragonborn. One might think that such a proud and honorable race would rebuff any advances by such a terrible deity, but the clans have long been in steep decline, and many among them have turned away from the old ways, seeking something, anything, that might return pride and glory to the clans. It is these foolish dragon-blooded that Apophis seeks out, gripping those foolish enough to listen to its whispers with mighty coils of lies and dark promises.

Cults devoted to Apophis have sprung up in a few dragonborn cities, and are even openly tolerated in the Dumarak, the stronghold of the open-minded Clan Aratos. However, most dragonborn view those that worship the great serpent to be nothing less than traitors to their race, and seek to stamp them out wherever they are found. Because of this, the cults operate in secret, slowly building membership from the abandoned and disillusioned. Every

day, the cults grow stronger, as Apophis sinks its fangs ever deeper into the heart and soul of a fading culture.

A typical cell of cultists numbers no more than ten Apophis worshipers and is usually led by a Blackvenom acolyte. Only in Dumarak, where the only true temple of the serpent god exists, can one find the most potent of Apophis' dragonborn servants, the powerful and reviled chosen of Apophis.

### *DARKFANG SLAYER*

**Most dragonborn** that become cultists of Apophis choose the path of the darkfang slayer. These shadowy assassins draw upon the power of the Great Serpent, injecting lethal poison into their victims or shrouding an area in impenetrable gloom. The cult relies upon the darkfang slayers to act as muscle for cult priests and to infiltrate areas where the worship of Apophis is strictly forbidden.

#### **DARKFANG SLAYER**

#### **LEVEL 5 LURKER**

Medium humanoid  
(dragonborn)

XP 200

**Initiative** +10 **Senses Perception** +8; darkvision

**HP** 51; **Bloodied** 25

**AC** 17; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 15

**Resist** 5 poison

**Speed** 6

⊕ **Katar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+4 damage.

‡ **Fangs of Apophis** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

The darkfang slayer makes two katar attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Poison**

Close blast 3; +8 vs. Reflex (+9 while bloodied); 1d6+2 poison damage.

↔ **Shroud of Night** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Zone**

Close burst 2; targets enemies; the darkfang slayer creates a cloud of darkness that remains in place until the end of its next turn. The zone blocks line of sight for all creatures except the darkfang slayer. Any creature within the zone (except for the darkfang slayer and its allies) is blinded.

**Combat Advantage**

The darkfang slayer deals an additional 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** History +3, Intimidate +4, Stealth +11, Thievery +11

**Str** 16 (+5)    **Dex** 18 (+6)    **Wis** 13 (+3)

**Con** 15 (+4)    **Int** 13 (+3)    **Cha** 14 (+)

**Equipment** leather armor, 2 katars

**Description** This tall, scaled humanoid wears dark robes and a cowl. Its head is dragon-like, but there is a definite serpentine quality that fills you with an ominous sense of dread.

**DARKFANG SLAYER TACTICS**

A darkfang slayer begins combat with shroud of night, allowing it to gain combat advantage on all enemies within the zone of darkness. It then attacks the nearest foe with fangs of Apophis, dealing tremendous amounts of physical damage as well as injecting its foe with virulent poison. A darkfang slayer works intelligently with its allies to flank and create other favorable combat situations.

**BLACKVENOM ACOLYTE**

**Blackvenom acolytes** lead cults of Apophis in blasphemous rites dedicated to the snake god, and ensure that the deity's enemies receive swift and certain destruction. In most cults, a single blackvenom acolyte serves as the undisputed master of his brethren; although in larger cults, there may be as many as three. Unlike the darkfang slayer,

dragonborn who devote themselves to Apophis at this level undergo subtle but distinct physical changes, developing serpent-like qualities that set them apart from their brethren.

**BLACKVENOM ACOLYTE**      **LEVEL 7 ARTILLERY**  
Medium natural humanoid      XP 300  
(dragonborn)

**Initiative** +7    **Senses Perception** +8; darkvision  
**HP** 62; **Bloodied** 31

**AC** 19; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 18

**Resist** 5 poison

**Speed** 6

⊕ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+9 vs. AC (+10 while bloodied); 1d4+4 damage.

⊗ **Venombolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex (+13 while bloodied); 1d10+4 poison damage.

☚ **Coils of the Serpent King** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Force**

Ranged 5; +12 vs. Fortitude (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+4 force damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). The blackvenom acolyte conjures spectral serpents to grasp and squeeze its victim.

↔ **Blackvenom Breath** (standard; 5,6) ♦ **Poison**

Close blast 5; +8 vs. Reflex (+9 while bloodied); 3d6+2 poison damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** History +12, Intimidate +8, Religion +10, Stealth +12

**Str** 15 (+5)    **Dex** 18 (+7)    **Wis** 15 (+5)

**Con** 14 (+5)    **Int** 15 (+5)    **Cha** 17 (+6)

**Equipment** robes, dagger

**Description** This green-scaled dragonborn wears flowing robes the color of bile. Its tongue flickers in and out between its fanged jaws in a disturbingly ophidian manner.

**BLACKVENOM ACOLYTE TACTICS**

A blackvenom acolyte prefers to engage foes at range, and let its allies and minions close for melee. It targets powerful melee opponents with coils of the serpent king to keep them from closing, and smites spellcasters with venombolt. A blackvenom acolyte reserves its breath weapon for situations where enemies have managed to close, using the blindness it creates to disengage and retreat to a safe distance.

## CHOSEN OF APOPHIS

**Only** the largest cults of Apophis are likely to have a chosen of Apophis among their number. These dragonborn have truly forsaken their heritage for evil, and the fell mark of the snake god is plainly evident in their actions. Like the blackvenom acolyte, the chosen of Apophis bear their devotion to the snake god on their flesh. Serpent-like qualities such as fangs, cobra-like hoods, and even sinuous, ophidian bodies are quite common: blasphemous reminders to other dragonborn that the chosen of Apophis are truly lost to darkness.

**CHOSEN OF APOPHIS**      **LEVEL 12 CONTROLLER**  
 Medium natural      **(LEADER)**  
 humanoid (dragonborn)      XP 700

**Initiative** +9    **Senses Perception** +15; darkvision  
**HP** 122; **Bloodied** 61  
**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 24  
**Resist** 10 poison  
**Speed** 5

⊕ **Scimitar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
 +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 1d8+4 damage  
 (crit 2d8+12).

‡ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**  
 +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 1d4+4 damage,  
 and the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage.

‡ **Fury of Apep** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

The chosen of Apophis makes a scimitar and a bite attack.

↘ **Gaze of the Serpent King** (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ **Charm, Gaze**

Ranged 10; +16 vs. Will (+17 while bloodied); the target is pulled 3 squares, and is dazed (save ends).

↔ **Breath of Apophis** (standard; 5,6) ♦ **Poison**  
 Close blast 5; +15 vs. Reflex (+16 while bloodied); 4d6+4 poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).

↔ **Devour the Sun** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Poison, Zone**

Close burst 3; targets enemies; the chosen of Apophis creates a cloud of poisonous darkness that remains in place until the end of its next turn. The zone blocks line of sight for all creatures except the chosen of Apophis. Any creature within the zone (except for the chosen of Apophis and its allies) is blinded, and any creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 10 poison damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

The chosen of Apophis gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic  
**Skills** History +16, Intimidate +12, Insight +15, Religion +14, Stealth +14  
**Str** 18 (+10)    **Dex** 16 (+9)    **Wis** 19 (+10)  
**Con** 18 (+10)    **Int** 15 (+9)      **Cha** 22 (+12)

**Equipment** scale armor, scimitar

**Description** This dragonborn wears emerald green scale armor and carries a long curved sword. Its head is decidedly serpent-like, resembling a cobra or viper.

### CHOSEN OF APOPHIS TACTICS

A chosen of Apophis typically acts in a support role in combat, aiding and bolstering the abilities of darkfang slayers and blackvenom acolytes. It uses devour the sun to create an area that its allies can easily navigate, but poses an extreme hazard for its enemies. It uses breath of Apophis when enemies press in, blasting them with a spray of deadly, caustic venom. A chosen of Apophis does not shrink from melee combat, using the combination of its scimitar and poisonous bite to devastating effect.

### CULTIST OF APOPHIS LORE

A character can learn the following with a successful Religion check.

**DC 15:** Apophis has managed to infiltrate the Great Clans of dragonborn, and has turned some individuals to its service. These dragonborn are universally shunned, except among the dark-hearted Maahksarith and the open-minded Aratos.

**DC 20:** The rank and file in an Apophis cult are known as darkfang slayers, stealthy assassins that wield a pair of poison blades.

**DC 20:** A blackvenom acolyte, a dragonborn that has been touched by Apophis and commands deadly and poisonous powers in its name, leads the



worship of the serpent god in a given area. These black-hearted fiends have begun to resemble the demonic serpent they revere, and have developed subtle snake-like qualities.

**DC 25:** The most powerful dragonborn servants of Apophis are called the chosen of Apophis. They lead the largest and most influential cults, and command a host of blasphemous powers, including the ability to blot out the sun with a poisonous cloud of darkness.

### ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Cultists of Apophis stick together and are rarely encountered with dragonborn or allies not initiated into the cult. However, they are sometimes aided by snake-like monsters, which serve Apophis as well.

#### Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,600)

- ◆ 2 blackvenom acolytes (level 7 artillery)
- ◆ 2 darkfang slayers (level 5 lurker)
- ◆ 3 dragonborn soldiers (level 5 soldier)

#### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,600)

- ◆ 1 chosen of Apophis (level 12 controller)
- ◆ 3 blackvenom acolytes (level 7 artillery)
- ◆ 5 darkfang slayers (level 5 lurker)

#### Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,500)

- ◆ 1 shadowsnake (level 16 skirmisher)
- ◆ 2 chosen of Apophis (level 12 controller)
- ◆ 2 crushgrip constrictors (level 9 soldier)
- ◆ 3 blackvenom acolytes (level 7 artillery)

## OTHER SERVANTS OF APOPHIS

**Apophis** is served by a number of snake-like monsters, including nagas, hydras, and various types of giant serpents. However, it is a fecund deity and often produces semi-divine progeny with mortal monsters. This results in a variety of hybrid abominations that bear the snake god's serpentine form as well as its vile and cruel disposition.

