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SCIONS OF EVIL



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SCIONS OF EVIL

A Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GM's RESOURCE supplement by loads of talented designers

Every hero needs an antihero, every defender of the light must have darkness to keep at bay and every pure-hearted paladin needs a vile, shadow-cloaked assassin to cut down. Scions of Evil presents over 100 foes (CR 1/4 - 23) to bedevil your PCs and five sinister bands of black-hearted individuals.

Each villain benefits from an extensive write-up including notes on their background, personality, mannerisms and distinguishing marks as well as a fully detailed stat block, plot hooks and suggested encounter groups making it easy to insert the villain into almost any campaign.

Scions of Evil also includes a selection of minions including stalwart, black-hearted swordsmen; calculating, warrior monks; stealthy, amoral rogues and more powerful foes such as including noisome ghouls and a cunning gargoyle, charismatic quasit, bloodthirsty ogre-magi and malevolent invisible stalker!

As well as over 20 pages of new material including new villains and minions, Scions of Evil collates the NPCs and groups first presented in *Antipaladins*, *Bandits of the Rampant Horror*, *Brethren of the Crimson Altar*, *Fellowship of the Blackened Oak*, *Kai's Scoundrels*, *Thanegar's Horde*, *Villains*, *Villains II* and *Villains III*.



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BONUS MATERIAL

Thank you for purchasing *Scions of Evil*; we hope you enjoy it and that you check out our other fine print and PDF products. We at Raging Swan are committed to providing first class web enhancements for our products. Visit ragingswan.com to download bonus materials including maps, reorganised stat block listings, additional encounters and more!

ERRATA

We would like to think *Scions of Evil* is completely error free and that absolutely no mistakes have crept in during design or editing. However, we are realists. So in that spirit, we shall post errata three months after release on ragingswan.com. We aren't going to be correcting typos and spelling errors, but we will correct any game mechanic or balance issues that come to light.

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Published by Raging Swan Press
1st printing, May 2012

ABOUT THE DESIGNERS

Christian Alipounarian has been wasting copious amounts of time gaming since 1981. He joined the Living Greyhawk campaign staff in the nineties as regional adventure coordinator and editor for the Kingdom of Keoland region. He has written many rounds of modules for not just that campaign but also for the RPGA's Living Kingdoms of Kalamar and Living Death campaigns, as well as for the independent Legends of the Shining Jewel. He was a playtest lead for the 4th Edition Dungeons & Dragons game and is a contributor to products produced by Empty Room Studios Publishing and Raging Swan Press. He holds an undergraduate degree in history and a graduate degree in social science. He lives in northern New Jersey with his cat, Ava.

John Bennett makes his lair in the tree-cloaked hills of New Hampshire. He enjoys heavy metal, beer and cigars as much as he enjoys playing RPGs. John has been writing since the age of 6 when he would narrate stories about dinosaurs and robots to his mother. He has a degree in film production and a pile of reject letters to go with his scripts. Currently, he is pursuing his Master's degree in Organizational Leadership. He is also striving to achieve at least one skill rank in Perform (guitar) but too little avail. Coerced into playing 1st edition D&D by an older (and bigger) kid in the neighbourhood at the age of 8, he would like to take a moment to thank his friend, Danny, for introducing him to the world of gaming many long years ago. While his friends and players know what he is talking about, John has been unsuccessful in explaining what bugbears are to his family and co-workers, the latter fleeing his office when he begins rambling.

Ben Kent has memories of seeing "bigger kids" playing RPGs in the hallways of his Elementary school. After overhearing the destruction of skeletons beyond number at the hands of a skilled cleric, he immediately settled upon such games as the sort of thing he'd enjoy.

Living with his wondrous and encouraging life-partner Tiffinie and their two beautiful young daughters in Ontario, Canada, Ben continues to find role-playing games the sort of thing he enjoys. He is eagerly looking forward to the day his daughters are both grown up enough to roll the dice instead of eat them, so they can join their parents at the table (and thus ease the difficulty in finding babysitters on gaming days).

Ben's eventual objective is complete dominion over the earth, but there's a lot of competition in that field. He's presently working as a customer service agent by day and superhero/game designer/bug squasher/father figure by night. Now that he's been published, he's honestly not sure his life could get much cooler.

Andrew Martin was born in the United States and now residing in eastern China, Andrew is both an aspirant teacher

and writer. Holding a long-fostered love of role-playing games and the act of playing, he spends much of his free time simply dreaming up various characters and plots, and occasionally even commits them to paper! He loves richly developed worlds and personas, with a special interest in dark fantasy, gothic horror and gritty westerns. He is engaged in a never-ending battle with his own lethargy, and whenever he earns a minor victory against this insidious foe, he uses the resulting window of motivation to further his practice in writing.

Julian Neale began his interest in roleplaying games with the classic "red box" in the early 1980s, then quickly progressed onto 1e AD&D when buying the *Player's Handbook* from none other than Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson - of *Fighting Fantasy* and Games Workshop fame - at a convention in London. Julian has run and played in many games and game systems over the years, and likes writing game stuff for fun. He has contributed to Dragon magazine and the Kingmaker Adventure Path for Paizo, and is excited to work with Raging Swan Press. Julian currently lives in the north of England, but plans to relocate further south in the future.

David Posener started gaming with the book *Grey Star the Wizard*, circa 1985, back when we eschewed that dice business and goddamn STABBED out random numbers. The next year, he received the D&D Basic Set red box as a birthday present and has been gaming ever since. His GMing style has been likened to a horrible Frankenstein combination of historical epic, gritty survival horror and *Flight of the Concords*-style song-filled whimsy.

He is yet to live down naming a NPC "The Crimea Reaver".

David adores his long-suffering wife and two sons who, frankly, have no idea what he's talking about most of the time. David is based in Sydney, and his work as a Logistics Consultant, much to his disappointment, contains fewer undead-filled warehouses and demon-possessed forklifts than he was led to believe.

Martin Tideswell has a vivid imagination honed by years of playing with toy soldiers and an unhealthy interest in vampires. He discovered Dungeons & Dragons at the age of 11 and the rest, as they say, is history...

Martin is now 38 and has been a full-time newspaper journalist for two decades. Through high school, college, house moves, job changes, marriage and the arrival of children, fantasy roleplaying has been his one constant. Martin lives with his wife Denise and his two adorable daughters - Lois and Mina - in a quiet avenue in Wirral, Merseyside. In the box room, he burns the midnight oil scripting adventures and plotting world domination and/or immortality by nefarious means.

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FOREWORD

Scions of Evil is Raging Swan’s biggest book to date containing over 200 pages presenting some of the foulest villains (and their minions) ever committed to paper to challenge your players! This book contains 135 ready to go stat blocks as well as copious notes enabling the GM to bring to life (or possibly unlife) the villains herein. Decent villains can be hard to find. Often the arch-villain in an adventure or campaign makes little or no sense. Why is he so evil? Why is he trying to do what he is doing? *Scions of Evil* seeks to answer these questions.

Another nice thing about *Scions of Evil* is that it makes a wheels within wheels style campaign easier to run. Sure at low-levels Aelire Maiaral made a fearsome opponent, but eventually the PCs will “outgrow” or slay her. Not to worry, using *Scions of Evil* you can determine that actually she was working for Cadan Negus who was in turn working for an even greater evil. (In fact, I think you could probably run an entire campaign using only the stat blocks herein).

Compiling this book has been great fun – I’ve got to go back and take a look at some of the fantastic products Raging Swan has been able to put out over the last two years. *Scions of Evil* is a compilation of *Bandits of the Rampant Horror*, *Brethren of the Crimson Altar*, *Fellowship of the Blackened Oak*, *Kai’s Scoundrels*, *Thanegar’s Horde*, *Villains*, *Villains II* and *Villains III*.

However, as well as reprinting these great supplements we’ve also included over 20 pages of new material as a thank

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Persona: Gheldorwhik.....	195
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you for your support over the last two years. Hiding among familiar faces, you’ll find new villains and new minions. In fact, *Scions of Evil* sees the publication of three of the highest CR stat blocks I’ve ever designed (but not the highest!) Need a CR 21 graveknight marilith antipaladin, CR 22 red dragon or CR 23 vampiric balor fighter? *Scions of Evil* has got you covered, but be warned these villains are not for the fainthearted. If you unleash these into your campaign, you must be ready to accept the consequences. Originally, I wrote these high-level stat blocks for my own; every Christmas, I run a high-level splatter-fest in which the players each bring a 20th-level character and I bring one or two villains. It’s an excuse for everyone to try out things they wouldn’t normally do in the main campaign and a great way to blow off steam. The results have not been pretty for the PCs, but we’ve all had a great time.

I hope you find *Scions of Evil* useful. It would be great to hear how you use the villains and their minions in-game; you can drop me a line at creighton@ragingswan.com.

May your dice roll way better than mine (which really wouldn’t be that hard),

STAT BLOCKS BY CR

CR	NAME	PAGE
1/4	Kobold Warrior LE male kobold warrior 1	21
1/3	Bandit NE male human warrior 1	13
1/3	Goblin Raider NE goblin warrior 1	18
1/3	Orc Warrior CE orc warrior 1	23
1/2	Goblin Champion NE male goblin warrior 2	18
1/2	Hobgoblin Warrior LE male hobgoblin fighter 1	20
1/2	Kobold Champion LE male kobold warrior 3	21
1/2	Orc Savage CE orc barbarian 1	23
1/2	Veteran Bandit NE male human warrior 2	13
1	Bandit Thief CN male human expert 3	13
1	Gnoll Warrior CE male gnoll	17
1	Goblin Adept NE male goblin adept 3	18
1	Goblin Scout NE goblin expert 1	18
1	Goblin Warrior (NE goblin warrior 3)	188
1	Hobgoblin Champion LE male hobgoblin fighter 2	20
1	Kobold Adept LE kobold adept 4	21
1	Orc Veteran CE orc warrior 3	23
1	Wolf animal	142
2	Krenshar Steed N Advanced krenshar	117
2	Bat swarm swarm	142
2	Bugbear Lurker CE male bugbear	14
2	Darick Boden NE male human rogue 2/sorcerer (destined) 1	42
2	Decapitated Plague Zombie NE spriggan plague zombie	127
2	Rake CE male human fighter 2/rogue 1	24
2	Rat swarm swarm	142
3	Aelire Maiaral CE female half-elf antipaladin 4	68
3	Anguish-Taster LE male hobgoblin fighter (unbreakable) 4	33

3	Chalice Byanfel CE female halfling antipaladin 4	43
3	Gnoll Warrior Veteran CE male gnoll warrior 4	17
3	Korgan Rimestone NE male dwarf wizard (enchanter) 4	87
3	Hobgoblin Chieftain LE male hobgoblin fighter 3/cleric 1	20
3	Mercenary Warrior NE male human fighter 4	22
3	Spriggan-at-Arms CE male spriggan	118
3	Thug CN male half-orc fighter 2/rogue 2	27
3	Vargouille Friar NE advanced vargouille	127
4	Aragan Doldal CE male dwarf fighter 2/barbarian 3	46
4	Ebrel Vosper CE female human cleric 5	103
4	Goblin Scout NE goblin ranger 5	188
4	Raine Karonen CE male human barbarian 5	60
4	Roondar Turen N male gnome bard 5	25
4	Sitae Amaithar LE female half-elf cleric 3/fighter 2	32
4	Thadrim Nytriluath NE male half-elf wizard (illusionist) 5	79
4	Valto Uronen LE male half-orc monk 2/fighter (brawler) 3	102
4	Vampire spawn	151
4	Veteran Rake CE male human fighter 4/rogue 1	24
4	Voniat Iasan NE male half-elf fighter 3/rogue 2	56
5	Brawler LE male dwarf fighter 4/monk 2	27
5	Bugbear Berserk CE male bugbear rogue 2/barbarian 1	14
5	Bugbear Shock-Trooper CE bugbear rogue 2/barbarian 1	190
5	Elite Mercenary Warrior NE male human fighter 6	22
5	Gnoll Shaman CE male half-fiend gnoll adept 4	17
5	Goblin Wolfkeeper NE goblin ranger 6	189
5	Greater vampire spawn Advanced vampire spawn	145
5	Human Thug NE human fighter 3/rogue 3	191
5	Knight of the Rampant Horror CE male spriggan fighter 2	116