Monstrous servants of Apophis often guard temples and other places sacred to the deity, and happily attack and devour intruders into these unholy places. Sometimes a particularly active cult might be gifted with a monstrous abomination sprung from Apophis' own seed; one such horror is known as the great serpent of Apophis, and is detailed below.

## GREAT SERPENT OF APOPHIS

**The mortal offspring** of the great serpent god, great serpents of Apophis are among the deity's most potent earthly servants. Typically found only in the largest temples, they serve as guardians of ancient and forbidden knowledge. Each great serpent is an engine of destruction rivaling even the mightiest of dragons in sheer ferocity.

### GREAT SERPENT OF APOPHIS

LEVEL 22 SOLO BRUTE  
XP 20,750

Hugh immortal magical  
beast (reptile)

**Initiative** +13 **Senses Perception** +18; darkvision  
**Mesmerizing Gaze (Charm, Gaze) aura 5:** a creature in the aura that attempts to make a melee or a ranged attack against the great serpent must roll an immediate saving throw before rolling the attack roll. If the saving throw fails, the creature cannot attack the great serpent in that round.

**HP** 990; **Bloodied** 445

**AC** 36; **Fortitude** 37, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 32

**Resist** 20 poison

**Saving Throws** +5

**Speed** 6, **Climb** 6

**Action Points** 2

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Poison**

Reach 2; +25 vs. AC; 3d6+9 damage, the target is grabbed (until escape), and the great serpent of Apophis makes a secondary attack on the same target. Secondary Attack: +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+6 poison damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

‡ **Coils of Doom** (standard; at-will)

Affects a target the great serpent of Apophis has grabbed; +23 vs. Fortitude; 4d6+18 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).

↔ **Venomous Spew** (standard; recharge 5,6) ◆ **Poison**

Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 6d6+6 poison damage, and the target is blinded (save ends both).

**Swallow the Sun** (minor; at-will)

All light sources within 10 squares of a great serpent of Apophis are immediately snuffed out. This includes magical forms of illumination.

↔ **Death Throes** (when reduced to 0 hit points)

Close burst 3; +23 vs. Reflex; 4d6+9 damage and the target is knocked prone. The great serpent of Apophis thrashes its body with a last burst of frenzied motion when it dies.

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil **Languages** Abyssal, Draconic

**Skills** Intimidate +19, Stealth +19

**Str** 29 (+20)    **Dex** 15 (+13)    **Wis** 14 (+13)

**Con** 22 (+17)    **Int** 12 (+12)    **Cha** 17 (+14)

**Description** This immense serpent is easily 30 feet long. Its scales are brilliant, emerald green, and its monstrous head resembles a cross between a great python and a cobra.

### ***GREAT SERPENT OF APOPHIS TACTICS***

A great serpent of Apophis begins combat by spewing caustic venom at its foes, burning and blinding them. It then follows up by biting and constricting a blinded foe, preferably a spellcaster, inflicting yet more physical and venomous damage. A great serpent of Apophis uses its action points to use its breath weapon when it recharges, along with a bite attack.

### ***GREAT SERPENT OF APOPHIS LORE***

A character can learn the following with a successful Religion check.

**DC 25:** Great serpents of Apophis are the semi-divine progeny of the snake god Apophis. They are typically encountered in areas sacred to the evil deity, and may serve a particularly large group of mortal worshippers.

**DC 30:** Great serpents of Apophis are unholy engines of death and destruction, and only the most powerful group of heroes stands a chance against one. It is said that great serpents can inject deadly toxin into their victims, crush them in their mighty coils, or spew venom so caustic that it can melt flesh right off the bone. It is also said that these unholy beasts can swallow all the light in an area, forcing their enemies to fight in complete darkness.

### ***ENCOUNTER GROUPS***

A great serpent of Apophis needs no allies to aid it in battle; however, it may occasionally associate with other powerful snake-like monsters that serve its dark master.

#### **Level 24 Encounter (XP 31,350)**

- ◆ 1 great serpent of Apophis (level 22 solo brute)
- ◆ 1 dark naga (level 21 elite controller)
- ◆ 3 guardian nagas (level 12 elite artillery)

## ***DIRE DRAKES***

**Bred by the Great Clans** as mounts and beasts of burden, dire drakes are large, reptilian beasts that resemble wingless dragons. They do not, however, have any draconic ancestry, and are instead derived from the many smaller species of drakes common throughout the known world.

Cobalt, mercury, and sea dire drakes serve primarily as mounts for individual dragonborn riders, while the massive umber dire drake is often fitted with a howdah and used as a mobile fighting platform.

### ***DIRE DRAKE LORE***

A character can learn the following with a successful Nature check.

**DC 15:** Cobalt dire drakes are aggressive, solitary predators with a powerful bite. They are trained for use as heavy cavalry mounts by the Great Clans of the dragonborn. They are strong enough to carry even a fully armored dragonborn warrior into battle with little effort.

**DC 15:** Mercury dire drakes are quick, stealthy beasts used by the Great Clans of the dragonborn as light cavalry mounts. They have a poisonous bite, and have an unpredictable temperament that can even cause them to turn on a favored rider.

**DC 15:** Sea dire drakes are semi-aquatic reptiles favored as mounts by the dragonborn of Clan Maahksarith. They are reputed to grant their riders the ability to breath underwater.

**DC 20:** The great umber dire drakes are dim-witted, slow-moving beasts that can simply crush foes beneath their massive bodies. Dragonborn use them as war platforms, and up to four dragonborn warriors can fit in an armored howdah on the beast's back.



### COBALT DIRE DRAKE

LEVEL 4 BRUTE

Large natural beast  
(mount, reptile)

XP 175

**Initiative** +4    **Senses Perception** +9; low-light vision

**HP** 67; **Bloodied** 33

**AC** 16; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15

**Resist** 5 cold

**Speed** 8

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+7 vs. AC; 2d6+5 damage, or 2d6+10 damage when charging.

‡ **Brutal Charge** (while mounted by a friendly rider of 4th level or higher; at-will) ◆ **Mount**

When charging, the cobalt dire drake adds its Strength modifier to its rider's damage rolls for all melee attacks.

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** -

**Skills** Athletics +12

**Str** 21 (+7)    **Dex** 14 (+4)    **Wis** 14 (+4)

**Con** 17 (+5)    **Int** 5 (-1)    **Cha** 10 (+2)

**Description** This large, blue-scaled reptile resembles a wingless dragon. It is a robust beast with stout limbs, a muscular neck, and large, powerful jaws.

### COBALT DIRE DRAKE TACTICS

In the wild, a cobalt dire drake is a solitary, apex predator that chases down large prey, such as bison, horses, and even smaller drakes. It typically attacks with a headlong charge, slamming into an opponent with jaws agape. When mounted, a cobalt dire drake is a tireless battle mount, and can increase the amount of damage a rider inflicts with a charge.

### MERCURY DIRE DRAKE

LEVEL 4 SKIRMISHER

Large natural beast  
(mount, reptile)

XP 175

**Initiative** +8    **Senses Perception** +9; low-light vision

**HP** 55; **Bloodied** 27

**AC** 18; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 15

**Resist** 5 poison

**Speed** 10

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+9 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage, and the mercury dire drake makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

**Quicksilver Agility** (while mounted by a friendly rider of 4th level or higher; at-will) ◆ **Mount**

The mercury dire drake shifts 1 square.

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** -

**Skills** Athletics +11, Stealth +11

**Str** 18 (+7)    **Dex** 18 (+4)    **Wis** 14 (+4)

**Con** 15 (+5)    **Int** 5 (-1)    **Cha** 10 (+2)

**Description** This lithe reptilian beast has silvery scales with a high, mirrored sheen. Its limbs are long and graceful, and its narrow, angular head rests upon a twining, serpentine neck.

## MERCURY DIRE DRAKE TACTICS

A mercury dire drake attacks with a poisonous bite, injecting a powerful toxin into its prey with two, long puncturing fangs. It is an incredibly agile beast, and makes an excellent mount when speed and adroitness are necessary on the battlefield.

### SEA DIRE DRAKE

Large natural beast  
(mount, reptile)

### LEVEL 4 SOLDIER

XP 175

**Initiative** +6    **Senses Perception** +9; darkvision  
**HP** 57; **Bloodied** 28  
**AC** 20; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15  
**Speed** 7, **swim** 7

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)  
+10 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage.

‡ **Ram** (standard, while swimming; at-will)

The sea dire drake makes a charge attack: +11 vs. AC; 1d8+5 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the sea drake's next turn.

**Deep Dive** (while mounted by a friendly rider of 4th level or higher; at-will) ◆ **Mount**

The sea dire drake grants its rider the ability to hold his breath for up to six minutes before needing to make an Endurance check to avoid drowning.

**Alignment** Unaligned    **Languages** -  
**Skills** Athletics +12 (+17 swimming)  
**Str** 20 (+9)    **Dex** 14 (+4)    **Wis** 15 (+4)  
**Con** 17 (+5)    **Int** 5 (-1)    **Cha** 14 (+4)

**Description** This large reptile has a blunt snout filled with small, conical teeth, black scales, and a long, flat, eel-like tail. It lounges on the porous lava rocks lining the shore, soaking in the ocean spray as the waves crash against its rocky perch.

## SEA DIRE DRAKE TACTICS

A sea dire drake is adapted to life on the land and in the ocean, being equally capable of both combat and mobility in either environment. On land, it typically attacks with its powerful jaws, using its many conical teeth to both puncture and crush. In the water, a sea dire drake rams opponents with its blunt snout.

### UMBER DIRE DRAKE

### LEVEL 12 BRUTE

Huge natural beast  
(mount, reptile)

XP 700

**Initiative** +6    **Senses Perception** +12; low-light vision

**HP** 153; **Bloodied** 76

**AC** 26; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 20

**Speed** 7

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)  
+15 vs. AC; 3d6+9 damage.

‡ **Crush** (standard; recharge 6)

The umber dire drake shifts up to 6 squares into squares occupied by up to 4 Medium or smaller creatures and makes an attack against each one; +10 vs. Reflex; 3d8+9 damage, and ongoing 10 damage and the target is immobilized until the umber dire drake moves out of the target's square or the target makes a saving throw. A successful saving throw by the target ends the immobilization and ongoing damage, and moves the target to a square adjacent to the umber dire drake. The immobilization and ongoing damage ends immediately if the umber dire drake moves out of a target's square. Miss: A missed target shifts (free action) the exact number of squares needed to place it adjacent to the umber dire drake.

**Towering Mount** (while mounted by 2 or more friendly riders of Medium size) ◆ **Mount**

Creatures mounted on an umber dire drake gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls against unmounted Medium-sized creatures with ranged and melee attacks. Provided, of course, they can reach targets on the ground.

**Alignment** Unaligned    **Languages** -  
**Skills** Athletics +12 (+17 swimming)  
**Str** 28 (+15)    **Dex** 11 (+6)    **Wis** 12 (+7)  
**Con** 23 (+12)    **Int** 3 (+2)    **Cha** 8 (+5)

**Description** This massive reptilian beast shakes the ground with each mammoth footfall. It has a wide, squat body, a large, blunt-snouted head on a short, thick neck, and a stubby tail. Its tusked jaws are cavernous, and look easily capable of swallowing a hippo whole.

## UMBER DIRE DRAKE TACTICS

An umber dire drake attacks with its huge jaws. However, it is large enough to simply crush its enemies beneath its massive bulk, and then simply lap up the pulped remains. An umber drake can be trained as a warbeast, granting up to 4 Medium-sized riders a considerable advantage over smaller foes.

## ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Dire drakes are often encountered as mounts for dragonborn warriors.

### Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,500)

- ◆ 2 cobalt dire drakes (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 2 mercury dire drakes (level 4 skirmisher)
- ◆ 4 dragonborn warriors (level 5 soldier)

### Level 11 Encounter (XP 3,000)

- ◆ 1 umber dire drake (level 12 brute)
- ◆ 2 cobalt dire drakes (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 2 mercury dire drakes (level 4 skirmisher)
- ◆ 8 dragonborn warriors (level 5 soldier)

mass uprising that would threaten the Great Clans. However, dragonborn rightly fear the atavists, and some even admire their power and closer relationship to true dragons.

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST LORE

Dragonborn have many myths and legends concerning the atavists, and they often serve as a draconic form of boogeyman in tales told to little ones. A character knows the following information with a successful Nature check.

**DC 15:** Dragonborn atavists are genetic anomalies that occur in large dragonborn communities. They closely resemble a specific type of chromatic dragon in both form and temperament, and possess abilities similar to true dragons.

**DC 20:** Dragonborn atavists are shunned by normal dragonborn, and an intense animosity exists between the two races. This forces the atavists to seek out isolated and forlorn places to make their homes. Depending on the type of atavist, typical lairs include remote glaciers, areas of intense volcanic activity, desolate deserts, impenetrable swamps, and primeval forests.

**DC 25:** Dragonborn atavists are often found in small groups called enclaves. These enclaves are often composed of atavists of a similar draconic heritage (white, red, black, etc.), but mixed groups are not unknown. In addition, atavists often serve true dragons, and may occasionally be found in the company of other reptilian or draconic creatures.

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST

**Dragonborn atavists** are genetic throwbacks that occur in roughly one out of every several thousand births in large dragonborn communities. Unlike the typical dragonborn, whose draconic heritage has become mixed and muted over the millennia, dragonborn atavists closely resemble a specific breed of chromatic dragon.

Atavists are universally evil, possessing the wicked nature of the dragon type they resemble, and are shunned by the Great Clans of dragonborn. However, atavists are incredibly powerful creatures, and are quite capable of surviving on their own. Each displays a number of potent abilities related to the dragon breed to which they are related, and most are more than a match for numerous standard dragonborn.

Although incredibly rare, a number of small enclaves of dragonborn atavists exist in isolated places throughout the known world. Typically, an enclave consists of three to five atavists, usually of the same type. Occasionally, larger, mixed enclaves led by the most powerful atavist have been formed. In addition, dragonborn atavists often serve true dragons, acting as favored minions, or in rare cases, consorts, and allies of equal status.

Most atavists harbor a deep and abiding hatred of their more common kin, and often go out of their way to attack or otherwise harm any dragonborn they encounter. Fear of complete annihilation and a general inability to work together towards a common goal keeps the atavists in check, and prevents a

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST (WHITE)

### FROSTRAGER

Large natural humanoid (reptile)

### LEVEL 7 ELITE BRUTE

XP 600

**Initiative** +5 **Senses Perception** +9; darkvision  
**HP** 196; **Bloodied** 98

**AC** 21; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 16

**Resist** 15 cold

**Action Points** 1

**Speed** 7 (ice walk), fly 6 (hover)

⬇ **Heavy Flail** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 2d8+6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

⬇ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Cold**

Reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 1d8+6 damage plus 1d6 cold damage.

### ‡ **Frostrager** (standard; at-will)

The frostrager makes a heavy flail and a bite attack against the last target that struck it in melee.

### ↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ◆ **Cold**

Close blast 3; +6 vs. Reflex; 2d8+4 cold damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +14

**Str** 22 (+9)      **Dex** 15 (+5)      **Wis** 12 (+4)

**Con** 18 (+7)      **Int** 10 (+2)      **Cha** 8 (+2)

**Equipment** heavy flail

**Description** This hulking humanoid is covered in thick, milk-white scales and stands an imposing 9 feet tall. A mammoth pair of leathery wings flares from its back, and its large, crested head is decidedly draconic. The towering brute grips a truly humongous flail in both clawed hands, and its breath leaks from between its jaws in semi-solid puffs of icy frost.

### **FROSTRAGER TACTICS**

The frostrager typically begins combat with its breath weapon, hoping to disable as many opponents as possible. It then charges into combat with its flail, targeting foes indiscriminately at first, followed by targeting enemies that have injured it to bring frostrage into play.

### **FROSTHURLER**

Medium natural humanoid (reptile)

### **LEVEL 5 ELITE**

### **ARTILLERY**

XP 400

**Initiative** +6      **Senses Perception** +9; darkvision  
**HP** 100; **Bloodied** 50

**AC** 19; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 17

**Resist** 15 cold

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 7 (ice walk), **fly** 8 (hover)

### ⊕ **Scimitar** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage (crit 1d8+11).

### ⊗ **Icebolt** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Cold**

Ranged 20; +12 vs. AC; 1d10+5 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

### ↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ◆ **Cold**

Close blast 3; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6+2 cold damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

**Nimble Vengeance** (immediate reaction; the frosthurler is targeted by a ranged attack while flying; encounter)

The frosthurler rolls a saving throw, and if successful the ranged attack misses, and the frosthurler can make an immediate ranged basic attack on its attacker.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +10, Stealth +12

**Str** 16 (+5)      **Dex** 20 (+7)      **Wis** 14 (+4)

**Con** 14 (+4)      **Int** 12 (+3)      **Cha** 11 (+2)

**Equipment** scimitar

**Description** This lightly built humanoid resembles an anthropomorphic white dragon, complete with crested head and large, leathery wings. It hovers in the chilly air, riding the howling, arctic winds with almost supernatural grace and adroitness. It clutches a scimitar in one scaly claw, and a long, jagged spike of ice in the other.

### **FROSTHURLER TACTICS**

The frosthurler prefers to engage its opponents at range while flying. It targets fast-moving opponents with icebolt, and constantly moves and shifts to stay out of melee range. When cornered, and forced into melee combat, the frosthurler uses its breath weapon, and then attempts to fight its way free and take to the air again.

### **ENCOUNTER GROUPS**

White dragonborn atavists are the only atavists to assume a dominant role over true dragons, and an enclave will sometimes have one or more young white dragons at its disposal. Obviously, older whites would never assume such a subservient role with lesser creatures.

### **Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,750)**

- ◆ 2 frosthurlers (level 5 elite artillery)
- ◆ 2 frostragers (level 7 elite brute)
- ◆ 1 young white dragon (level 3 solo brute)

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST (BLACK)

### GLOOMSTALKER LEVEL 6 ELITE LURKER

Medium natural XP 500  
humanoid (reptile)

**Initiative** +12 **Senses Perception** +10; darkvision  
**HP** 114; **Bloodied** 57

**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 15

**Resist** 15 acid

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 8

⊕ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
+11 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage, and the gloomstalker shifts 1 square.

‡ **Twin Blades** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

The gloomstalker makes two short sword attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target grants combat advantage to the gloomstalker until the end of the gloomstalker's next turn.

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Acid**

Close blast 3; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d10+2 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

↔ **Gloom Burst** (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ **Zone**

Close burst 2; the gloomstalker creates a zone of darkness that remains until the end of its next turn. The cloud blocks line of sight, and all creatures within the zone (except the gloomstalker) are blinded.

**Combat Advantage:** The gloomstalker deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

**Alignment** Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Stealth +13, Thievery +13

**Str** 14 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+8) **Wis** 13 (+4)

**Con** 15 (+4) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+4)

**Equipment** 2 short swords

**Description** This lithe, draconic humanoid grips a short sword in each hand, twirling the blades in a circular arc with lackadaisical agility. Its body is surrounded by a shifting haze of smoky gloom, and a steady patter of caustic green fluid drips from its fanged jaws, sizzling quietly on the flagstones under its feet.

## GLOOMSTALKER TACTICS

A gloomstalker is a stealthy killer that prefers to strike from ambush. In melee, it constantly maneuvers around the battlefield, adjusting its position to gain combat advantage against its target. A gloomstalker typically begins combat against numerous foes with gloom burst. It then targets the area of darkness with its breath weapon to further injure and disorient its foes. Finally, it wades into the gloom with its short swords, attacking its wounded and blinded foes with terrible, lethal precision.

### FOULBLADE LEVEL 8 ELITE

Medium natural SKIRMISHER  
humanoid (reptile) XP 700

**Initiative** +9 **Senses Perception** +11; darkvision  
**HP** 176; **Bloodied** 88

**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 17

**Resist** 15 acid

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 7, fly 7 (hover); see also **Flyback Attack**

⊕ **Caustic Falchion** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Acid, Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 2d4+4 damage (crit 2d4+12) plus 1d6 acid damage.