5	Petrok Uren CE male human antipaladin 6	98
5	Spriggan Trouble-Shooter CE male spriggan wizard (diviner) 3	119
6	Gheldorwhik NE male goblin rogue 7	195
6	Kulan-Wyr Guardian LE skeletal champion monk 11	132
6	Lungen Rasur NE male halfling ranger 3/rogue (poisoner) 4	86
6	Nelius Zentar NE male human cleric 7	110
6	Rumaira Sheraee NE female elf druid 3/sorcerer (empyrean celestial) 4	88
6	Shamil the Poisoner NE female gnome rogue 5/assassin 2	12
6	Taim Noben NE male half-elf wizard (necromancy) 5/rogue 2	78
7	Aellian Cyelrae CN elf sorcerer (fey) 8	147
7	Bertliak CE bugbear ranger 2/assassin 3	192
7	Bugbear Assassin CE male bugbear range 2/assassin 3	14
7	"Captain" LeVar CN male human afflicted wereshark rogue 3/fighter 4	180
7	Chasm N name bulette	120
7	Dhaeris the Cad CE male half-elf bard 8	193
7	Dhoean Tahlthar NE male half-elf bard 4/ranger 4	161
7	Digory Odgers CE male human rogue 5/fighter 3	82
7	Eranil Surnae NE female dhampir sorcerer [infernal] 8	194
7	Forest Uncle N dire bear	89
7	Ghast Hordeling CE male advanced ghoulish fighter 2/rogue 3	16
7	Grash the Destroyer CE male half-orc rogue 3/fighter 2/assassin 3	12
7	Hired Thugs NE male half-orc warrior 5/expert 4	146
7	Holg NE male half-orc ranger 8	163
7	Kalaen Korran CN male elf fighter 5/rogue 2/duelist 1	147
7	"Killer" Kai Linnow N female human magus 7/rogue 1	177
7	Kulan-Wyr Champion NE human skeletal champion warrior 12	145
7	Lafithel Traivanna CN female elf sorcerer (draconic [gold]) 8	163

7	Marra Brandywine NE female halfling summoner 1/ranger 1	178
7	Marrowsplitter CN male gnoll druid 7	182
7	Mercenary Leader NE male human fighter 8	22
7	Mercutio CE male half-elf rogue 1/bard 7	183
7	Professional Duellist NE male elf fighter 5/rogue 2/duelist 1	24
7	Steren Wearne CE female half-elf antipaladin 4/bard 4	104
7	Teraim Arasten LE male dwarf fighter 8	34
7	Tiefling Sneak CN female tiefling rogue 3/wizard (enchanter) 5	25
7	Torn Tusk NE male half-orc sorcerer (elemental [fire]) 8	184
7	Vola NE female half-orc druid 8	167
8	Cadan Negus CE male human vampire sorcerer (destined) 7	150
8	Canerous and Vercherix CE male variant ettin bard 4	123
8	Ibric NE male human fighter 6/rogue 3	57
8	Krask NE male orc barbarian 6/fighter 3	61
8	Thanegar NE male half-orc oracle [battle] 9	196
9	Baron Tallega Raundrev CE male spriggan fighter 2/rogue (thug) 4	121
9	Duerrin Thramek CE male duergar antipaladin 6/fighter 4	94
9	Eiluanna Maiasar CE female elf fighter 10	70
9	Firhar Luedul NE male half-elf wizard (diviner) 10	66
9	Hordeling Leader CE male advanced ghoulish fighter 4/rogue 3	16
9	Myghal Nankaris LE male human monk 10	76
9	Sussamarra CE female young harpy sorcerer (fey) 8	124
9	Varisthu NE male advanced vargouille oracle (bones) 6	126
11	Aurakraul LE female young adult green dragon	157
11	Cauchemar nightmare outsider	136
11	Cornes Solethar NE male half-elf sorcerer (infernal) 2	90
11	Eseld Cass CE female human barbarian 5/antipaladin 7	44
11	Gargoyle Scout CE female gargoyle ranger 7	15

11	Guthseyr NE male invisible stalker rogue 4	19
11	Perran Gongye NE male human rogue 6/assassin 6	54
11	Thothosk CE male quasit bard 9	26
11	Voarothim LE male ogre-magi fighter 3	28
12	Daveth Goninan NE male half-orc vampire fighter 10	136
12	Terl Yarg NE male doppelganger vampire rogue 5/shadowdancer 2	140
13	Arlis the Ender NE male human cleric 12/fighter 2	49
13	Lillian Orxal LE female human spectre sorcerer (arcane) 10	80
13	Margh Vosper LE male human vampire aristocrat 4/bard 9	138
13	Rexal Urexin CE male advanced minotaur barbarian 8	100
13	Tharon Zasper CE male drow antipaladin 8/rogue 3/shadowdancer 2	108
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ANTIPALADIN CLASS ABILITIES

The stat blocks for the antipaladins in this GM's RESOURCE include all information necessary to run them in battle. This section contains additional relevant information that first appeared in the *Advanced Player's Guide* by Paizo Publishing LLC.

Detect Good (Sp): At will, an antipaladin can use *detect good* (as the spell) as a paladin uses *detect evil*.

Smite Good (Su): An antipaladin uses smite good against good opponents as a paladin uses smite evil against evil opponents. Additionally, if the target of the smite is an outsider with the good subtype, a good-aligned dragon, or a good creature with levels of cleric or paladin, the bonus to damage increases to 2 points per antipaladin level on the first hit.

Plague Bringer (Ex): An antipaladin takes no damage or penalties from diseases, but can still contract and spread them.

Fiendish Boon (Sp) A weapon affected with fiendish boon glows with the same radiance as a torch. Only the antipaladin gains the bonuses imparted by this ability.

CODE OF CONDUCT

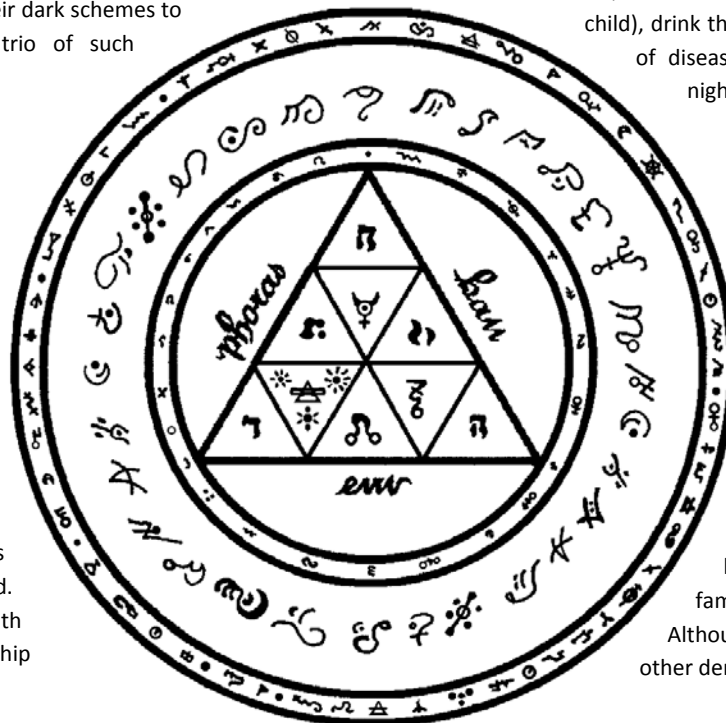
Antipaladins must be of chaotic evil alignment; those that change alignment – or willingly commit good acts – immediately lose their class-related powers. Antipaladins must always place their own desires and agenda before others and impose tyranny, provoke suffering and fight against the forces of good at every opportunity. Antipaladins may work with individuals of neutral alignment, but may not ally themselves with good-aligned powers (except when their goal is to bring down their enemies from within). An antipaladin's followers must be chaotic evil.

DEMONIC PATRONS

Many antipaladins venerate degenerate, otherworldly demons bent on the destruction of all that is good and pure. Such creatures often conspire to tear down the gleaming lights of civilisation and despatch their blackest, most merciless servants to bring their dark schemes to fruition. Brief notes on a trio of such demons appear here.

ARACHNE

Once a servant of good in the dim pre-history of the world, Arachne was transformed into a monstrous demonic spider after besting her divine patron in a contest. Driven by her boundless thirst for revenge, her minions now work to destroy the works of her former master. Arachne spins many plots across the world. Due to their affinity with spiders, drow often worship Arachne.



LAMASHTU

The female demon Lamashtu is a horrifying hybrid creature that dines on the living flesh of stolen children. She is known to slay children, torture women (especially those with child), drink the blood of men and as a bringer of disease, sickness, death and terrible nightmares. She has a great affinity for snakes and appears as a nauseating creature with a bloated, hairy body, a lioness' head with a donkey's teeth and ears and the talons of a bird. Lamashtu is a rival of Pazuzu.

PAZUZU

Pazuzu has the winged body of a man, the head of a lion, eagle-like taloned feet and a scorpion's tail. He is the bringer of storms, droughts and famines and the rival of Lamashtu. Although evil, he often drives away other demons.

READING STAT BLOCKS

Scions of Evil includes all necessary stat blocks; these notes explain how to read them. Unless otherwise noted, all listed scores include all the creature's normal modifiers. Stat blocks appear in four sections: basic, defensive, offensive and supplemental.

BASIC

Name, CR and XP: The monster's name appears first followed by its CR and how many experience points it is worth. If more than one creature is encountered, a bracketed number lists how many appear.

Appearance: The GM can read aloud or paraphrase this section. If a picture depicts the creature, this section may be omitted.

Sex, Race, Class and Level: If the monster has class levels these appear here along with its race and sex. The first noted class is the creature's favoured class.

Alignment and Type: The creature's abbreviated alignment and its type (including applicable subtypes).

Init and Senses: This creature's initiative modifier appears before any special senses (such as scent or darkvision) and the creature's Perception and Sense Motive scores. If the creature has special Perception-based abilities, such as trapfinding or stonecunning, these appear here.

Speed: The creature's modified land speed appears first along with any other relevant speeds (such as climb or fly). If the creature's base land speed is different to its modified speed this is also listed.

ACP and Movement Skills: ACP presents the creature's normal armour check penalty modifier. If the creature's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Stealth or Swim modifier differs from the relevant ability modifier minus its armour check penalty, these skills appear here.

DEFENSIVE

AC: The creature's normal, touch and flat-footed AC along with its CMD; additionally this section lists any defensive powers or abilities that affects the creature's AC.

Immune, Resist and Weaknesses: If the creature has immunity, resistance or a vulnerability to an effect or condition it appears here.

Fort, Ref and Will: The creature's saving throw modifiers along with any conditional modifiers and defensive powers (such as evasion) and spell resistance appear here.

HP: The creature's full, normal hit points along with the number

of hit dice it possesses. A bracketed hit point total indicates that the creature is injured. If the creature has damage reduction or hardness it appears here.

OFFENSIVE

Space, Base Atk and CMB: The creature's space, base attack bonus and CMB.

Melee: This section lists a creature's melee attacks. If the attack has a reach that is not 5 ft. it is listed here. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Power Attack), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Ranged: This section lists the creature's ranged attacks. It always includes the attack's range. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Point Blank Shot), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Atk Options: This section lists any abilities or feats that can affect more than one of the creature's attacks, unless it has already been presented with the creature's specific attacks. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in depth.

Special Actions: This section lists any useful abilities that a creature could use in battle. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

Spells and Spell-Like Abilities: The creature's caster level, along with its concentration modifier and domains appears in brackets before the main spell listing. If one or more of the creature's spells require a touch attack, the relevant attack bonus is included. Spells available appear in reverse order from highest to lowest level. Spells denoted ^D are domain spells. If applicable, a spell's DC is also provided.

Combat Gear: This section lists any combat-related equipment the creature possesses.

SUPPLEMENTAL

Abilities and Special Qualities: These sections list the creature's ability scores and any special qualities that do not appear anywhere else in its stat block.

Feats: An alphabetical listing of all the creature's feats.

Skills and Languages: These sections list any skills the creature possesses that have not already appeared in the stat block and all languages spoken or understood. Any language-based special abilities also appear here.

Gear: This section lists any gear not already listed in the creature's stat block. This section hardly ever contains weapons or armour as they usually appear in the relevant sections above.

Spellbook: The contents of the creature's spellbook and its barred schools.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special abilities appear in the section to which they are best suited. Thus, offensive abilities appear with a creature's attacks while defensive ones appear with its other defences. Full write-ups of irrelevant powers (such as those that could not affect combat) are omitted. The effects of abilities that factor into a creature's normal attacks or defences have already been included in the relevant calculations.

MINIONS

ASSASSINS

Stalking the shadows, waiting for the perfect time to strike, assassins work at the behest of dark forces to cut down those opposing their employer's will.

SHAMIL THE POISONER CR 6 (XP 2,400)
This ruddy-faced gnome has a welcoming smile and wears a food-stained shirt.