‡ **Flyby Attack** (standard; at-will)

The foulblade flies up to 7 squares and makes a melee basic attack at any point during the move without provoking an opportunity attack from the target.

‡ **Wing Slam** (minor; recharge 5,6)

+11 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the foulblade's next turn.

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Acid**

Close blast 3; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d8+3 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

**Alignment** Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +13, Stealth +12

**Str** 18 (+8) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 14 (+6)

**Con** 16 (+7) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 8 (+3)

**Equipment** falchion, leather armor

**Description** This tall, black-scaled humanoid grips an enormous falchion in both taloned hands. An acrid, cloying stench surrounds the dragon-like monstrosity.

## FOULBLADE TACTICS

Quick and agile, a foulblade prefers to attack from the air, diving at its foes to deliver powerful and accurate blows with its corrosive falchion. It uses flyby attack to maintain its distance from powerful melee types, and wing slam to neutralize spellcasters and those using ranged attack.

## ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Black dragonborn atavists are typically found in dismal swamps, and often associate with the creatures that live there, including black dragons. Black dragonborn atavists serving older black dragons as scouts, spies, and assassins are not uncommon.

### Level 15 Encounter (XP 5,900)

- ◆ 3 gloomstalkers (level 6 elite lurker)
- ◆ 2 foulblades (level 8 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 1 adult black dragon (level 11 solo lurker)

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST (GREEN)

### BLIGHTKNIFE

Medium natural humanoid (reptile)

### LEVEL 10 ELITE

SKIRMISHER  
XP 1,000

**Initiative** +12 **Senses Perception** +11; darkvision  
**HP** 206; **Bloodied** 103

**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 20

**Resist** 15 poison

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 8, fly 8 (hover)

⊕ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Poison, Weapon**  
+15 vs. AC; 1d4+5 damage plus 1d6 poison damage.

⊕ **Twin Fang Strike** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Poison, Weapon**

The blightknife makes two dagger attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the blightknife shifts 1 square and the target is weakened (save ends).

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ◆ **Poison**

Close blast 5; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d10+2 poison damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage and is slowed (save ends).

### Combat Advantage

The blightknife deals an additional 2d6 damage against a target it has combat advantage against.

**Alignment** Evil

**Languages** Common,  
Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +14, Stealth +15

**Str** 19 (+9)

**Dex** 20 (+10)

**Wis** 13 (+6)

**Con** 15 (+7)

**Int** 14 (+7)

**Cha** 16 (+8)

**Equipment** leather armor, two daggers

**Description** This agile, reptilian humanoid has dull-green scales and a pair of large, bat-like wings. It grips a serrated dagger in each hand; each blade coated in a sticky sheen of what can only be poison. A heavy, chemical smell saturates the air.

## BLIGHTKNIFE TACTICS

A blightknife attempts to engage its foes as quietly as possible, hoping to gain surprise and an advantageous tactical position. It maneuvers around the battlefield, attempting to flank with its allies and gain combat advantage against its enemies. The blightknife attacks with a pair of poisoned daggers, striking with lightning speed and precision. It uses its breath weapon only when faced with enemies beyond its ability to defeat, hoping to slow pursuit while it flees.

### MINDSCAR ADEPT

Medium natural humanoid (reptile)

### LEVEL 8 ELITE

CONTROLLER  
XP 800

**Initiative** +8 **Senses Perception** +11; darkvision  
**HP** 170; **Bloodied** 85

**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 22

**Resist** 15 poison

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 6

⊕ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Poison, Weapon**

+11 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage plus 1d6 poison damage.

✂ **Cerebral Dagger** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Psychic**

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; 1d10+5 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

✂ **Mind Puppet** (standard; recharge 5,6) ◆ **Charm, Psychic**

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; 2d6+5 psychic damage, and the target makes a melee basic attack against its nearest ally, shifting a number of squares up to its speed if necessary.



↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Poison**

Close blast 5; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d10+1 poison damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage and is slowed (save ends).

**Get Out of My Mind!**

Any creature that successfully attacks a mindscar adept's Will defense takes 5 points of psychic damage.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +12

**Str** 15 (+6)      **Dex** 18 (+8)      **Wis** 15 (+6)

**Con** 13 (+5)      **Int** 20 (+9)      **Cha** 16 (+7)

**Equipment** robes, short sword

**Description** This tall humanoid wears thick green robes that cover all but its strikingly draconic head. It is unarmed beyond a sheathed short sword at its waist, but you feel a terrible, alien pressure in your skull as its viridian eyes find and hold your own.

**MINDSCAR ADEPT TACTICS**

A mindscar adept attacks foes with cerebral dagger, focusing its attacks on melee types to reduce their effectiveness in combat. A favored tactic is to use mind puppet on the most potent melee fighter in range, and then force the dominated victim to attack allied spellcasters. The mindscar adept typically avoids melee, although it is competent with its short sword if pressed.

**ENCOUNTER GROUPS**

Green dragonborn atavists are found in deep forests and underground, and typically avoid contact with green dragons, preferring instead to rule over tribes of lizardfolk, troglodytes, and other primitive humanoids.

**Level 14 Encounter (XP 4,400)**

- ♦ 4 troglodyte maulers (level 6 soldier)
- ♦ 2 troglodyte impalers (level 7 artillery)
- ♦ 2 blightknives (level 10 elite skirmisher)
- ♦ 1 mindscar adept (level 8 elite controller)

**DRAGONBORN ATAVIST (BLUE)**

**BOLTKNIGHT**

**LEVEL 12 ELITE**

Large natural humanoid (reptile)

**SOLDIER**  
XP 1,400

**Initiative** +10    **Senses Perception** +14; darkvision  
**HP** 244; **Bloodied** 122

**AC** 30; **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 22

**Resist** 20 lightning

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 8, fly 8

⚡ **Shockblade** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Lightning, Weapon**

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 1d10+7 damage plus 1d8 lightning damage. On a critical hit, all adjacent enemies suffer 1d8 lightning damage.

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter; see also born of lightning) ♦ **Lightning**

The boltknight targets up to three creatures with its breath weapon; the first target must be within 5 squares of the boltknight, the second target within 5 squares of the first, and the third target within 5 squares of the second; +15 vs. Reflex; 3d8+4 lightning damage. Miss: Half damage.

↔ **Cyclone Strike** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Lightning, Weapon**

Close burst 2; targets enemies; +18 vs. AC; 1d10+7 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 lightning damage.

**Born of Lightning**

Whenever a boltknight is hit with an attack that includes the lightning keyword, its breath weapon recharges, regardless of whether it actually suffers damage or not.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +18

**Str** 24 (+13)      **Dex** 15 (+8)      **Wis** 17 (+9)

**Con** 18 (+10)      **Int** 14 (+8)      **Cha** 13 (+7)

**Equipment** scale armor, heavy shield, longsword

**Description** This massive, winged humanoid stands nine feet tall and is covered in azure scales. It is armored in a hauberk of metal scales, dyed a lighter shade of blue than its own scales. It grips a large round shield in its left hand, and a large, jagged sword – reminiscent of a lightning bolt – in its right. The smell of ozone and burnt flesh hangs thickly in the air.

## BOLTKNIGHT TACTICS

A boltknight begins combat with its breath weapon, choosing likely spellcasters for its three targets. It then rushes into melee with its sword, making a beeline for enemies that have clumped together to bring cyclone strike into play. It fights until bloodied, after which it takes to the air to escape its foes.

### BOLT THROWER

### LEVEL 10 ELITE

Medium natural humanoid (reptile)

**ARTILLERY**  
XP 1,000

**Initiative** +11 **Senses Perception** +12; darkvision  
**HP** 162; **Bloodied** 81

**AC** 25; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 19

**Resist** 15 lightning

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 6, fly 8 (hover)

⚔ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
+15 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.

⚡ **Shockbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Lightning, Weapon**

Ranged 20/40; +17 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage plus 1d8 lightning damage.

⚡ **Chain Lightning Shot** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Lightning, Weapon**

Ranged 20/40; +17 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage plus 1d8 lightning damage and the target is stunned (save ends), and all enemies within 5 squares suffer 1d8 lightning damage and are dazed (save ends).

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Lightning**

The bolt thrower targets up to three creatures with its breath weapon; the first target must be within 5 squares of the bolt thrower, the second target within 5 squares of the first, and the third target within 5 squares of the second; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d8+2 lightning damage. Miss: Half damage.

⚡ **Lightning Rod** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Lightning**

Area burst 3 within 10; targets enemies; +13 vs. Fortitude; target gains vulnerability 10 lightning (save ends).

**Alignment** Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Stealth +16

**Str** 16 (+8) **Dex** 22 (+11) **Wis** 15 (+7)

**Con** 15 (+7) **Int** 13 (+6) **Cha** 14 (+7)

**Equipment** leather armor, longsword, longbow

**Description** This winged, draconic humanoid grips a large bow in its taloned hands. As it draws the bow to its scaled cheek, you realize that no arrow has been set to the string. Instead, a crackling bolt of blue lightning rests upon the bow's riser, ready to be released...at you!

## BOLT THROWER TACTICS

The bolt thrower prefers to fight in the air, especially if its foes are restricted to the ground. It begins combat with lightning rod, making its foes more vulnerable to the rest of its electrified arsenal. It then targets up to three enemies with ranged combat abilities with its breath weapon, following up with chain lightning shot. Once its encounter powers have been exhausted, it simply rains lightning-charged arrows down upon its foes until either they are destroyed or flee. A bolt thrower usually flees combat if confronted with powerful melee opponents that can engage it in the air.

## ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Blue dragonborn atavists live in harsh deserts, and often serve blue dragons as elite minions, and even allies.

Level 17 Encounter (XP 8,800)

♦ 2 bolt throwers (level 10 elite artillery)

♦ 2 boltknights (level 12 elite soldier)

♦ 1 adult blue dragon (level 13 solo artillery)

## DRAGONBORN ATAVIST (RED)

### FIRELANCE TITAN

### LEVEL 17 ELITE

Huge natural humanoid (reptile)

**SOLDIER**  
XP 3,200

**Oppressive Heat** (Fire) aura 1; creatures without resistance to fire within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls.

**Initiative** +13 **Senses Perception** +17; darkvision  
**HP** 336; **Bloodied** 168

**AC** 36; **Fortitude** 32, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 24

**Resist** 20 fire

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 8, fly 10

⚔ **Firelance** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 3; +24 vs. AC; 2d6+10 damage (crit 4d6+22) plus 2d6 fire damage.

✂ **Infectious Immolation** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Ranged 10; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d10+7 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). Secondary Effect: Every round that the primary target suffers ongoing fire damage, it makes an attack against all adjacent creatures; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d10+7 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage. Secondary targets do not spread the infectious immolation to adjacent creatures.

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Close blast 5; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d10+7 fire damage.

### Threatening Reach

The firelance titan can make opportunity attacks against all creatures within its reach (4 squares).

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +23, Intimidate +17

**Str** 31 (+18)    **Dex** 17 (+11)    **Wis** 19 (+12)

**Con** 24 (+7)    **Int** 12 (+9)      **Cha** 15 (+10)

**Equipment** heavy shield, spear

**Description** This colossal, red-scaled humanoid grips a flaming spear in one clawed hand, and a massive shield in the other. A pair of truly, gigantic wings jut from its back, and a shimmering haze of heat surrounds its body.

### FIRELANCE TITAN TACTICS

A firelance titan begins combat by targeting the most competent melee opponent with infectious immolation; it then blasts its opponents with its breath weapon, further compounding the pain and confusion of infectious immolation. It follows these fiery attacks with its massive, flaming spear, using its vast reach to strike opponents well before they can reach it.

### INFERNATRIX

Large natural humanoid (reptile)

### LEVEL 13 ELITE

**CONTROLLER**  
XP 1,600

**Initiative** +12    **Senses Perception** +14; darkvision

**HP** 256; **Bloodied** 128

**AC** 29; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 21

**Resist** 20 fire

Saving Throws +2

Action Points 1

**Speed** 7, fly 7

⬇ **Blazing Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d12+4 damage plus 1d6 fire damage.

✂ **Withering Aura** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Fire**

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d8+3 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). Secondary Effect: Every round that the primary target suffers ongoing fire damage, it radiates an aura of oppressive heat (aura 1). Creatures without fire resistance within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls.

✂ **Incendiary Cloud** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Area burst 5 within 10; this power creates a cloud of cinder and ash that remains in place until the end of the infernatix's next turn. Creatures inside the cloud take 1d8+3 fire damage and are blinded until they exit the cloud. Sustain: The infernatix can sustain the cloud as a minor action for up to 3 rounds.

↔ **Breath Weapon** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Close blast 5; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d10+3 fire damage.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

### Skills

**Str** 18 (+10)    **Dex** 22 (+12)    **Wis** 16 (+9)

**Con** 16 (+9)    **Int** 16 (+9)      **Cha** 15 (+8)

**Equipment** scale armor, flail

**Description** This large, draconic humanoid grips a flail with a head like a blazing sun in one hand, and holds a ball of lurid red flames in the other. Its scales are deep scarlet, and the armor it wears has been dyed the same shade. Heat rolls off the towering, dragon-like horror in oppressive waves.

### INFERNATRIX TACTICS

Skilled in both melee and ranged combat, the infernatix is a versatile and terrifying opponent. It typically begins combat with incendiary cloud, using the cloud to isolate and disorient opponents. It then targets a powerful melee type with withering aura, making the victim a danger to his allies, which effectively isolates him from the group. The infernatix then alternates between inferno bolt and using its flail in melee, as the situation demands.

### ENCOUNTER GROUPS

The mighty red dragonborn atavists bow to no dragon or dragonborn, and are the least likely to join a mixed enclave.

### Level 15 Encounter (XP 6,400)

♦ 2 infernatix (level 13 elite controller)

♦ 1 firelance titan (level 17 elite soldier)

# DRAGONBORN OF THE GREAT CLANS

The dragonborn of the eight Great Clans are a diverse and varied lot. Each has its own view on war, commerce, and relations with other races. The eight example dragonborn presented here exemplify, for the most part, the tactics and combat styles of the clans they represent.

## DRAGONBORN OF THE GREAT CLANS LORE

A character can learn the following with a successful History check. This is in addition to the information presented in the dragonborn entry in the MM.

**DC 15:** There are eight Great Clans of dragonborn: Aratos, Daigo, Durisshk, Karkonus, Kengi, Kthonan, Maahksarith, and Satikor.

## CLAN ARATOS

The warriors of Clan Aratos are known for their ability to communicate with the ancient spirits of their ancestors, and draw upon the strength of these shades to power their own martial abilities. Most fighters and paladins of the clan belong to the Knights of Aratos, a martial company tasked with protecting the great merchant city of Dumarak.

**KNIGHT OR ARATOS**      **LEVEL 6 SOLDIER**  
Medium natural      XP 250  
humanoid

**Initiative** +7    **Senses Perception** +10  
**HP** 71; **Bloodied** 35  
**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17  
**Speed** 5

⬇️ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦️ **Weapon**  
+13 vs. AC (+14 while bloodied); 1d6+3 damage.

⬇️ **Spirit Blade** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦️ **Fear, Psychic, Weapon**

Requires short sword; +11 vs. Will (+12 while bloodied); 3d6+3 psychic damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

⬅️ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦️ **Lightning**

Close blast 3; +9 vs. Reflex (+10 while bloodied); 1d6+2 lightning damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Spirit Shield**

A Knight of Aratos gains a +2 bonus on all defenses against attacks and powers with the psychic or divine key words.

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Diplomacy +11, History +9, Intimidate +11

**Str** 17 (+6)    **Dex** 15 (+5)    **Wis** 14 (+5)

**Con** 15 (+5)    **Int** 12 (+4)    **Cha** 16 (+6)

**Equipment** plate armor, light shield, short sword

**Description** This proud dragonborn is armored in a blue-enameled breastplate and greaves. He carries a small round shield and a short, thrusting sword.

## KNIGHT OF ARATOS TACTICS

A Knight of Aratos typically begins combat with dragon breath to weaken his opponents and clear the battlefield. He then follows up with spirit blade on the most potent looking melee fighter, using the power as often as possible to quickly dispatch powerful enemies. A Knight of Aratos relies on spirit shield to ward him from the divine and mental powers of his enemies.

## CLAN DAIGO

The paladins of Clan Daigo believe that the mythical Code of the Dragon guides them in all things. Known as swordsworn, these honorable warriors seek to exemplify the virtues of courage, honor, and loyalty in every action they take, especially when it come to combat.

**SWORDESWORN****LEVEL 11 CONTROLLER**Medium natural  
humanoid**(LEADER)**  
XP 600

**Aura of Loyalty** aura 1; allies within the aura are immune to charm effects.

**Initiative** +6    **Senses Perception** +13**HP** 114; **Bloodied** 57**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 21**Speed** 5

⊕ **Bastard Sword** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**  
+15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 1d10+6 damage, and the target is marked.

‡ **Bound by Honor** (standard; recharge 5,6) ◆  
**Charm, Psychic, Weapon**

Requires bastard sword; marked target only; +15 vs. Will (+16 while bloodied); 3d10+6 psychic damage, and the target suffers a -4 penalty on all attack rolls against any target but the swordsworn (save ends).

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Cold**

Close blast 3; +13 vs. Reflex (+14 while bloodied); 2d6+3 cold damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

↔ **Gift of Courage** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Healing**

Close burst 5; all allies in the burst may spend a healing surge, and also gain a +2 bonus to their Will defenses until the end of the encounter.

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common,  
Draconic

**Skills** Diplomacy +14, History +13, Intimidate +16**Str** 22 (+9)    **Dex** 12 (+5)    **Wis** 17 (+6)**Con** 18 (+7)    **Int** 13 (+5)    **Cha** 18 (+6)**Equipment** scale armor, bastard sword

**Description** This regal dragonborn warrior is armored in sky-blue scale armor and carries a long, curved sword at his waist.

**SWORDESWORN TACTICS**

A swordsworn prefers to initiate honorable combat with a foe; even going so far as to challenge a particular enemy on the battlefield to a duel. If an enemy accepts such a duel, the swordsworn begins combat with bound by honor to ensure that his enemy completes the duel. A swordsworn tries to stay close to his allies in combat to bolster their morale and provide healing if necessary.

**CLAN DURISSHK**

The noble paladins of Clan Durishsk are known for their acts of self-sacrifice and their cold, aloof demeanor. They view the cold purity of martyrdom to be the most exalted state of being, believing that to give one's life for an ally exemplifies the virtues of the Code of the Dragon. However, they do not throw away their lives needlessly, and the Mistral Knights, as the paladins of Clan Durishsk are called, are potent and tireless warriors.

**MISTRAL KNIGHT****LEVEL 9 CONTROLLER**Medium natural  
humanoid

XP 400

**Initiative** +6    **Senses Perception** +12**HP** 96; **Bloodied** 48**AC** 23; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 22**Speed** 5

⊕ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**

+12 vs. AC (+13 while bloodied); 1d8+4 damage, and the target is marked.

‡ **Ice Balm Strike** (standard; recharge 5,6) ◆  
**Charm, Healing, Weapon**

Requires longsword; +13 vs. Fortitude (+14 while bloodied); 2d8+5 cold damage, and all allies within 5 squares can spend a healing surge.

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Cold**

Close blast 3; +11 vs. Reflex (+12 while bloodied); 1d6+2 cold damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Selfless Wrath** (immediate interrupt 1/round; at-will)

When a marked target attacks one of the mistral knight's allies, the mistral knight may take half the damage inflicted on the ally. In addition, the ally may take an immediate melee basic attack on the target as a free action.

↔ **Ice Phoenix** (when reduced to 0 hit points) ◆  
**Cold, Radiant**

Close burst 3; targets enemies; +11 vs. Fortitude; 3d8+5 cold and radiant damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Draconic

**Skills** Diplomacy +14, History +12, Intimidate +16, Religion +10

**Str** 19 (+8)      **Dex** 14 (+6)      **Wis** 17 (+7)  
**Con** 16 (+7)      **Int** 13 (+5)      **Cha** 20 (+9)

**Equipment** chainmail, heavy shield, longsword

**Description** This impressive dragonborn warrior is armored in chainmail and carries a large heater shield. It is armed with a longsword carried in a scabbard at its waist.