Female gnome rogue 5/assassin 2

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11 (+13 vs. traps), Sense Motive -1

Speed 20 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +13 (+9 jumping), Escape Artist +8, Stealth +17 (fast stealth)

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 18; Dodge, Mobility +1 vs. traps, +4 vs. giant type foes, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge (+1 size, +3 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +1 dodge)

Fort +5 (+6 vs. poison), **Ref** +9 (+10 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +3 (+5 vs. illusions)

hp 54 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4

Melee +1 dagger +9 (1d3+2/19-20)

Atk Options +1 vs. reptilian and goblin subtypes, death attack, poison use, sneak attack +4d6, surprise attack

Death Attack (Ex) If Shamil studies her victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack she can attempt to paralyze (for 1d6+2 rounds) or kill her target (Fortitude DC 13 negates either effect).

Poison Use (Ex) Shamil is trained in the use of poisons and cannot accidentally poison herself.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +8)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 12

SQ trapfinding, rogue talents (fast stealth, surprise attack), weapon familiarity

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +9, Disable Device +16, Disguise +10, Knowledge (local) +7, Profession (cook) +7, Sleight of Hand +10

Languages Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, masterwork thieves' tools, dark reaver powder, 10 gp, 10 sp

Few would take Shamil for an assassin. Squeamish, she hates the sight of blood – often fainting at the mere sight of it – preferring more subtle methods of disposing of her enemies. Shamil always works alone. Her preferred method of attack is to infiltrate her target's kitchen or preferred eatery and add poison to his food or drink. She flees combat wherever possible, surrendering if her life seems in danger. If handed over to the authorities, she relies on her extensive contacts and hidden wealth to win her release.

GRASH THE DESTROYER CR 7 (XP 3,200)
This hulking warrior's clothes barely contain his knotted muscles.

Male half-orc rogue 3/fighter 2/assassin 3

CE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +11 (+12 vs. traps), Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +14, Climb +9, Ride +7, Stealth +13, Swim +8

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 23; Dodge, Shield Focus, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge (+2 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +3 shield [+1 buckler], +1 dodge)

Fort +7 (+8 vs. traps), **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear)

hp 66 (8 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity (Ex) Once per day, when Grash is brought below 0 hit points he can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of the next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points he falls unconscious and starts dying.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +10

Melee +1 falchion +12 (2d4+6/18-20)

Atk Options death attack, poison use, sneak attack +4d6, surprise attack

Special Actions Dazzling Display

Death Attack (Ex) If Grash studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack he can attempt to paralyze (for 1d6+2 rounds) or kill his target (Fortitude DC 14 negates either effect).

Poison Use (Ex) Grash is trained in the use of poisons and cannot accidentally poison himself.

Combat Gear *javelin of lightning*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ bravery (+1), rogue talent (surprise attack), trapfinding, weapon familiarity

Feats Dazzling Display, Dodge, Intimidating Prowess, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills as above plus Disable Device +7, Disguise +4, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Knowledge (local) +8

Languages Abyssal, Common, Orc

Gear as above plus 12 gp, 15 sp

A large, hulking fellow of little imagination, Grash nevertheless possesses battle cunning won from many alley brawls and blood splattered assassinations. Feared throughout the city, he acts as an enforcer for hire or assassin to those who want to send an unequivocal message. He cares little if innocents get in his way; all are cut down by his much-used falchion.

Grash does not like to work alone, preferring instead to surround himself with a crowd of lesser thugs all desperate to earn his favour. Of course, such minions don't last long, as Grash employs them to soften up a target's defences before striking.

BANDITS

Lurking in wilderness areas, lawless frontier towns and other places where their activities go unpunished, bandits are the bane of innocent travellers and merchant's alike. They can serve as a villain's willing accomplices or perhaps unknowing dupes whose purpose is simply to prey upon the unwary.

They are often allied with thieves' guilds and the like and may on occasion also serve as smugglers. Bandits normally lack the savage bravery of orcs and the professionalism of hobgoblin warriors. Lust for easy gold drives them; without an excellent reason such bands rarely attack prepared and obviously skilled adventuring bands.

BANDIT CR 1/3 (XP 135)

Clad in dirty studded leather armour this dishevelled human has a distinctly unsavoury look about him.

Male human warrior 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; **Climb** +2, **Stealth** +1

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+2 Dex, +3 armour [studded leather], +1 shield [light wooden])

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

hp 10 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1

Melee morningstar +1 (1d8)

Ranged light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +3 (1d8/19-20)

Combat Gear bolts (10)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Toughness

Skills as above

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 1d8 sp

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Small groups of bandit lurk in many woods and out of the way places. Larger groups can take entire caravans, but most content themselves with striking smaller, easier targets. Sometimes they even hire themselves out as mercenary guards and fall upon their unfortunate employer in wild, lonely spots where no help is available.

EL 2 (XP 600): Bandit (3) and Veteran Bandit (1)

EL 3 (XP 800): Bandit (3) and Veteran Bandit (2) or Bandit Thief (2)

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Bandit (3) and Veteran Bandit (4) or Bandit Thief (2) and Veteran Bandit (2)

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Bandit (6), Veteran Bandit (2) and Bandit Thief (1)

VETERAN BANDIT

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Clad in dirty studded leather armour this dishevelled human has a distinctly unsavoury look about him.

Male human warrior 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; **Climb** +2, **Stealth** +2

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 14

(+3 armour [studded leather], +2 Dex, +1 shield [light wooden])

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

hp 18 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

Melee flail +2 (1d8)

Ranged light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d8/19-20)

Combat Gear bolts (10)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Toughness

Skills as above plus Intimidate +3

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 2d8 sp

BANDIT THIEF

CR 1 (XP 400)

This thin human wears a good quality cloak over his fine studded leather armour.

Human expert 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +5, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **Nimble Step**; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +5, **Climb** +6, **Escape Artist** +5, **Stealth** +10

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 13

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

hp 16 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

Melee mwk dagger +3 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +3 (1d10/19-20)

Combat Gear bolts (10), dagger (2), smokestick (2), tanglefoot bag (1)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Dodge^B, Nimble Step, Skill Focus Stealth

Skills as above plus Appraise +4, Bluff +4, Knowledge (local) +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Survival +6

Languages Common

Gear as above plus belt pouch, 6 gp, 12 sp

BUGBEARS

The largest and most ferocious of the goblins, bugbears are terrible, ferocious foes that are nevertheless surprisingly stealthy. They live in small clans and occasionally serve as mercenaries to other humanoid clans or powerful individuals. They prefer to operate in small bands and make excellent skirmishers. They often worship a variety of demon lords, which makes them excellent servants for antipaladins.

BUGBEAR LURKER CR 2 (XP 600)

This muscular, dark-furred creature has milk-white eyes.

Male bugbear

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; Stealth +9

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 16

(+2 armour [leather], +1 Dex, +3 natural, +2 shield [heavy wooden])

Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

hp 16 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5

Melee morningstar +5 (1d8+3)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d6+3)

Combat Gear javelins (3)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ stalker

Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +7

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus 2d6 sp

BUGBEAR BERSERK CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This large, shaggy humanoid wields a bloodied greatsword.

Bugbear rogue 2/barbarian 1

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +9 (+11 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Stealth +17 (fast stealth)

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 23

(+4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather])

Fort +5, **Ref** +10 (evasion), **Will** +2

hp 43 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9

Melee mwk greatsword (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +10 (2d6+7/19-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +8 (1d6+5)

Atk Options Cleave, rage (6 rounds), sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear javelin (3), *potion of cat's grace*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7

SQ fast movement, rogue trick (fast stealth), trapfinding

Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills as above plus Disable Device +13, Intimidate +10, Survival +9

Languages Goblin

When raging, the Berserk has the following altered statistics:

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 25

(+4 Dex, -2 class, +4 armour [+1 studded leather])

Fort +7, **Will** +4

hp 55 (6 HD)

CMB +11

Melee mwk greatsword +12 (2d6+10/19-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +8 (1d6+7)

Abilities Str 24, Con 19

BUGBEAR ASSASSIN CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Wielding axe and blade, this furry humanoid glides forward.

Male bugbear ranger 2/assassin 3

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12 (+14 vs. elves), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. elves)

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; Stealth +18

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 25

(+4 Dex, +5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +1 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +1])

Fort +7 (+8 vs. poison), **Ref** +13, **Will** +3

hp 63 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11

Melee mwk scimitar +10/+5 (1d6+5/18-20) and

mwk handaxe +10/+5 (1d6+5/x3) or

Melee mwk scimitar +12/+7 (1d6+5/18-20) or

Melee mwk handaxe +12/+7 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +10/+5 (1d8+5/x3)

Atk Options death attack (DC 14), favoured enemy (elves +2), poison use, sneak attack +2d6

Death Attack (Ex) If the assassin studies a victim for 3 rounds before hitting with a sneak attack he can kill or paralyze (for 1d6+3 rounds) his target (DC 14 Fortitude negates).

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 7

SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), track (+1), wild empathy (+0, -4 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Double Slice, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills as above plus Bluff +9 (+11 vs. elves), Disguise +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +1 (+3 vs. elves), Survival +1 (+2 tracking, +4 tracking elves)

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Bugbears hunt in small, stealthy groups.

EL 6 (2,400): Bugbear Lurker (4)

EL 7 (XP 3,200): Bugbear Berserk (2)

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Bugbear Berserk (1) and Bugbear Assassin (1)

GARGOYLE SCOUT

Equally at home skulking through the twisted passages of the deep earth or lurking amongst the leering statues of a cathedral or other impressive edifice, gargoyle scouts are malevolent foes. Driven by excessive vindictiveness, and consumed with their own petty desires, gargoyle scouts do not often serve one master for any length of time.

For all this, though, they are skilled scouts, cruel combatants and are valued (if not trusted) minions. Gargoyle scouts prefer to operate with others of their own kind and do not mix well with a villain's other minions. Often perching atop a villain's lair, they frequently take on the appearance of the building's architecture, making them a difficult threat to recognise.



GARGOYLE SCOUT

CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Female gargoyle ranger 7

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +8 (+10 urban, +12 underground); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14 (+16 vs. dwarves or in urban, +18 underground, vs. humans or dwarves in urban, +20 vs. humans in urban, +22 vs. humans underground), Sense Motive +2 (+4 vs. dwarves, +6 vs. humans)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average; Hover); woodland stride

Woodland Stride (Ex) The gargoyle scout can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects her.

ACP 0; Fly +14, Stealth +20 (+24 in stony environs, +26 urban, +28 underground; freeze)

Freeze (Ex) A gargoyle scout can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. A frozen gargoyle can take 20 on a Stealth check to hide in plain sight as a stone statue.

AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 33; Dodge, *gloves of arrow snaring*

(+4 Dex, +2 armour [*bracers of armour* +2], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge, +4 natural)

Fort +10, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

hp 121 (12 HD); **DR** magic/10

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +17

Melee 2 claws +17 (1d6+5) and bite +17 (1d4+5) and gore +17 (1d4+5)

Ranged +2 composite longbow (range 110 ft.; Improved Precise Shot, Precise Shot) +19/+14/+9 (1d8+7/x3)

Atk Options favoured enemy (dwarf +2, human +4)

Special Actions hunter's bond (companions; 2 rounds)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

2nd—*protection from energy*

1st—*magic fang*, *resist energy*

Combat Gear 20 arrows, *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of invisibility*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 5

SQ combat style (archery), favoured terrain (underground +4, urban +2), hunter's bond, track (+3), wild empathy +4 (+9 magical beasts)

Feats Dodge, Endurance^B, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot^B, Iron Will, Precise Shot^B, Skill Focus (Fly), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills as above plus Bluff -3 (-1 vs. dwarves, +1 vs. humans), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (geography) -2 (+0 vs. urban, +2 vs. underground), Knowledge (local) -2 (+0 vs. dwarves, +2 vs. humans), Survival +12 (+15 tracking, [swift tracking], +17 tracking dwarves or in urban, +19 tracking underground, humans, dwarves in urban, +21 tracking humans in urban or dwarves underground, +23 tracking humans underground)

Languages Common, Terran

Gear as above plus 25 gp

GHAST HORDELINGS

Driven by their all-consuming hunger for flesh, ghost hordelings willingly serve their master only as long as he can provide a ready source of corpses. Their lairs are always macabre, gore-splattered places - no place for sane, right-thinking folk.

In battle, hordelings seek to overwhelm their target through sheer weight of numbers. They hurl themselves at their prey using their bite and claws to paralyze their victims. If this fails, they grapple their enemies and, once their prey is pinned, rip them apart.

GHAST HORDELING CR 7 (XP 3,200)

With long, sharp teeth and wickedly curved talons, this creature's pallid skin is stretched tightly over its starved frame, giving it a nightmarish appearance.

Male advanced ghoulish fighter 2/rogue 3

CE Medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13 (+14 vs. traps), Sense Motive +2

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +14, Climb +14, Stealth +14 (fast stealth), Swim +14

AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 25; Dodge, +1 vs. traps (+4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +1 dodge, +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8 (evasion; +9 vs. traps), **Will** +10 (channel resistance +2)

hp 64 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft. (stench 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9 (+11 grapple)

Stench (Ex) The overwhelming stench of death surrounds the ghost (sickened for 1d6+4 minutes; DC 15 Fortitude negates).

Melee bite +9 (1d6+4 plus ghoulish fever and paralysis [DC 16; 1d4+1 rounds]) and 2 claws +9 (1d6+4 plus paralysis [DC 16; 1d4+1 rounds])

Atk Options Improved Grapple, ghoulish fever, sneak attack +2d6

Ghoulish Fever (Su) save DC 12 Fortitude [2 consecutive cures]; onset 1 day; frequency 1 day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage.

Combat Gear javelin of lightning, potion of inflict moderate wounds

Abilities Str 18, Dex 19, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16

SQ bravery (+1), rogue talent (fast stealth), trapfinding (+1), trapsense (+1)

Feats Ability Focus (paralysis), Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Toughness

Skills as above plus Intimidate +13, Linguistics +2

Languages Abyssal, Common

Gear as above plus cloak of resistance +1

HORDELING LEADER

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

With long, sharp teeth and wickedly curved talons, this creature's pallid skin is stretched tightly over its starved frame, giving it a nightmarish appearance.

Male advanced ghoulish fighter 4/rogue 3

CE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15 (+16 vs. traps), Sense Motive +2

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +17, Climb +14, Stealth +17 (fast stealth), Swim +14

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 28; Dodge, +1 vs. traps (+5 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +1 dodge, +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10 (evasion; +10 vs. traps), **Will** +11 (channel resistance +2)

hp 83 (9 HD)

Space 5 ft. (stench 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +11 (+13 grapple)

Stench (Ex) The overwhelming stench of death surrounds the ghost (sickened for 1d6+4 minutes; DC 15 Fortitude negates).

Melee bite +13/+8 (1d6+7 plus ghoulish fever and paralysis [DC 16; 1d4+1 rounds]) and 2 claws +12 (1d6+5 plus paralysis [DC 16; 1d4+1 rounds])

Atk Options Improved Grapple, ghoulish fever, sneak attack +2d6

Ghoulish Fever (Su) save DC 12 Fortitude [2 consecutive cures]; onset 1 day; frequency 1 day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage.

Combat Gear potion of inflict moderate wounds (2)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 20, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), rogue talent (fast stealth), trapfinding (+1), trapsense (+1)

Feats Ability Focus (paralysis), Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)9, Weapon Specialisation (bite)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +13, Linguistics +2

Languages Abyssal, Common

Gear as above plus amulet of mighty fists +1, cloak of resistance +1

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Hordelings can be encountered in groups of almost any size — the group's size dictated by the number of fresh corpses the villain can provide to assuage the ghosts' terrible hunger.

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Ghost Hordeling (3)

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Ghost Hordeling (2) and Hordeling Leader

EL 12 (XP 19,200): Ghost Hordeling (4) and Hordeling Leader

EL 13 (XP 25,600): Ghost Hordeling (4) and Hordeling Leader (2)

GNOLLS

These hyena-headed beasts are rapacious hunters that live in small, loosely organised bands. Generally they are lazy scavengers and in their society the mightiest lead. They relish combat (when they outnumber their foe) and eat the slain (even their own fallen) after battle. They prefer to strike from ambush and enjoy tormenting obviously weak or wounded prey.

GNOLL WARRIOR CR 1 (XP 400)

This furry, hyena-headed humanoid carries a morningstar and a shield decorated covered in splattered blood.

Male gnoll

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 13

(+2 armour [leather], +1 natural, +2 shield [heavy wooden])

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

hp 11 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Melee morningstar +4 (1d8+2)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +1 (1d6+2)

Combat Gear javelin

Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

Feats Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills as above

Languages Gnoll

Gear as above 3 gp, 6 sp

GNOLL WARRIOR VETERAN CR 3 (XP 800)

Clad in fine scale mail this muscular and furry hyena-headed humanoid wields a morningstar.

Male gnoll warrior 4

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -5; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping), Climb +3, Swim +3

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 18

(+5 armour [mwk scale mail], +1 natural, +2 shield [heavy

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Gnolls normally raid in small, mobile gangs led by the most powerful warrior or shaman. They strike opportunistically at distracted, weak or numerically smaller foes. After battle, they drag the bodies of the fallen away to consume in an orgiastic blood-feast.

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Gnoll Warrior (2) and Gnoll Warrior Veteran (1)

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Gnoll Warrior (4) and Gnoll Warrior Veteran (1)

EL 7 (XP 3,200): Gnoll Warrior Veteran (2) and Shaman (1)

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Gnoll Warrior (4), Gnoll Warrior Veteran (2) and Shaman (1)

wooden])

Fort +8, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

hp 47 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8

Melee mwk morningstar (Power Attack [-2/+4]) +10 (1d8+3)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +5 (1d6+3)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, javelin (2)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

Feats Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills as above

Languages Gnoll

Gear as above plus 12 gp, 31 sp

GNOLL SHAMAN CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This tall and powerfully built humanoid has a hyena-like head complete with horns growing from its forehead. Ebon wings curl up from its back.

Male half-fiend gnoll adept 4

CE Medium outsider

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5 (+7 familiar in arm's reach), Sense Motive +3 (+5 familiar in arm's reach)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); **ACP** 0; Fly +13

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 17

(+1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])

Immune poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7; **SR** 16

hp 45 (6 HD); **DR** magic/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+3) and

bite +4 (1d6+1)

Atk Options smite good 1/day (+6 damage)

Adept Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7; share spells [bat familiar])

2nd—*web* (DC 15)

1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds*, *obscuring mist*

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th, concentration +9)

3/day—*darkness*

1/day—*desecrate*, *unholy blight* (DC 17)

Combat Gear *wand of scorching ray* (20 charges)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12

SQ, summon familiar (bat)

Feats Alertness^B, Improved Natural Armour, Multiattack, Toughness

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +6, Heal +12, Knowledge (nature) +7, Survival +11

Languages Common, Gnoll, empathic link (bat familiar)

Gear as above plus spell component pouch, holy symbol, 12 gp

GOBLINS

Dwelling in caves and in dense woodland goblins are superstitious, tribal creatures. Those among their number that wield magic are treated with awe and fear. They hate gnomes and dogs and have voracious appetites. Goblins are just as likely to fight other tribes as they are humans.

GOBLIN ADEPT CR 1 (XP 400)

This bald and skinny humanoid's head seems too large for its body. It wears dirty robes

Male goblin adept 3

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Ride +6, Stealth +10

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 12; Dodge (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 armour [bracers of armour +1], +1 dodge)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

hp 19 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -2

Melee cold iron dagger +0 (1d3-2/19-20)

Ranged dart (range 20 ft.) +4 (1d3-2)

Adept Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 12), *cure light wounds* (2)

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of invisibility*, *scroll of bless*

Abilities Str 6, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 7

SQ summon familiar

Feats Dodge, Toughness

Skills as above plus Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus 5 darts, wooden holy symbol, spell component pouch, black gem (onyx [50 gp]), 4 gp, 12 sp

GOBLIN RAIDER CR 1/3 (XP 135)

Clad in leather armour this dirty, skinny humanoid carries a shortbow and short sword.

Goblin warrior 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Climb +3, Ride +6, Stealth +10

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 shield [buckler])

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

hp 6 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

Melee short sword +5 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +5 (1d4/x3)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 6

Feats Weapon Finesse

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus 20 arrows, belt pouch, 1d6 sp

GOBLIN SCOUT CR 1 (XP 135)

Covered in mud and with many twigs stuck to its leather armour, this small skinny humanoid looks vaguely ridiculous.

Goblin expert 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Acrobatics +6, Climb +2, Ride +6, Stealth +14

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 shield [buckler])

Fort +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

hp 5 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -2

Melee light mace +0 (1d4-1)

Ranged light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d6/19-20)

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 9, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills as above plus Survival +5

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus 20 bolts, backpack, belt pouch, 2d6 sp

GOBLIN CHAMPION CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Clad in leather armour this dirty, skinny humanoid carries a shortbow and handaxe.

Male goblin warrior 2

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +4, Ride +7, Stealth +12

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 shield [mwk buckler])

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +1

Melee handaxe +6 (1d4/x3)

Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +6 (1d4/x3)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *oil of magic weapon*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 6

Feats Weapon Finesse

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus belt pouch, 1d6 sp, 1d4 gp

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Goblins hunt in small, mobile bands of warriors. Occasionally, larger groups band together to attack larger targets – well protected merchant caravans, borderland villages and so on.

EL 2 (XP 600): Goblin Raider (3) and Goblin Scout (3)

EL 3 (XP 800): Goblin Raider (3), Goblin Scout (3) and Goblin Champion (1)

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Goblin Adept (1), Goblin Champion (2), Goblin Raider (2) and Goblin Scout (1)

GUTHSEYR

An invisible and near soundless threat, this deranged invisible stalker is a powerful minion and malevolent foe.

Tracker, spy and assassin, Guthseyr has fulfilled many roles at the behest of his mortal masters. Now, after long centuries of such service, Guthseyr has grown to hate all mortals and indulges himself by dispensing as much misery and suffering as possible.

Background: For untold centuries, Guthseyr served at the pleasure of a long succession of mortal spellcasters each intent on forcing him to perform many services. Exposed to the most venal and self-serving desires of innumerable masters, Guthseyr has come to the conclusion that no mortal has the right to command him. This slow realisation has warped his viewpoint on life.

Personality: A thoroughly evil, self-centred individual, Guthseyr delights in twisting and bending any agreement he enters into so that as many people as possible suffer as a result of his actions. He is also a kleptomaniac, stealing any small items or trinkets that amuse him.

Mannerisms: Guthseyr delights in the terror his "appearance" instils in his victims. Often he cannot stop himself laughing and cackling during battle. He enjoys allowing a terrified and badly injured foe the luxury of fleeing battle, only to follow behind to strike him down within sight of safety.

Distinguishing Features: Guthseyr is naturally invisible and thus few have glimpsed his proper form. However, a palpable sense of lurking dread surrounds him. Particularly sensitive individuals surviving an encounter with the deranged invisible stalker also report sensing the creature's hatred radiating from it like the blaze of a bonfire.

Hooks: Bound to service by some villain, Guthseyr seeks the fall of both his targets and master. He remains within the letter of his agreement while attempting to manipulate the situation so that the PCs come into direct conflict with his master.

Alternatively, Guthseyr could be seeking his revenge against a master who inadvertently failed to protect himself sufficiently

through a badly-worded contract. In this situation, Guthseyr may enlist the unwitting PCs to be the instruments of his vengeance. Having mortals dance to his tune (even unwittingly) greatly amuses Guthseyr and he may provide the PCs with a reward (of dubious value — perhaps a powerful, cursed magic item or a very recognisable item recently stolen from an important, local figure).

GUTHSEYR CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Male invisible stalker rogue 4

NE Medium outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar)

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17 (+19 vs. traps; trap spotter), Sense Motive +3

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

ACP 0; Acrobatics +21, Fly +29, Stealth 21 (fast stealth, natural invisibility)

Natural Invisibility (Ex) This ability is constant; Guthseyr remains invisible even when attacking. As this ability is inherent, it is not subject to *invisibility purge*. Against opponents that cannot pinpoint him, he gains a +20 bonus on Stealth checks when moving or +40 when standing still; these bonuses are not included in his listed Stealth bonus.

AC 29, touch 18, flat-footed 29; **CMD** 34; Dodge, uncanny dodge, +1 vs. traps; **Miss Chance** 50%

(+7 Dex, +5 armour [+2 *studded leather*], +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Immune paralysis, poison, *sleep*, stunning, critical hits, flanking, precision-based damage

Fort +15, **Ref** +20 (evasion; +21 vs. traps), **Will** +8

hp 137 (11 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +16

Melee 2 slams +18 (2d6+7)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes (Stand Still), sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear *feather token (whip; 2)*, *hand of the mage*, *potion of cure serious wounds (2)*

Abilities Str 22, Dex 24, Con 24, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 9

SQ rogue talents (fast stealth, trap spotter), trapfinding, trap sense

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Stand Still, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills as above plus Disable Device +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (planes) +16, Sleight of Hand +21

Languages Abyssal, Auran, Common, Undercommon

Improved Tracking Guthseyr takes no penalty to Survival checks when tracking and moving at any speed.

Gear as above plus *amulet of mighty fists +1*, *cloak of resistance +2*, 12 gp, masterwork thieves' tools

INVISIBILITY

Guthseyr's natural invisibility gives him a great advantage when carrying out his mission. This has the following effects:

- +2 bonus on attack rolls against sighted opponents.
- Ignores sighted opponent's Dexterity bonus AC.
- Opponents have a 50% miss chance when attacking Guthseyr.
- To attack Guthseyr, his opponents must first pinpoint his location; see "Invisibility" in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* for more information.