### MISTRAL KNIGHT TACTICS

A mistral knight seeks to mark as many targets as possible during combat, so he may better protect his allies from harm. He uses ice balm strike when his allies are wounded, and defends them furiously with his longsword and dragon breath power. When bloodied, a mistral knight attempts to move adjacent to multiple enemies, hoping to inflict as much damage as possible with ice phoenix, should he fall in combat.

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Fire**  
 Close blast 3; +11 vs. Reflex (+12 while bloodied); 1d6+3 fire damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)  
 A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Unified Action**  
 A Blackspears hoplite gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls against any target that was attacked by an ally in the same round.

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +12, Endurance +12, History +7, Intimidate +11

**Str** 20 (+9)      **Dex** 15 (+6)      **Wis** 14 (+6)  
**Con** 16 (+7)      **Int** 13 (+5)      **Cha** 10 (+4)

**Equipment** plate armor, heavy shield, longspear

**Description** This dragonborn warrior is armored in steel breastplate and greaves, and carries a large, round shield. He grips a longspear in one taloned hand as if it weighed no more than a willow wand.

### BLACKSPEAR HOPLITE TACTICS

The Blackspears hoplite prefers to fight alongside his brothers, be they other hoplites or allies drawn from the “lesser” races. The hoplite typically combines his attacks with an ally on a single opponent to make use of the unified action ability. He uses impaling strike on tough melee opponents, especially those he considers a worthy foe. The Blackspears hoplite saves his dragon breath for numerous, weak enemies.

## CLAN KARKONUS

The regimented and warlike dragonborn of Clan Karkonus are renowned for their skill with spear and shield. Their legendary Blackspears hoplites are perfect models of military unity and efficiency.

**BLACKSPEAR HOPLITE**      **LEVEL 8 SOLDIER**  
 Medium natural      XP 350  
 humanoid

**Initiative** +8      **Senses Perception** +5  
**HP** 88; **Bloodied** 44  
**AC** 25; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17  
**Speed** 5

⊕ **Longspear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
 Reach 2; +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 1d10+5 damage. A Blackspears hoplite can wield a longspear in one hand.

‡ **Impaling Strike** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Weapon**  
 Requires longspear; +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 2d10+5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

## CLAN KENGI

The mighty swordmasters of Clan Kengi are famous for their ability to blend elemental power and martial prowess. These mighty warriors are called dragonsword adepts, and they combine blade, breath, and dauntless courage into one devastating fighter.

**DRAGONSWORD ADEPT****LEVEL 9 SOLDIER**

Medium natural humanoid

XP 400

**Initiative** +7 **Senses Perception** +6**HP** 97; **Bloodied** 48**AC** 25; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 19**Speed** 5⊕ **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**

+16 vs. AC (+17 while bloodied); 1d10+5 damage (crit 1d10+15), and the target is marked.

⊕ **Blade of the Dragon Kings** (standard; recharge 5,6) ◆ **Acid, Weapon**

Requires greatsword; +16 vs. AC (+17 while bloodied); 2d10+5 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is marked.

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Acid**

Close blast 3; +12 vs. Reflex (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+3 acid damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Fury of the Dragon Kings**

A dragonsword adept gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls against marked targets.

**Alignment** Any **Languages** Common, Draconic**Skills** Athletics +14, History +7, Intimidate +13**Str** 21 (+9) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+6)**Con** 17 (+7) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 15 (+6)**Equipment** scale armor, greatsword**Description** This massive dragonborn warrior is armored in a suit of green scale armor and has a two-handed sword sheathed in a scabbard across his back.**DRAGONSWORD ADEPT TACTICS**

A dragonsword adept relishes intense and bloody melee combat and seeks out the most potent fighter on the battlefield to engage. He begins combat with blade of the dragon kings and then continues to hew away at the same opponent until either it or he drops. A dragonsword adept rarely uses its dragon breath power, considering it rather unsporting to attack multiple enemies at the same time.

**CLAN KTHONAN**

The dragonborn of Clan Kthonan are at home beneath the earth and spend much of their time exploring the caverns and tunnels of the subterranean world. The most proficient of these explorers are known as deep seekers, and they are crafty, well-rounded fighters prepared for virtually anything the Underdeep can throw at them.

**DEEP SEEKER****LEVEL 8 SKIRMISHER**

Medium natural humanoid

XP 350

**Initiative** +11 **Senses Perception** +11; darkvision**HP** 87; **Bloodied** 43**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 18**Speed** 6⊕ **War Pick** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC (+14 while bloodied); 1d8+3 damage (crit 1d8+11).

⊕ **Rockslide Strike** (standard; recharge 5,6)

+13 vs. AC (+14 while bloodied); 2d8+3 damage, and the deep seeker slides the target 3 squares. If the target is slid into a square occupied by another enemy, the second target is pushed 1 square, and both targets fall prone.

↔ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Acid**

Close blast 3; +9 vs. Reflex (+10 while bloodied); 1d6+2 acid damage.

↔ **Echolocation Breath** (minor; encounter) ◆ **Thunder**

Close blast 3; +9 vs. Fortitude (+10 while bloodied); 1d6+2 thunder damage, and the deep seeker gains a +2 bonus to hit the target for the rest of the encounter.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Combat Advantage**

A deep seeker deals an additional 1d6 damage on ranged and melee attacks against an opponent it has combat advantage against.

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, Draconic

**Skills** Athletics +12, Dungeoneering +13, History +14, Intimidate +8, Stealth +14

**Str** 16 (+7)      **Dex** 20 (+9)      **Wis** 14 (+6)

**Con** 15 (+6)      **Int** 16 (+7)      **Cha** 15 (+6)

**Equipment** leather armor, war pick

**Description** This massive dragonborn warrior is armored in a suit of green scale armor and has a two-handed sword sheathed in a scabbard across his back.

### DEEP SEEKER TACTICS

A deep seeker attempts to gain combat advantage over his foes by using abilities like rockslide strike or flanking with an ally. He uses echolocation breath at the beginning of combat to make his enemies easier to hit for the duration. A deep seeker typically saves his dragon breath power to finish off wounded enemies.

☞ **Poison the Soul** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Poison**

Ranged 5; +15 vs. Fortitude (+16 while bloodied); 3d8+6 poison damage, and that target gains vulnerability 5 poison (save ends).

☜ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Poison**

Close blast 3; +13 vs. Reflex (+14 while bloodied); 1d6+3 poison damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Alignment** Evil      **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic

**Skills** Bluff +14, History +14, Intimidate +16

**Str** 16 (+8)      **Dex** 20 (+10)      **Wis** 16 (+8)

**Con** 22 (+11)      **Int** 14 (+7)      **Cha** 18 (+9)

**Equipment** sickle

**Description** This sinister dragonborn wears virulent green robes and carries a saw-toothed sickle at its waist.

### VENOMANCER TACTICS

A venomancer begins combat by targeting a foe, preferably a good paladin or cleric, with poison the soul. He then follows up with toxic blast on the same target, taking advantage of the foe's newfound vulnerability to poison damage. A venomancer uses his dragon breath on enemies that press in close, but avoids melee if possible.

## CLAN MAAHKSARITH

The foul warlocks of Clan Maahksarith are infamous for their use of eldritch poison to bring their enemies low. It is said that the Maahksarith have made terrible bargains with infernal powers in order to control such virulent toxins.

**VENOMANCER**      **LEVEL 10 ARTILLERY**  
Medium natural      XP 500  
humanoid

**Initiative** +10      **Senses Perception** +13  
**HP** 88; **Bloodied** 44  
**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20  
Resist 5 poison  
**Speed** 6

☜ **Sickle** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
+12 vs. AC (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+3 damage.

☞ **Toxic Blast** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**  
Ranged 10; +15 vs. Reflex (+16 while bloodied); 1d10+6 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage.

## CLAN SATICOR

The exiles and pariahs that make up Clan Saticor are known for the banditry and general disdain of everything that dragonborn normally hold dear. Members of the clan show a frightening proclivity for the use of the crossbow, and their highwayman and snipers are said to be deadly with the weapon.



**SATICOR BANDIT SNIPER**      **LEVEL 7 ARTILLERY**  
Medium natural      XP 300  
humanoid

**Initiative** +7    **Senses Perception** +10  
**HP** 62; **Bloodied** 31  
**AC** 19; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 17  
**Speed** 6

Ⓣ **Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
+12 vs. AC (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+2 damage.

Ⓢ **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
Ranged 15/30; +14 vs. AC (+15 while bloodied);  
1d8+4 damage. A Saticor bandit sniper can reload  
a crossbow as a free action.

↘ **Ricocheting Shot** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦  
**Weapon**

Requires crossbow. The Saticor bandit sniper targets up to three creatures with crossbow; the first target must be within 10 squares of the Saticor bandit sniper, the second target within 5 squares of the first, and the third target within 5 squares of the second; +13 vs. AC (+14 while bloodied); 1d8+4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the Saticor bandit sniper until the end of its next turn.

⚡ **Dragon Breath** (minor; encounter) ♦ **Lightning**

Close blast 3; +10 vs. Reflex (+11 while bloodied);  
1d6+2 lightning damage.

**Dragonborn Fury** (only while bloodied)

A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.

**Combat Advantage**

A Saticor bandit sniper deals an additional 2d6 damage on ranged attacks against an opponent it has combat advantage against.

**Alignment** Any      **Languages** Common,  
Draconic

**Skills** History +5, Intimidate +11, Stealth +12  
**Str** 15 (+5)    **Dex** 19 (+7)    **Wis** 14 (+5)  
**Con** 14 (+5)    **Int** 14 (+5)    **Cha** 12 (+4)

**Equipment** leather armor, club, crossbow, case with 20 bolts

**Description** This furtive-looking dragonborn is dressed in tattered leather armor, and is armed with a club and a crossbow.

**SATICOR BANDIT SNIPER TACTICS**

A Saticor bandit sniper attempts to engage foes from hiding, and at range. He relies heavily on his crossbow in combat and will attempt to gain combat advantage over his foes in order to deal extra damage. A Saticor bandit sniper will use his dragon breath or ricocheting shot when faced with multiple opponents. He will avoid melee if at all possible.