HOBGOBLINS

The most organised, militaristic and fecund of the goblin races, hobgoblins make excellent warriors and dependable mercenaries. They are more civilised than their brethren and very warlike – they need little urging to raid their neighbours.

HOBGOBLIN WARRIOR CR 1/2 (XP 200)

This muscular, gray-skinned humanoid has tiny, observant eyes. Clad in studded leather armour it wields sword and bow.

Male hobgoblin fighter 1

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; Stealth +5

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 16

(+3 armour [studded leather], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [buckler])

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

hp 14 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Ranged longbow (range 100 ft.) +3 (1d8/x3)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure light wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Dodge, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Knowledge (engineering) +4

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus 1d8 gp

HOBGOBLIN CHAMPION CR 1 (XP 400)

This muscular, gray-skinned humanoid has tiny, observant eyes. Clad in studded leather armour it wields sword and bow.

Male hobgoblin fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft.; base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Stealth +5

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 17

(+5 armour [mwk scale mail], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [mwk buckler])

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1 (+2 vs. fear)

hp 23 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk bastard sword +5 (1d10+3/19-20)

Ranged longbow (range 100 ft.) +4 (1d8/x3)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure light wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ bravery (+1)

Feats Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills as above plus Knowledge (engineering) +4, Profession (soldier) +5

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus 2d8 gp

HOBGOBLIN CHIEFTAIN

CR 3 (XP 800)

This muscular, gray-skinned humanoid wears banded mail and wields a huge two-handed sword.

Male hobgoblin fighter 3/cleric 1

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft.; base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Stealth +5

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 18

(+8 armour [+1 banded mail], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [mwk buckler])

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6 (+7 vs. fear)

hp 40 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

Melee mwk greatsword (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +6 (2d6+3/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +5 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Actions battle rage, channel energy (4/day; 1d6; DC 12), touch of law

Battle Rage (Sp [standard; 4/day]) A touched creature deals +1 damage with each attack for 1 round.

Touch of Law (Sp [standard; 4/day]) A touched willing creature treats all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round as if it had rolled a natural 11.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2; spontaneous casting [*inflict spells*], domains law, war)

1st—*bless, cure light wounds, magic weapon*^D

0—*guidance, stabilise, virtue*

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure moderate wounds, scrolls of cure light wounds, scroll of obscuring mist, scroll of remove fear*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), evil aura (faint)

Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills as above plus Knowledge (engineering) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Profession (soldier) +5

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus 40 gp

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Hobgoblins operate in small, disciplined groups.

EL 3 (XP 800): Hobgoblin Warrior (2) and Hobgoblin Champion (1)

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Hobgoblin Warrior (4) and Hobgoblin Champion (1)

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Hobgoblin Warrior (6) and Hobgoblin Champion (1)

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Hobgoblin Warrior (6), Hobgoblin Champion (1) and Hobgoblin Chieftain (1)

KOBOLDS

Small, cowardly creatures kobold normally dwell deep underground in enormous warrens. They believe they are descended from dragons but rarely exhibit the draconic traits of strength and bravery. They never fight fairly and love to dupe their enemies into stumbling into the many traps surrounding their lair. Kobold priests loudly proclaim their manifest destiny to destroy their enemies and they hate most other creatures. They reserve particular loathing for gnomes and fey creatures. Their society is tribal and rewards cunning and duplicity above strength and bravery.

KOBOLD WARRIOR CR 1/4 (XP 100)

Male kobold warrior 1
LE Small humanoid (reptilian)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.
ACP -2; **Stealth** +7

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 10
(+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 armour [studded leather], +1 shield [small wooden], +1 natural)

Weakness light sensitivity
Light Sensitivity (Ex) When in an area of bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell the kobold is dazzled (-1 penalty on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks).

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

hp 6 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -1
Melee short sword +3 (1d4-1/19-20)
Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +3 (1d4/x3)
Combat Gear arrows (12)

Abilities Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills as above plus Craft (trapmaking) +1, Profession (miner) +2
Languages Draconic
Gear as above plus belt pouch

KOBOLD CHAMPION CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Male kobold warrior 3
LE Small humanoid (reptilian)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Kobolds can be encountered in groups of almost any size — but they generally only attack groups less numerous than their own.

EL 2 (XP 600): Kobold Warrior (4) and Kobold Champion (1)

EL 3 (XP 800): Kobold Warrior (4) and Kobold Adept (1)

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Kobold Warrior (6) and Kobold Champion (1), Kobold Adept (1)

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Kobold Warrior (6), Kobold Champion (3) and Kobold Adept (1)

ACP -2; **Stealth** +9

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 13
(+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +3 armour [studded leather], +1 shield [buckler], +1 natural)

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) When in an area of bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell the kobold is dazzled (-1 penalty on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks).

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

hp 19 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +1
Melee short sword +5 (1d4-1/19-20)
Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +5 (1d4/x3)
Combat Gear 10 mwk arrows

Abilities Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Weapon Finesse, Dodge

Skills as above plus Craft (trapmaking) +1, Profession (miner) +2

Languages Draconic

Gear as above plus belt pouch, 2d6 gp

KOBOLD ADEPT CR 1 (XP 400)

Kobold adept 4
LE Small humanoid (reptilian)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +2
Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; **Stealth** +10

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 10
(+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) When in an area of bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell the kobold is dazzled (-1 penalty on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks).

Fort +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

hp 18 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** -2
Melee dagger +0 (1d3-3/19-20)
Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +5 (1d3-3/19-20)
Adept Spells Prepared (CL 4th, concentration +6)

2nd—*invisibility*

1st—*bless*, *burning hands* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 13)

0—*ghost sound*, *guidance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 12)

Combat Gear tanglefoot bag (2), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of shield of faith*

Abilities Str 4, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 10

SQ summon familiar

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills as above plus Craft (trapmaking) +1, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +4, Profession (miner) +4

Languages Draconic

Gear as above plus belt pouch, spell component pouch

MERCENARY WARRIOR

Mercenary warriors are the backbone of many villains' forces. Loyal to their employer (as long as they are paid), and merciless to their enemies, they are brave in battle and rapacious in victory. Their masters often employ them to oppress the local populace, slay troublemakers and to serve as their elite guards.

MERCENARY LEADER CR 7 (XP 3,200)
Clad in intricately carved full plate, this human warrior radiates an aura of command and barely restrained violence.

Male human fighter 8
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +6; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.
ACP -4; **Acrobatics** -2 (-6 jumping), **Climb** +4, **Ride** +7, **Swim** +4
AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 23; **Shield Focus** (+2 Dex, +10 armour [+1 full plate], +3 shield [mwk heavy steel])
Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. fear)
hp 72 (HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +12
Melee +1 *bastard sword* +15/+10 (1d10+8/19-20) or
Melee mwk silver dagger +13/+8 (1d4+3/19-20)
Ranged mwk spear (range 20 ft.) +11 (1d8+4/x3)
Atk Options Dazzling Display, Power Attack (-3 attack, +6 damage), Vital Strike
Combat Gear *feather token (whip), potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
SQ armour training (2), bravery (+2), weapon training (heavy blades +1)
Feats Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialisation (bastard sword)
Skills as above plus Intimidate +14
Languages Common

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, 31 gp, 14 sp

ELITE MERCENARY WARRIOR CR 5 (XP 1,600)
Clad in fine full plate this warrior carries a bastard sword.

Male human fighter 6
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +6; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.
ACP -5; **Acrobatics** -3 (-7 jumping), **Climb** +2, **Ride** +4, **Swim** +2
AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22; **CMD** 21; **Shield Focus** (+2 Dex, +9 armour [mwk full plate], +3 shield [mwk heavy steel])
Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5 (+7 vs. fear)
hp 55 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +9
Melee +1 *bastard sword* +12/+7 (1d10+7/19-20) or

Melee mwk silver dagger +10/+5 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged mwk spear (range 20 ft.) +9 (1d8+3/x3)

Atk Options Dazzling Display, Vital Strike

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+2), weapon training (heavy blades +1)

Feats Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Shield Focus, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialisation (bastard sword)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +8

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 31 gp, 14 sp

MERCENARY WARRIOR CR 3 (XP 800)

Clad in banded mail this warrior carries a bastard sword.

Male human fighter 4

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -5; **Acrobatics** -3 (-7 jumping), **Climb** +2, **Ride** +2, **Swim** +2

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 19; **Shield Focus**

(+2 Dex, +7 armour [mwk banded mail], +3 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

hp 38 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7

Melee mwk cold iron bastard sword +9 (1d10+5/19-20) or

Melee mwk silver dagger +8 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged mwk spear (range 20 ft.) +7 (1d8+3/x3)

Combat Gear *potion of aid, potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1)

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialisation (bastard sword)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +6

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 12 gp, 21 sp

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Mercenary warriors can be encountered in any size group. Small groups could serve as bodyguards for their master while elite warriors or even mercenary leaders could protect particularly powerful villains.

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Mercenary Warriors (2)

EL 7 (XP 3,200): Mercenary Warriors (4)

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Mercenary Warriors (4) and Elite Mercenary Warrior 1

EL 9 (XP 6,400): Elite Mercenary Warriors (2) and Mercenary Leader (1)

ORCS

These savage creatures hate light and possess prodigious reserves of strength but little intelligence. They are violent and aggressive and disdain all but the rudimentary trappings of civilisation, simply taking what they want from their neighbours. They are filthy, brutish creatures quick to anger and hard to kill. Their tribal society is fiercely competitive and tribes often fight among themselves.

ORC SAVAGE CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Clad in a chain shirt, this bestial green-gray skinned, black haired warrior roars with rage and wildly swings his axe!

Orc barbarian 1

CE Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +0

Speed 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; Acrobatics +1 (+5 jumping)

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 16
(+4 armour [chain shirt], +1 Dex)

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) Bright light dazzles orcs.

Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

hp 15 (1 HD); ferocity

Ferocity (Ex) An orc with negative hit points remains conscious, but is staggered and loses 1 hit point a round.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +5

Melee greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +5 (1d12+6/x3)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +2 (1d6+4)

Atk Options rage (6 rounds)

Abilities Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ fast movement

Feats Power Attack

Skills as above plus Intimidate +2, Survival +4

Languages Common, Orc

Raging, the Orc Savage has the following altered statistics:

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 18

(+4 armour [chain shirt], -2 class, +1 Dex)

Fort +6, **Will** +2

hp 16 (1 HD)

CMB +7

Melee greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +7 (1d12+9)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +2 (1d6+6)

Abilities Str 23, Con 18

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Orcs are often encountered in small raiding groups.

EL 2 (XP 600): Orc Savage (1) and Orc Warrior (3)

EL 3 (XP 800): Orc Savage (2) and Orc Warrior (3)

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Orc Savage (2) and Orc Veteran (2)

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Orc Savage (2), Orc Warrior (3) and Orc Veteran (2)

ORC WARRIOR CR 1/3 (XP 135)

This bestial humanoid resembles a savage human; it has green-gray skin and greasy black hair.

Orc warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1

AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 14
(+3 armour [studded leather])

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) Bright light dazzles orcs.

Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

hp 6 (3 HD); ferocity

Ferocity (Ex) An orc with negative hit points remains conscious, but is staggered and loses 1 hit point a round.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk falchion +5 (2d4+4/18-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +1 (1d6+3)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6

Feats Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +2

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above

ORC VETERAN CR 1 (XP 400)

Clad in splint mail, this snarling creature resembles a beast-like human, with green-gray skin and greasy black hair.

Orc warrior 3

CE Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -6 (-10 jumping)

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 16
(+7 armour [mwk splint mail])

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) Bright light dazzles orcs.

Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

hp 19 (3 HD); ferocity

Ferocity (Ex) An orc with negative hit points remains conscious, but is staggered and loses 1 hit point a round.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

Melee mwk falchion (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +8 (2d4+4/18-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d6+3)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6

Feats Power Attack, Weapon Focus (alchion)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +3, Survival +0

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above plus coins and jewellery totalling 30 gp

RAKES

Sons of minor nobles, bravos determined to prove their worth, or down-on-their-luck troublemakers, rakes are to be found in every town and city. Haunting bars and inns they are ever ready to use their martial skills for gain. Eager to earn the price of their next drunken revel, they are dangerous opponents.

PROFESSIONAL DUELLIST CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Lithe and slim, this elf carries a worn, honed rapier.