**ENCOUNTER GROUPS**

Although the dragonborn presented here are exemplars of their clans, they will most often be encountered in the company of standard dragonborn. Some clans also work closely with other races, and may be encountered among them.

**Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,300)**

- ♦ 2 knights of Aratos (level 6 soldier)
- ♦ 4 dragonborn soldiers (level 5 soldier)

**Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,600)**

- ♦ 3 Saticor bandit snipers (level 6 soldier)
- ♦ 4 mercury dire drakes (level 4 soldier)

**Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,750)**

- ♦ 5 Blackspear hoplites (level 8 soldier)

**Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,850)**

- ♦ 2 deep seekers (level 8 skirmisher)
- ♦ 3 dwarf hammerers (level 5 soldiers)
- ♦ 3 dwarf bolters (level 4 artillery)

**Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,000)**

- ♦ 3 dragonsword adepts (level 9 soldier)
- ♦ 6 dragonborn soldiers (level 5 soldier)

**Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,200)**

- ♦ 1 mistral knight (level 9 controller)
- ♦ 2 dragonborn gladiators (level 10 soldier)
- ♦ 4 dragonborn soldiers (level 5 soldier)

**Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,600)**

- ♦ 2 venomancers (level 10 artillery)
- ♦ 2 dragonborn raiders (level 13 skirmishers)

**Level 11 Encounter (XP 2,975)**

- ♦ 1 swordsworn (level 11 controller)
- ♦ 3 dragonborn gladiators (level 10 soldier)
- ♦ 5 dragonborn soldiers (level 5 soldier)

## CHAPTER 7: MAGIC ITEMS

**Following** is a list of magic items created and used by the dragonborn.

### ANCESTRAL WEAPON LEVEL 6+

*The soul of a great warrior inhabits this blade.*

Lvl 6 +2	1,800 gp	Lvl 21 +5	225,000 gp
Lvl 11 +3	9,000 gp	Lvl 26 +6	1,125,000 gp
Lvl 16 +4	45,000 gp		

**Weapon:** Any

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus

**Property:** This weapon functions as a paladin's implement, adding its enhancement bonus to attacks and damage rolls for paladin powers that use implements.

**Power (Daily ♦ Psychic):** Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. Deal an extra 1d8 psychic damage.

**Level 11 or 16:** 2d8 extra psychic damage.

**Level 21 or 26:** 3d8 extra psychic damage.

The paladins of Clan Aratos craft ancestral weapons to aid them in battle. Each ancestral weapon houses the spirit of an Aratos ancestor who has chosen this path over serving as a spirit guide to a clan member. Ancestral weapons are sometimes lost by their original owners and may be found in the hands of paladins of other races.

### ARMOR OF THE SEA DRAKE LEVEL 7+

*This armor is composed of rippling blue-black scales and smells faintly of the briny deep.*

Lvl 7 +2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22 +5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12 +3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27 +6	1,625,000 gp
Lvl 17 +4	65,000 gp		

**Armor:** Scale

**Enhancement:** AC

**Property:** Gain a swim speed equal to your speed.

**Power (Daily):** Minor Action: You gain the ability to breathe underwater for 1 hour per enhancement bonus of the armor.

The marine-loving dragonborn of Clan Maahksarith are the only dragonborn known to craft this type of armor, often fashioning it to resemble the scales of the sea drakes they ride into battle. The scales of sea drake armor are very small and thin, but incredibly strong, forged via a process that is fiercely guarded by the Maahksarith dragonborn.

### BLOODFREEZING WEAPON LEVEL 10+

*This weapon glows blue-white, and particles of ice and snow cling to its blade.*

Lvl 10 +2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25 +5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15 +3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30 +6	3,125,000 gp
Lvl 20 +4	125,000 gp		

**Weapon:** Heavy Blade

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d6 cold damage per plus

**Property:** You gain resistance cold 5 when holding a bloodfreezing weapon.

**Power (At-Will ♦ Cold):** Free Action. All damage dealt by this weapon is cold damage. Another free action returns the damage to normal.

**Power (Daily ♦ Cold):** Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. The target gains vulnerability 5 cold until the end of the encounter.

**Level 20 or 25:** Vulnerability 10 cold

**Level 30:** Vulnerability 15 cold

The cold-loving warriors of Clan Durisshk often employ bloodfreezing weapons to further devastate their foes with breath and blade. These feared swords have the ability to freeze an enemy to his very core, making him even more vulnerable to the icy blast of the Durisshk breath weapon.

**CIRCLET OF ARCANES** **LEVEL 14**  
**DETECTION**

*This platinum circlet is set with a small red stone and enhances arcane skills. It can be activated to detect the presence of magical items.*

**Item Slot:** Head 21,000 gp  
**Property:** Gain a +3 item bonus to Arcana checks

**Power (Daily):** Minor Action: You can detect the presence of all magical items within 5 squares.

**Sustain Standard:** if you sustain this power for one round, you can ascertain the level of all magic items within range of the power. If you sustain it for two rounds, you can ascertain the type of each item (frost weapon, staff of power, etc.).

Wizards and warlocks of Clan Maahksarith have devised the circlet of arcane detection to aid them in their search for magical items. The circlet provides a constant bonus to arcane skills, but can be activated to detect the presence, level, and type of magic items nearby.

**DISARMING WEAPON** **LEVEL 3+**

*This weapon has a long hook set just above the business end of the weapon, which can be used to disarm opponents.*

Lvl 3 +1	680 gp	Lvl 18 +4	85,000 gp
Lvl 8 +2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23 +5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13 +3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28 +6	2,125,000 gp

**Weapon:** Any  
**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls  
**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus, +1d8 per plus against unarmed opponents  
**Power (Daily):** Minor Action. An opponent struck by the next melee basic attack you make drops any item it is currently holding. If the target is holding two items, you can choose which one it drops. Dropped items land in the square the target is currently occupying.

Obsessed with the accumulation of magical items and weaponry, Clan Maahksarith has devised a type of enchanted weapon that allows them to acquire an opponent's magical items with minimal effort. Despite the name, disarming weapons can be used to snag any item an opponent might be holding, such as weapons, wands, rods, holy symbols, etc.

**DEEP DELVER WEAPON** **LEVEL 9+**

*These axes and picks keep underground explorers from getting lost, and provide resistance to the attacks of certain infamous subterranean monsters.*

Lvl 9 +2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24 +5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14 +3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29 +6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19 +3	105,000 gp		

**Weapon:** Axe, Pick  
**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls  
**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d12 damage per plus against creatures with the aberrant origin type  
**Property:** While in hand, a deep delver weapon allows its wielder to intuit the cardinal directions while underground without the use of the Dungeoneering skill.

**Property:** This weapon provides resistance against psychic attacks, as shown below.

**Level 9:** Resist 5 psychic  
**Level 14 or 19:** Resist 10 psychic  
**Level 24 or 29:** Resist 15 psychic

Clan Kthonan and its many subterranean explorers prize deep delver weapons above all other arms. Not only does a deep delver weapon keep an intrepid dragonborn from getting lost in caverns and tunnels, but it also provides invaluable defense against the psychic attacks of dangerous underground monsters.

**DRAGONFURY WEAPON** **LEVEL 2+**

*Your blade comes alive with the fury of the dragon-kings.*

Lvl 2 +1	520 gp	Lvl 17 +4	65,000 gp
Lvl 7 +2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22 +5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12 +3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27 +6	1,625,000 gp

**Weapon:** Axe, Hammer, or Heavy Blade  
**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls  
**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus



**Property:** When bloodied, you gain a +1 item bonus to damage rolls.

**Level 15 or 20:** When bloodied, you gain a +2 item bonus to damage rolls.

**Level 25 or 30:** When bloodied, you gain a +3 item bonus to damage rolls.

Most weapons with the dragonfury enhancement are large and robust, such as greatswords, greataxes, and warhammers, reflecting the overpowering nature of draconic rage. Spikes, serrations, and other imposing features are also common on wyrmfang weapons. The dragonsword adepts of Clan Kengi are renowned for their use of dragonfury bastard swords.

### ECHOLOCATION WEAPON LEVEL 10+

*The blade of this sword vibrates with a barely audible hum.*

Lvl 10 +2 5,000 gp    Lvl 25 +5 625,000 gp

Lvl 15 +3 25,000 gp    Lvl 30 +6 3,125,000 gp

Lvl 20 +4 125,000 gp

**Weapon:** Heavy Blade, Light Blade

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus

**Power (Daily ♦ Thunder):** Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. The target takes an extra 1d8 thunder damage, and you gain blindsight 5 until the end of the encounter.

**Level 20 or 25:** 2d8 thunder damage.

**Level 30:** 3d8 thunder damage and blindsight 10.

Darkness is perhaps the most difficult obstacle to overcome in the deep places beneath the earth. For those without the ability to see in the dark, darkness can prove deadly when facing enemies without this limitation. Clan Kthonan, whose sons and daughters spend much of their lives exploring the subterranean world, have crafted echolocation weapons to ensure that deep-dwelling monsters can never use their inability to see in darkness against them.

### GAUNTLETS OF KRIVIKAGE LEVEL 13+

*These leather and steel gauntlets are supple and light. Once donned, the gauntlets make heavier armors easier to wear, and can be activated to quicken your blade in combat.*

Lvl 13 17,000 gp    Lvl 23 425,000 gp

**Slot:** Hands

**Property:** Reduce armor check and speed penalties by 1.

**Power (Daily):** Minor Action. Use this power when you make a successful melee basic attack. You may make another melee basic attack as minor action against the same target

**Level 23:** Make two additional melee basic attacks.

The Kengi warrior school of Krivikage teaches its students to strike with lightning speed and precision. For those who master the schools techniques, and have brought honor to the Krivikage way, a set of gauntlets of Krivikage may be awarded. These powerful gauntlets only further enhance the Krivikage skill of speed, maneuverability, and deadly accuracy.

### GLOVES OF THE HIGHWAYMAN LEVEL 12+

*These fingerless leather gloves make sniping attacks deadlier, and are greatly prized by brigands, highwaymen, and other unsavory sorts.*

Lvl 12 13,000 gp    Lvl 22 325,000 gp

**Slot:** Hands

**Property:** You deal an additional 1d6 damage on ranged attacks to any target you have combat advantage against.

Level 22: 2d6 additional damage.

Members of Clan Saticor often make their living as thieves and brigands assaulting and robbing innocent travelers on the highways and roads that run between major cities. Most Saticor prefer to engage their enemy from a distance, from hiding, and with minimal risk to themselves. The gloves of the highwayman make such ambush and sniping attacks much more effective and are highly prized by Saticor bandit lords.

### HELM OF THE SUBTERRANE LEVEL 8

*This rune-carved leather helm enhances perception and knowledge of the subterranean world.*

**Slot:** Head 3,400 gp

**Property:** You gain a +2 item bonus to Dungeoneering and Perception checks.

The explorers of Clan Kthonan created the helm of the subterrane to aid them in their deep ranging delves into the lightless caverns and tunnels beneath the world.



**HELM OF UNFETTERED  
PRECISION****LEVEL 7+***This helmet rewards wearers that focus only on simple, direct offense.*

Lvl 7 2,600 gp Lvl 27 1,625,000 gp

Lvl 17 65,000 gp

**Slot:** Head**Property:** On any round in which you take no other action than to make a melee basic attack, and do not spend an action point, you deal an extra 1d6 damage.**Level 17:** 2d6 extra damage.**Level 27:** 3d6 extra damage.

The swordmasters of Clan Daigo teach their pupils that the purest form of offense is often the simplest. To further reinforce this humble belief, the clan armorers have crafted the helm of unfettered precision. These magical helms reward Daigo warriors and paladins that strive to achieve simplicity in their pursuit of martial perfection.

**OATH BLADE****LEVEL 10+***This weapon ensures a quick and honorable duel.*

Lvl 10 +2 5,000 gp Lvl 25 +5 625,000 gp

Lvl 15 +3 25,000 gp Lvl 30 +6 3,125,000 gp

Lvl 20 +4 125,000 gp

**Weapon:** Heavy Blade, Light Blade**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus**Power (Daily):** Minor Action. When you use this power, you choose one enemy within line of sight. You deal an extra 1d6 damage to this enemy and score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20 with all attacks against this enemy until the end of the encounter. However, you receive a -4 penalty to attack rolls and deal only half damage to all other enemies until the chosen enemy is slain or until the end of the encounter (whichever comes first).**Level 20 or 25:** 2d6 extra damage, critical hit on a roll of 18-20.**Level 30:** 3d6 extra damage, critical hit on a roll of 17-20.

The swordsworn of Clan Daigo relish honorable duels, even if it means placing severe limitations on their ability to engage multiple enemies. Oath blades are cherished among the swordsworn paladins, as they allow these honor-bound warriors to focus on a single, potent enemy in battle. Swords bearing the oath blade enhancement are typically the well-crafted bastard swords favored by the warriors of Clan Daigo, but may be placed on any sword, from short swords to falchions.

**Cryptlight:** The cryptlight is similar to a sunrod in that it provides illumination; however, moss-rods are not magical and are generally only used underground. The subterranean explorers of Clan Kthonan construct cryptlights by allowing bioluminescent lichen to grow upon an alchemically treated length of bone. Once the lichen has taken root within the torch-shaped bone, it glows with dim illumination out to 5 squares.

For explorers looking for brighter illumination, Kthonan alchemists also construct greater cryptlights, which provide bright light out to 10 squares for up to 4 hours per day. Once the 4-hour duration has expired, the greater cryptlight sheds dim light out to 5 squares just like the common cryptlight.

Cryptlight are permanent as long as the lichen is moistened regularly and never exposed to direct sunlight for more than a moment, which kills it quickly. Exposure for much longer may even cause a dry cryptlight to spark noisily and conflagrate. Cryptlight sheaths, leather cylinders kept damp, are typically used to protect them when traveling aboveground.

**Cryptlight:** 8 gp**Greater Cryptlight:** 15 gp**POINT BLANK WEAPON****LEVEL 14+***This weapon's projectiles are deadly at short range. In addition, the weapon can be activated to avoid opportunity attacks from adjacent foes.*

Lvl 14 +3 21,000 gp Lvl 24 +5 525,000 gp

Lvl 19 +4 105,000 gp Lvl 29 +6 2,625,000 gp

**Weapon:** Bow or Crossbow**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus**Property:** A point blank weapon scores a critical hit on a roll of 19-20 within a number of squares equal to half its normal range. For example, a longbow (range 20/40) would score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20 at a range up to 10 squares.

**Power (Encounter):** Free action. Use this power when making a ranged attack with a crossbow or bow. You do not draw attacks of opportunity from adjacent enemies until the end of your turn.

Sometimes the members of Clan Saticor like to get up close and personal with their targets, but still retain the ability to fill an opponent full of crossbow bolts. The crafty rogues and bandits of the exile clan have devised the point blank weapon, which allows them to strike harder at close range or even feather an enemy standing right next to them.

### RAZORMIND AMULET

LEVEL 9+

*This amulet features a clear blue stone set into a nest of silver spikes. It can be activated to aggressively repel mental attacks.*

Lvl 9 +2 4,200 gp Lvl 24 +5 525,000 gp  
Lvl 14 +3 21,000 gp Lvl 29 +6 2,625,000 gp  
Lvl 19 +4 105,000 gp

**Item Slot:** Neck

**Enhancement:** Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

**Power (Encounter ♦ Psychic):** Immediate Interrupt. Use this power when you are hit with an attack that targets your Will defense. Make an immediate saving throw. If the saving throw is successful you negate the attack, and the creature that attacked you suffers 1d8 psychic damage.

**Level 19 or 24:** 2d8 psychic damage.

**Level 29:** 3d8 psychic damage.

Proud and watchful, the dragonborn of Clan Durisshk despise all forms of magical compulsion and domination, considering such attacks to be the heart of cowardice. To combat these insidious powers the crafters of the clan constructed the razormind amulet. These powerful items hide a nasty surprise for any wizard or warlock attempting to assail the mind of a Durisshk warrior.

### SHIELD OF SMASHING

LEVEL 10+

*This large metal shield has a spiked boss, perfect for smashing your foes into submission.*

Lvl 10 5,000 gp Lvl 30 3,125,000 gp  
Lvl 20 125,000 gp

**Item Slot:** Arms

**Power (Encounter):** Immediate Interrupt. You can use this power when you are missed by a melee attack. Make a melee basic attack against the enemy that missed you. If you hit, you deal 1d8 + Strength modifier damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Shields of smashing are almost always found in the hands of Karkonus hoplites, as the clan often awards these magical shields to hoplites that display extreme bravery and valor. Most shields of smashing are constructed in the standard Karkonus style: a massive, round metal shield, often with the sigil of its owner's hoplite company.

### TRADER'S CLOAK

LEVEL 7+

*This bright green cape can makes any business negotiation smoother.*

Lvl 7 +2 2,600 gp Lvl 22 +5 325,000 gp  
Lvl 12 +3 13,000 gp Lvl 27 +6 1,625,000 gp  
Lvl 17 +4 65,000 gp

**Item Slot:** Neck

**Enhancement:** Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

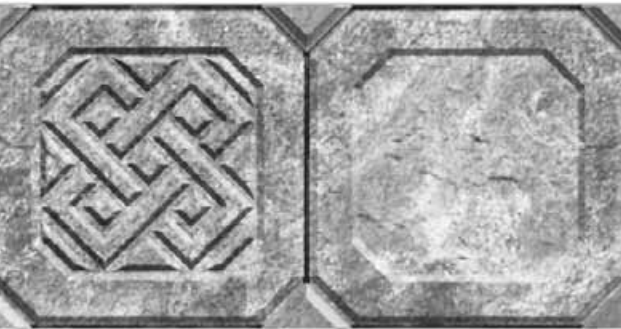
**Property:** Gain an item bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Insight checks when any of those three skills are used in any negotiation regarding money or the trade of goods.

Trader's cloaks are highly sought after by the caravan masters of Clan Aratos. These merchants are already shrewd negotiators, but the possession of a trader's cloak all but ensures the best prices and exchange rates wherever a merchant might go.

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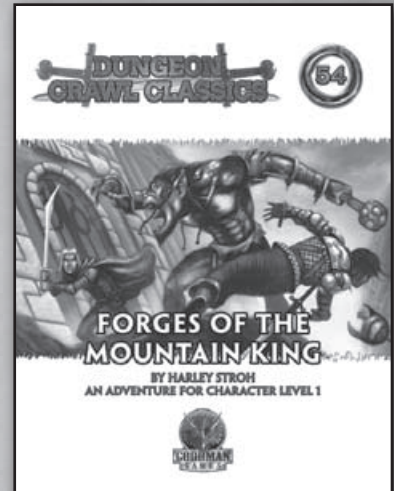
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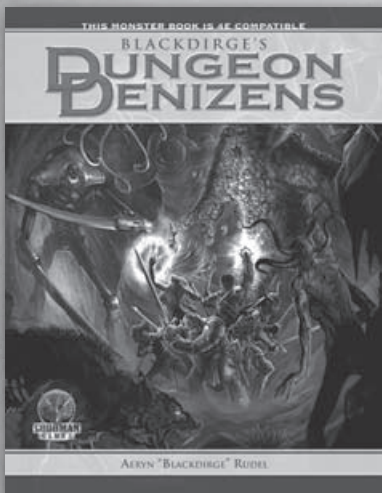
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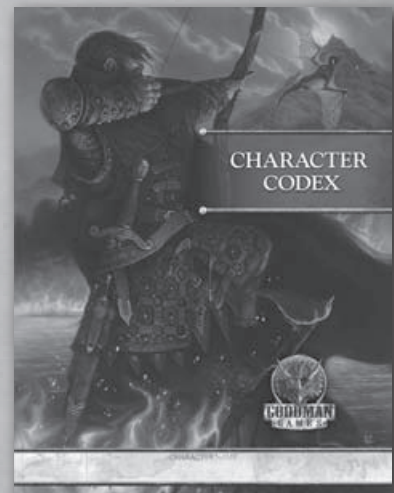


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