Male elf fighter 5/rogue 2/duellist 1

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13 (trapfinding), Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +15, Climb +11, Ride +6, Stealth +15, Swim +7

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 23; Dodge, canny defence (+5 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +1 dodge)

Immune sleep

Fort +6, **Ref** +10 (evasion), **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear); +2 vs. enchantments

hp 63 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9

Melee +1 rapier +14/+9 (1d6+6/18-20) or

Melee +1 rapier +12/+7 (1d6+6/18-20) and
mwk dagger +11 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger (range 10 ft.) +13 (1d4+3/19-20)

Atk Options bleeding attack, precise strike, sneak attack +1d6

Bleeding Attack (Ex) When the duellist hits with a sneak attack the target also suffers 1 bleed damage. This damage does not stack with itself and occurs at the start of the target's turn. It can be stopped with a DC 15 Heal check or by the application of any effect that heals hit point damage.

Precise Strike (Ex) The duellist adds +1 damage when hitting a living creatures with a discernable anatomy with a rapier or dagger (but not both).

Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath, elixir of tumbling, potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ armour training (1), canny defence, rogue talent (bleeding attack), weapon training (light blades +1)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier)

Skills as above plus Appraise +6, Perform (dance) +4

Languages Common, Elven, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, fine clothing, belt pouch, 13 pp, 10 gp, 10 sp

RAKE CR 2 (XP 600)

This foppish, graceful man wears fine clothes.

Male human fighter 2/rogue 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +5 (+6 vs. traps), Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +9, Climb +7, Stealth +9

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 18

(+3 Dex, +3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence], +1 dodge); Dodge

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** -1 (+0 vs. fear)

hp 25 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk rapier +6 (1d6+2/18-20) or

Melee mwk rapier +4 (1d6+2/18-20) and
mwk dagger +3 (1d4+1/19-20) or

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace (2), potion of invisibility*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

SQ bravery (+1), trapfinding

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Two Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills as above plus Bluff +7, Disable Device +4, Knowledge (local) +4

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 9 gp, 15 sp, fine clothes

VETERAN RAKE CR 4 (XP 1,200)

This swaggering man wears fine, fashionable clothes.

Male human fighter 4/rogue 1

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +6 (+7 vs. traps), Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +11, Climb +8, Stealth +10

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 21

(+3 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence], +1 dodge); Dodge

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0 (+1 vs. fear)

hp 39 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7

Melee mwk rapier +9 (1d6+5/18-20) or

Melee mwk rapier +7 (1d6+5/18-20) and
mwk dagger +6 (1d4+3/19-20) or

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *feather token (whip), potion of cat's grace (2)*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), trapfinding

Feats Dodge, Double Slice, Improved Initiative, Two Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier)

Skills as above plus Disable Device +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Sleight of Hand +9

Languages Common

Gear as above plus 10 pp, 9 gp, 15 sp, fine clothes

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Rakes congregate in taverns and inns. They fight to impress the ladies and to earn gold to pay for the finer things in life.

EL 6 (2,400) Rakes (4)

EL 7 (XP 3,200) Rakes (4) and Veteran Rake (1)

SPIES

Even the greatest villain must learn of his enemies' weakness before striking. Villains without recourse to magical methods of gleaning such information must employ the services of a spy. Such individuals normally work alone and rarely put themselves in a position from which they must fight to escape. Some spies eavesdrop on privileged conversations while others seek out their target's secrets through direct action.

ROONDAR TUREN CR 4 (XP 1,200)

This thin gnome has a ruddy complexion and a welcoming smile.

Male gnome bard 5

N Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10, Sense Motive +7

Speed 20 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +7 (+3 jumping), Climb +1, Escape Artist +9, Stealth +13

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13; Dodge, Mobility, +4 vs. giant type foes

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 dodge)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4; +2 vs. illusions, +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects

hp 36 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +0

Melee dagger +2 (1d4-2/19-20)

Atk Options +1 vs. reptilian and goblin type foes

Special Actions bardic performance (22 rounds/day; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +2), lore master (1/day)

Bard Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +9)

2nd (3/day)—*invisibility*, *minor image* (DC 17), *mirror image*

1st (5/day)—*disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *silent image* (DC 16), *ventriloquism* (DC 16)

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *lullaby* (DC 14), *message*, *read magic*, *summon instrument*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +9)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

Combat Gear *hat of disguise*, *tanglefoot bag* (2)

Abilities Str 6, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 18

SQ bardic knowledge, gnome magic, lore master, versatile performance, weapon familiarity, well-versed

Feats Dodge, Extra Performance, Mobility

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Craft (books) +3, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +8, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perform (string) +14, Sleight of Hand +6, Spellcraft +5

Languages Common, Draconic, Gnome, Sylvan

Gear as above plus 12 gp, fine clothes, masterwork violin

TIEFLING SNEAK CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This tall woman has dusty skin and the heavy scent of perfume hangs in the air about her.

Female tiefling rogue 3/wizard (enchanter) 5

CN Medium outsider (native)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11 (+12 vs. traps), Sense Motive +4

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +11, Climb +3, Escape Artist +11, Stealth +20 (fast stealth), Swim +0

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 17; +1 vs. traps (+3 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

Fort +3, **Ref** +7 (+8 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +5

hp 42 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk dagger +4 (1d4-1/19-20) or

Melee Touch *dazing touch* +3 (dazed [5 HD, 1 round])

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +7 (1d4-1/19-20)

Atk Options *dazing touch* (6/day), sneak attack +2d6

Special Actions arcane bond (amulet)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8; barred schools: evocation, necromancy)

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 17), *heightened charm person* (DC 17), *major image* (DC 16)

2nd—*hideous laughter* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *touch of idiocy*, *web* (DC 15)

1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *colour spray* (DC 14), *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*

0—*daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +8)

1/day—*darkness*

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of blur*, *cat's grace*, *mage armour* and *phantom steed*, *wand of scorching ray* (25 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 11

SQ cantrips, enchanting smile, fiendish sorcery, rogue talent (fast sense), trapfinding, trap sense

Feats Improved Initiative, Heighten Spell^B, Scribe Scroll^B, Skill Focus (Bluff, Diplomacy), Spell Focus (enchantment),

Skills as above plus Appraise +9, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Disable Device +10, Disguise +6, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (planes) +9, Sleight of Hand +7, Spellcraft +11

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin, Infernal, Undercommon

Gear as above plus *cloak of elvenkind*, masterwork thieves' tools, disguise kit, spell component pouch, 5 pp, 30 gp, 15 sp

Spellbook 3rd—*deep slumber*, *fly*, *major image*, 2nd—*cat's grace*, *eagle's splendour*, *hideous laughter*, *invisibility*, *touch of idiocy*, *web*; 1st—*charm person*, *colour spray*, *detect secret doors*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*, *sleep*; 0—all

THOTHOSK

Conman and go-between, in his own mind, Thothosk is a debonair and suave fellow. In reality this depraved quasit is hated by almost all who deal with him.

Thothosk is a conman and fixer who had deep and widespread connections in the criminal underworld of a large city. As charismatic as he is debauched, his associates among the denizens of the lower planes makes him an invaluable broker for a villain attempting to entice demons into his ranks.

Background: Once the familiar of the archmage Cullain, Thothosk did not follow his master's soul to the Great Beyond, instead opting to enjoy the delights of the prime material plane for a few more centuries. Since then, Thothosk has built up a small fortune and even owns several businesses scattered throughout the city.

Personality: An inveterate liar, Thothosk is always out for himself. He doesn't care who his customers are as long as they pay handsomely for his services. Thothosk loves manipulating those around him and often asks potential customers to carry out certain long-winded and ultimately pointless tasks for his own amusement.

Thothosk has a short attention span and is easily distracted.

Ultimately, Thothosk is becoming bored with his life and wants to find another quasit to share his japes with.

Mannerisms: A skilled comedian, Thothosk often regales his customers with long one-man shows designed to assert his superiority over his audience. His conversation is punctuated by cruel jibes and jokes. Thothosk fancies himself a great orator and uses expansive hand gestures when speaking.

Distinguishing Features: Thothosk speaks in a very high-pitched voice and his scales are of burnished black punctuated by red flecks.

Hooks: Thothosk is nosy and inquisitive. If the PCs start to make trouble for any of his customers, he investigates using change shape and/or *invisibility*. Spying on his new enemies he gathers enough information to deal with this new threat. This could involve discovering where the PCs sleep at night, uncovering a dark secret the PCs would not like revealed and so on. Having gathered sufficient information he approaches those who owe him favours and orders them to deal with the PCs. If his chosen tools fail to deal with the problem, he simply finds new ones.

Alternatively, the PCs could be battling an evil wizard who has a quasit familiar. In Thothosk they find an unlikely ally; the quasit wishes to entice the wizard's familiar to remain with him when the wizard dies and thus aids the PCs. If the quasit familiar is slain, Thothosk flies into a rage and stops at nothing to exact his revenge.

THOTHOSK

CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Curved ram's horns top this tiny winged demon's head.

Male quasit bard 9

CE Tiny outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18, Sense Motive +18

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)

ACP 0; Acrobatics +16 (+12 jumping), Escape Artist +16, Fly +22, Stealth +27

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 20; Dodge (+2 size, +4 Dex, +5 armour [+2 *studded leather*], +1 dodge +3 natural)

Immune electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

Fort +7, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12; +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects

hp 78 (12 HD); fast healing 2; **DR** cold iron or good/5

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +9

Melee 2 claws (reach 0 ft.) +11 (1d3-2 plus poison [DC 13 Fortitude {2 consecutive cures}; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dexterity]) and bite (reach 0 ft.) +1 (1d4-2)

Special Actions bardic performance (29 rounds; countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 17], inspire courage [+2], inspire competence [+3], *suggestion* [DC 17], dirge of doom, inspire greatness), change shape (bat, toad; *polymorph*)

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +12)

3rd (4/day)—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *deep slumber* (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *see invisibility*

2nd (5/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 15), *eagle's splendour*, *heroism*, *mirror image*

1st (6/day)—*alarm*, *cure light wounds*, *identify*, *silent image* (DC 14), *undetected alignment*

0—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

At will—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*cause fear* (30-foot radius, DC 14)

1/week—*commune* (six questions)

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of silence*, *marvellous pigments*, *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 6, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 17

SQ bardic knowledge, lore master, versatile performance (act, comedy), well versed

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Extra Performance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +18, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +3, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perform (comedy) +18

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, telepathy (touch)

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, 12 gp

THUGS

The staple of many villains' organisations, thugs intimidate enemies, cause havoc and generally make things very unpleasant for those angering them or their employer. Rarely devoted to a cause or imbued with great loyalty to their paymaster thugs delight in knocking heads together and rarely think far beyond their next booze-fuelled brawl. Normally encountered in towns and cities, villains occasionally import gangs of thugs to villages to impose their will. Such groups are notoriously unreliable in the face of temptation – lightly guarded treasure, stores of alcohol or groups of vulnerable, non-hideous women often deflect them from their task.

THUG CR 3 (XP 800)
This hulking half-orc wears battered but serviceable studded leather armour. Cuts and bruises cover is fists.

Male half-orc fighter 2/rogue 2
 CN Medium humanoid (human, orc)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8 (+9 vs. traps), Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +9, Climb +8, Stealth +9, Swim +8

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 19; Dodge (+2 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 dodge)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +1 (+2 vs. fear)

hp 34 (4 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity (Ex) Once per day, when the thug is brought below 0 hit points he can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of the next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points he falls unconscious and starts dying.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6 (+8 grapple)

Melee unarmed strike +6 (1d3+3) or

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d4+3/19-20)

Atk Options Catch Off-Guard, Improved Grapple, sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *elixir of hiding* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of magic fang* (2)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ bravery (+1), rogue talent (combat feat), trapfinding, weapon familiarity

Feats Catch Off-Guard, Dodge^B, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike

Skills as above plus Disable Device +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +5

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above plus 1 gp, 7 sp

BRAWLER CR 5 (XP 1,600)
Stocky and powerfully built, this dwarf wears ragged, loose-fitting clothes.

Male dwarf fighter 4/monk 2

LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12 (+14 vs. unusual stonework), Sense Motive +3

Speed 20 ft.; Spring Attack

ACP 0; Acrobatics +12 (+8 jumping), Climb +6, Stealth +7, Swim +6

AC 18, touch 17, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 25 (+29 vs. bull rush and trip); Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Mobility, +4 dodge vs. giant subtype foes

(+2 Dex, +3 class, +1 armour [*bracers of armour* +1], +1 dodge, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])

Fort +9 (+11 against poison), **Ref** +6 (evasion), **Will** +7 (+8 vs. fear); +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

hp 54 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7 (+9 grapple)

Melee unarmed strike +8 (1d6+4) or

Melee unarmed strike +7 (1d6+4) and unarmed strike +7 (1d6+4)

Atk Options Improved Grapple, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist (3/day, DC 16), flurry of blows, +1 vs. orc and goblinoid subtype foes

Combat Gear *potion of magic fang*, *necklace of fireballs* (type I)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 6

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), stonecunning, weapon familiarity

Feats Deflect Arrows, Dodge^B, Improved Grapple^B, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist^B, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Specialisation (unarmed strike)

Skills as above plus Appraise +4 (+6 vs. gems and metals)

Languages Common, Dwarven

Gear as above plus 12 gp, 15 sp

The brawler enjoys nothing more than pounding his enemies into the ground with his powerful fists. A renegade warrior from an isolated dwarven monastic society he enjoys proving his dominance over those who resort to weapons. He prefers to start fights in taprooms and other public areas where his enemies are likely unarmed and unarmoured.

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Thugs can be encountered in the following groups:

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Brawler (1) and Thug (1)

EL 7 (3,200): Thug (4) or Brawler (2)

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Brawler (1) and Thug (4) or Brawler (2) and Thug (2).

VOAROTHIM

This hulking, but surprisingly wise, giant is steeped in battle-cunning.

A creature born of battle and slaughter, Voarothim relishes the opportunity to bathe his sword in the warm blood of his enemies. No music is sweeter to Voarothim than the screams of the dying and the clash of blade on blade and no victory sweeter than standing atop the slashed corpse of a fallen enemy hero.

Background: An evil spirit clad in the form of a once-powerful ogre chieftain, Voarothim has fought and brawled his way across much of the known world. Frustrated with the simple, brutish life of normal ogres, and seeking glory and booty in the civilised lands, Voarothim has fought in many major wars. Responsible for countless atrocities, he has developed a taste for the flesh of the fallen.

Personality: Voarothim follows his own warped and twisted code of honour in which the gaining of battle glory justifies the means by which it is gained. Brave, but not fearless, Voarothim is not stupid and uses his various powers to escape from an impossible situation. His twisted honour code demands he destroy notable enemies in single combat (even if his opponent starts the fight asleep).

Mannerisms: Even though he often approaches enemies cloaked in a different form (see below), he always announces himself to his victims so that they may know who sends them to hell. When in combat he roars and bellows in a deep booming voice. When he defeats a skilled foe in single combat, he beheads his victim and uses the skull as a drinking vessel.

Distinguishing Features: In his true form, several deep scars criss-cross Voarothim's face and shoulders. Dried blood often coats his tusks.

Voarothim's greatsword is an ancient blade forged of adamantine by enslaved dwarven master crafters many centuries ago. Wrested from a slain giant chieftain, the blade is his pride and joy. Enemies stealing or breaking the weapon earn his eternal hatred.

Several bleached skulls — the remains of powerful fighters slain in single combat — adorn his belt. These serve as drinking cups for the depraved warrior.

Hooks: Voarothim serves villains as a personal bodyguard or enforcer. Either role is likely to bring him into contact with the PCs. As an enforcer, he is normally dispatched to crush meddling adventurers while as a bodyguard he stays close to his master.

Alternatively, if Voarothim is without employment, he may be encountered in a villain's lair awaiting an audience. In this situation, the PCs are not his enemies and unless they attack him, he does not strike them down. Indeed, quick-thinking PCs may be able to entice him into joining their foray (for an equal share of the profits, of course).

VOAROTHIM

CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Clad in shining plate armour, this tusked giant wields a massive adamantine greatsword.

Male ogre-mage fighter 3

LE Large outsider (giant, native, oni, shapechanger)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17, Sense Motive +3

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

ACP -4; Fly +12, Stealth -4

AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 35

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +11 armour [+2 full plate], +5 natural)

Fort +19, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14 (+15 vs. fear); **SR** 19

hp 151 (11 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +21

Melee +1 *adamantine greatsword* (reach 10 ft.) +21/+16/+11 (3d6+14/17-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +15/+10/+5 (2d6+9/x3)

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack (-3 attack, +9 damage with greatsword)

Special Actions change shape (Small, Medium or Large humanoid; *alter self* or *giant form I*)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +12)

Constant—*fly*

At will—*darkness*, *invisibility*

1/day—*charm monster* (DC 17), *cone of cold* (DC 18), *gaseous form*, *deep slumber* (DC 16)

Combat Gear 20 arrows, *potion of cure serious wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 28, Dex 19, Con 27, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 17

SQ armour training (1), flight

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills as above plus Disguise +11 (+31 with change shape), Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Spellcraft +15, Use Magic Device +17

Languages Common, Giant

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, 20 gp

ALTERNATE FORMS

Voarothim often takes a different form than his own in order to confuse and confound his enemies. His favourite forms include:

- A beautiful elven female warrior clad in shimmering chainmail and wielding a slender longsword. For the first couple of combat rounds he appears tentative and afraid in the hopes that the skilled enemy warriors ignore him in favour of more dangerous foes.
- A dirty orc warrior clad in rusty armour and wielding a large mace. (In this guise he attempts to blend in with other lesser troops so that he can close to a target without being singled out as an obviously significant threat).

VILLAINS

A MEMORY OF ALLWINTER

In a time before the ken of fire, the prehistoric peoples of this land dug a long barrow into the frozen earth to hold the remains of their dead. The ancients abandoned their dead at the tomb's mouth for wild animals to strip the flesh from their bones before the shamans reverently placed the skulls of the ancestors along the wall of the long tunnel into the earth; a tunnel they dug deeper into the earth with crude stone tools as each millennia passed.

The barrow, holding twenty thousand years of ancestors' skulls, was forgotten when foreigners brought agriculture from across the sea, driving the hunting folk before them with the sprawl of proto-civilisation.

The old gods of the dark forest and biting frost of ice ages died with the last of the hunting folk. The afterlife of the hunters collapsed with their deities' waning, casting their souls adrift. Some of the abandoned souls returned to the deep barrow over the passing eons, coalescing into a single awakened demilich, A Memory of Allwinter.

Background: A Memory of Allwinter has awakened from its long slumber, its barrow disturbed by a stone quarry digging too deep. The demilich slew all within the mining camp as they investigated the barrow, leaving their remains as carrion for the ancestor skulls reincarnated into the bodies of ravening megafauna.

Personality: Confused by the passing epochs, A Memory of Allwinter strives to return the lands to their state during the last ice age – a time of dark, sunless forests inhabited by deadly megafauna. The demilich considers the whole continent to belong to it (or at least its component souls) and remains animated until all civilised folk are driven away or A Memory of Allwinter is destroyed.

The demilich is a creature built of thousands of forsaken souls, and lacks a single dominant personality. Interactions with the demilich receive responses akin to the wild screams of a thousand dying animals.

Mannerisms: A Memory of Allwinter's lower jaw continually bites at the air in animalistic fury.

Distinguishing Features: The demilich's skull is embedded with rough, uncut magical stones which function as *ioun stones*. The demilich is covered with a layer of glittering rime.

LAIR

A Memory of Allwinter raises deep woods overnight with *plant growth*, an inexorably expanding a forested dominion centred

on the demilich's barrow. *Control weather* plunges the land into perpetual winter and *reincarnation* and other powerful magic repopulates the forests with the large, cruel beasts of the demilich's ancient memory such as smilodons and other primal megafauna. These creatures are fanatically loyal to A Memory of Allwinter, and retain their human cunning.

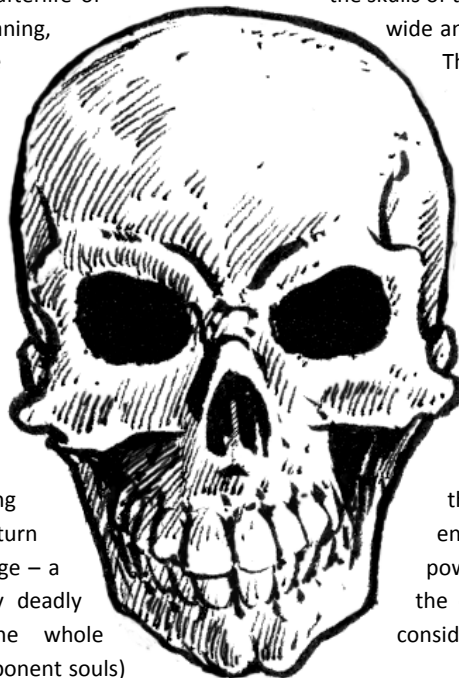
A Memory of Allwinter also uses ancient oaks, animated with *liveoak* and *changestaff* to lead assaults on the outskirts of civilisation. Occasionally the demilich's *reincarnate* spells revive a creature in primitive human form. These savages are trained in druidic lore by A Memory of Allwinter, so that they may eventually restore the ancient tribes.

The demilich resides in a three-mile deep barrow filled with the skulls of the ancient folk. The tunnel is typically 10 feet wide and 20 feet high and walled in heaped stones.

The tunnel winds into the earth at a slight gradient, occasionally turning back onto itself or opening into a larger alcove.

The walls of the barrow are lined with millions of human skulls. Stratum within the skulls reveal details about the periods in which the primeval people lived; old toothless skulls reveal eras of long life, while piles of children's skulls speak of tiny frozen fingers clutched tight by mourning parents in the middle of a deadly ice age.

The floor of the barrow is layered with the remaining bones of the ancestors. At the entrance to the barrow, these bones are powdered from the march of countless feet. In the depths, these bones are unbroken and are considered difficult terrain.



TACTICS

A Memory of Allwinter uses *commune with nature*, *charmed animals*, *scrying* and *stone tell* to track threats within its realm. Before combat, the demilich casts *barkskin*, *cat's grace*, *resist energy* (sonic and fire) and *freedom of movement*. Enemies attempting to explore the demilich's barrow are subjected to waves of *awakened* and *summoned* creatures. Explorers in its forest must battle *liveoak* protectors and *changestaff* treants. If any creatures approach the demilich, it uses *wail of the banshee*, *rime ice storm* and *rime chill metal*. If reduced to less than 30 hit points, A Memory of Allwinter escapes using *meld into stone* (or *word of recall* if encountered outside the barrow).

A MEMORY OF ALLWINTER CR 19 (XP 204,800)
This floating human skull is pierced with a score of roughly-cut gemstones and encased with a glistening layer of ice.

Awakened demilich druid 15

NE Tiny undead

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +29, Sense Motive +29

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect; Flyby Attack); Fly +34, Stealth +30

AC 27, touch 23, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 28

(+4 Dex, +1 insight, +6 profane, +4 natural, +2 size)

Immune acid, cold, electricity, magic, polymorph, undead traits;

Weakness torpor, vorpal susceptibility

Immunity to Magic (Su) A Memory of Allwinter is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells function differently against the creature, as noted below.

- A *dispel evil* spell deals 2d6 points of damage, with no saving throw.
- *Holy smite* affects A Memory of Allwinter normally.
- A *power word kill* spoken by an ethereal caster deals 50 points of damage to A Memory of Allwinter if it fails a Fortitude save (with a DC determined as though the spell allowed a saving throw).
- A *shatter* spell deals 1d6 points of damage per two caster levels (maximum 10d6), with no saving throw.

Vorpal Susceptibility (Ex) Vorpal weapons of any kind ignore A Memory of Allwinter's damage reduction.

Fort +17, **Ref** +15, **Will** +22 (+27 vs. channelling)

Hp 157 (15 HD); **DR** —/20

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +7

Special Actions devour soul

Devour Soul (Su [standard; at will; 300 ft.]) A Memory of Allwinter can imprison the soul of a living creature within one of 10 special gems embedded in its skull. If the target succeeds at a DC 25 Fortitude save, it gains two permanent negative levels. If it fails, its soul is immediately drawn into one of the gems in A Memory of Allwinter's skull. The soul remains trapped within the gem, visible as but a gleam except under *true seeing*. The soulless body corrupts and decays rapidly, reducing to dust in a single round. As long as the dead creature's soul remains trapped in the gemstone, it cannot be restored to life via any means save direct divine intervention. Gems containing souls can be retrieved from a destroyed demilich, at which point they can either be crushed to release any souls within to their afterlife or used in the place of the usual material components to restore the soul and body with *resurrection* or *true resurrection*. After 24 hours, A Memory of Allwinter can consume a trapped soul, healing 1d6 hit points per Hit Die of the soul, at which point only *miracle* or *wish* can restore the dead creature.

Telekinetic Storm (Su) As a special use of its *telekinesis* spell-like ability, A Memory of Allwinter can churn up its treasure, dust, bones and other loose debris in the area into a whirling storm about its skull. The storm obscures vision as a fog cloud within a 20-foot spread centred on A Memory of Allwinter. Creatures within the storm take 12d6 points of

damage per round on the demilich's turn (Reflex DC 21 for half damage). A Memory of Allwinter can maintain the storm indefinitely by concentrating.

Torpor (Ex) A Memory of Allwinter takes no actions against intruders unless its remains or treasure are disturbed.

Greater Bestow Curse (Sp) This spell-like ability functions like *bestow curse*, but can have one of the following effects: –12 to one ability score; –6 to two ability scores; –8 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks; or a 25% chance to act normally. This ability is treated as a 6th-level spell.

Spell-like Abilities (CL 21st; concentration +27; spontaneous spellcasting (*summon* spells [Augment Summoning, Superior Summoning])

Constant—*true seeing*

At will—*greater bestow curse* (DC 22), *telekinesis* (DC 20), *will of the banshee* (DC 25)

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 16th; concentration +23)

8th—*word of recall*

7th—*changestaff*, *control weather*, *quicken ice storm*

6th—*antilife shell* (DC 23), *summon nature's ally VI*, *liveoak*, *stone tell*

5th—*awaken*, *baleful polymorph* (DC 22), *commune with nature*, *call lightning storm* (DC 22), *rime ice storm*

4th—*dispel magic*, *freedom of movement*, *ice storm*, *reincarnate*, *scrying* (DC 21)

3rd—*dominate animal* (DC 20), *meld into stone*, *plant growth* (3), *rime chill metal* (DC 19)

2nd—*barkskin*, *cat's grace*, *fog cloud*, *resist energy* (2), *tree shape*

1st—*charm animal* (3, DC 18), *entangle* (DC 18), *obscuring mist*, *speak with animals*

0—*detect magic*, *know direction*, *mending*, *resistance*

Abilities Str 6, Dex 19, Con —, Int 23, Wis 24, Cha 23

SQ rejuvenation, unholy grace

Rejuvenation (Su) If destroyed, A Memory of Allwinter reforms in 2d6 days. To permanently destroy it, holy water must be poured over its remains within the area of a *hallow* spell. To complete the destruction, *holy word* or *dispel evil* must be cast. If the caster succeeds at a DC 25 caster level check A Memory of Allwinter is permanently destroyed.

Unholy Grace (Su) A Memory of Allwinter gains a bonus on saves and a profane bonus to AC equal to its Charisma modifier.

Feats Ability Focus (devour soul), Alertness, Augment Summoning, Eschew Materials, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Rime Spell, Spell Focus (conjugation), Still Spell, Superior Summoning

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +21, Handle Animal +21, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (nature) +24, Knowledge (religion) +24, Spellcraft +24, Survival +25

Languages (archaic) Aklo, Common, Draconic, Druidic, Giant, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *ioun stones* (*deep red sphere*, *dusty rose prism*, *incandescent blue sphere*, *lavender and green ellipsoid*, *orange prism*, *scarlet and blue sphere*)

SITAE AMAITHAR

A dark seductress who preys on the weakness of men and uses their guilt for both personal satisfaction and monetary gain.

Background: The daughter of wandering gypsies, Sitae fled her parents when she was 14 after one too many savage beatings at her sexually abusive and drunken father's hands. Forced to beg and sell her body on the streets, she developed an all-consuming hatred for men and would often slit her client's throat as they reached the moment of maximum pleasure – robbing them and leaving a trail of corpses in alleyways and secluded locations.

Fearful of eventual capture and execution, and tired of the constant struggle to survive, Sitae decided that keeping her victims alive and bleeding them dry in other ways would be much more profitable (and fun). Thus, she set herself up as a seer of great repute. Targeting merchants, adventurers and noblemen in relationships, she quickly built up a large clientele. Offering a glimpse of the future via crystal ball, palm-reading or tarot cards, she plays on her heritage and makes full use of her voluptuous figure to seduce her victims. She sleeps with each only once, but the price they pay is steep indeed. From the moment they leave her chambers, Sitae's henchmen – an expert forger named simply The Inker and a stealthy cat burglar called Reznak the Sly – dog the poor souls. Sitae's victims receive letters, delivered by Reznak, at all hours of the day and night. There is nothing in any of the letters to suggest that Sitae is involved in the blackmail but all demand money. Should her victim refuse to pay, Reznak brutally slays them.

Personality: Sitae is cold, calculating and utterly without remorse. Her contempt for men has no bounds. She only tolerates The Inker and Reznak because they are a means to an end and plots for the day when their



usefulness ends. Two things drive her: the pursuit of excessive wealth and the desire to punish men for her father's sins.

Mannerisms: Sitae is a coy and beguiling creature – her accent thick with the heritage of her people. Her fortune-telling techniques are pure parlour tricks but fool most observers.

Distinguishing Features: Sitae is, quite literally, dressed to kill; always garbed in black she favours low-cut tops to accentuate her heaving bosom. She wears large, hoop earrings and has a tiny scar over her left eye – a gift from her father.

Hooks: The PCs may seek Sitae out to gain a glimpse of their future. Alternatively, they may be hired by one of the Dark Lady's victims, desperate to keep his infidelity a secret.

SITAE AMAITHAR

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Female half-elf cleric 3/fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +4, Sense Motive +8
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics -1 (-5 jumping)

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 19

(+3 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate])

Immune sleep

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects
hp 34 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6

Melee mwk glaive (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-2/+6]) +8 (1d10+3)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, dazing touch (5/day)

Dazing Touch (Sp) Sitae can cause a living creature of 3 HD or less to become dazed for 1 round as a melee touch attack.

Special Actions channel negative energy (4/day; 2d6; DC 12), copycat (5/day)

Copycat (Sp) Sitae can create an illusory double of herself as a move action that functions as a single *mirror image* (duration 3 rounds or until the duplicate is dispelled or destroyed). Sitae can have no more than one image at a time. This ability does not stack with *mirror image*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +5; Charm, Trickery; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells])

2nd—*enthrall* (DC 14), *invisibility*^D, *owl's wisdom*

1st—*bless*, *charm person*^D (2; DC 13), *protection from good*

0—*bleed*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilise*

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of divine favour* (+3, CL 9), *wand of suggestion* (2 charges, DC 14)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 13

SQ aura of evil (moderate)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness, Weapon Focus (glaive)

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (religion) +6

Languages Common, Elven

Gear as above plus spell component pouch, unholy symbol, fine clothes plus GM determined

ANGUISH-TASTER

Beneath the unfurled warbanners of the mighty, undulating host lurks a band armoured in bone-white enamelled mail and steel plate.

A grizzled captain of a mercenary cadre, the Bleached Bones, the hobgoblin Anguish-Taster lives royally on the blood money of desperate kings and other petty tyrants.

Background: Anguish-Taster drew first blood in battle while barely seven winters old, caving in the skull of an elven knight beneath the shadowy forests bordering his homeland. Anguish-Taster fought and killed at his king's command, but when his king fell to a volley of elven arrows, he escaped the carnage with the remnants of the king's personal guard and made his way to human lands there to sell his services to those who need death distributed at a reasonable price.

Personality: Anguish-Taster is nothing if not a survivor, and carefully weighs up any offer against the risks presented before committing his mercenaries to battle. The hobgoblin's loyalty is an ephemeral thing when gold is proffered, and it is not unknown for his mercenary band to turncoat three or more times during a battle as each side escalates the bidding.

The hobgoblin is a quiet, intense leader, preferring to lead by

example rather than engage in inspiring oration.

Mannerisms: In the long moments before the clash of armies, Anguish-Taster bites down on his holy symbol for good luck. When in camp, the hobgoblin enjoys the finest food, wine and song that his coin can buy, but he never seems to take pleasure from his debauchery.

Distinguishing Features: Anguish-Taster is bearded and bears a shock of black, wild hair. The shield he carries is a crescent-shaped pelte, lacquered bone-white to match the rest of his heavy armour.

Tactics: Anguish-Taster begins combat by hurling javelins before charging into melee. The hobgoblin fights defensively at all times, benefiting from his Crane Stance and Stalwart feats to lessen the impact of the dozens of blows received in a typical skirmish. When charged with routing the enemy's elite units, Anguish-Taster drinks his potions prior to battle.

BLEACHED BONES

The Bleached Bones company varies in strength by the season, ranging from as little as twenty men to a host of four or five hundred. The cadre consists of a mix of humanoid, perhaps half of which are goblinoids. Humans, dwarves and orcs are not uncommon within the ranks, but Anguish-Taster refuses to employ even a single elf. Each of the Bleached Bones company wears bone-white armour for ease of recognition in the field.

The Bleached Bones, as with most expendable mercenary soldiers, are used at the vanguard of the army. The band fights as mounted skirmishers, throwing javelins into the enemy's ranks before charging into melee or harrying unprotected missile troops at the rear of the enemy formations.



ANGUISH-TASTER

CR 3 (XP 800)

This proud hobgoblin mercenary wears elaborately decorated white-enamelled armour and carries a pelte shield.

Male hobgoblin fighter (unbreakable) 4

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics +2 (-2 jumping), Stealth +2

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 20; **Stalwart** (+9 armour [mwk full plate mail], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +2 shield [mwk heavy wooden])

Stalwart (Ex) When using total defence or when fighting defensively, Anguish-Taster forgoes his dodge bonus to AC instead gaining DR —/4.

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2 (+3 vs. mind-affecting)

hp 46 (4 HD); Diehard

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7

Melee mwk warhammer +8 (1d8+3/x3) or unarmed strike (Crane Style [-2 attack/+4 AC]) +7 (1d3+3)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +6 (1d6+3)

Combat Gear caltrops, *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of heroism*, *potion of protection from good*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ armour training (1), unflinching

Feats Crane Style, Diehard, Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stalwart, Toughness

Skills as above

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus warhorse "Spilled Blood", goblin valet "Chikkascratch", chest containing 3,000 sp

TERAIM ARASTEN

As tough as the rock of the mountains that spawned him, Teraim the One-Eyed is a brutal, unstoppable killer for hire...

A drunken savage, Teraim has been variously employed as muscle, for the purposes of extortion, or as an executioner. No job for Teraim is too big or small if the price is right. He has no qualms about killing anyone or anything – as the notches on his wicked morningstar, Widowmaker, attest.

Background: Some cultures believe that children cannot be born evil. Teraim Arasten surely disproves that rule. Banished by his clan at the age of 11 for the brutal and drawn-out murder of another young dwarf, Teraim became almost feral. He lived in the wild for several years and it was during this time that he lost his eye in a fight with a wolf, which almost cost him his life.

One day Teraim, barefoot and wearing little more than rags and a crude wolf-skin cloak, staggered into a village, half-starved and desperate. The blacksmith there – a kindly man named Dunstan – took pity on the emaciated young dwarf and foolishly welcomed him into his home.

For three years, Dunstan cared for Teraim and schooled him in the ways of metalwork whilst attempting to civilise the brute. It was, ultimately, to no avail. Teraim, by now a burly youth with a strength forged by the smithy, bludgeoned his benefactor to death one night in a haze of alcohol-fuelled violence leaving a grieving widow and an orphaned son in his wake. Teraim even made off with much of Dunstan's wealth and a suit of armour (which the dwarf wears to this day), consigning the smith's family to a life of poverty.

Since then Teraim has been the instrument of pain and death for many unscrupulous merchants or noblemen.

He can most often be found boozed-up on dwarf spirits in a tavern, awaiting his next purse. His signature item is his morningstar – Widowmaker – which he looted from the tomb of a long-dead priest during service with one of several mercenary companies all of which ultimately tired of the brutal and savage warrior.

Personality: Teraim is almost entirely devoid of emotion. He is oblivious to the cries of his victims and sees only his personal gain in their suffering or death.

The pursuit of wealth to furnish his need for splendid lodgings, the services of whores (whom he treats appallingly), and a near-endless supply of ale drives him to commit ever-worsening acts of appalling violence and cruelty.

His greatest motivation, however, remains his sole weakness. Teraim is an alcoholic who very often completes his tasks while deep under the influence of strong spirits. He now fights virtually from memory. He is slower than he should be and carrying more weight than is good for him, as a result of his excessive consumption of all kinds of alcohol.

Mannerisms: Teraim is unable to read or write, despite the best efforts of the elders in Dunstan's village. His illiteracy is a source of great embarrassment to the dwarf and one of the many things that can spark an explosive outbreak of violence.

Needless to say, Teraim is quick to anger and not one for conversation. He ordinarily shuns company and simply lets Widowmaker do the talking. When drunker than usual, he can sometimes be found slurring the words to an old folk song that Dunstan's wife sung to him to soothe his nightmares.

Distinguishing Features: The intimidating warrior wears a leather patch over his right eye and pays handsomely for his beard to be trimmed and braided in the style of his kin – something which stands out compared to his generally unkempt appearance.

Whether wearing armour or not, Teraim never lets Widowmaker leave his side.

TERAIM ARASTEN

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male dwarf fighter 8

LE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8 (+10 vs. unusual stonework), Sense Motive +2

Speed 20 ft.

ACP -6; **Acrobatics** -5 (-9 jumping), **Climb** +2, **Swim** +2

AC 24, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 23; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. bull rush and trip); +4 **dodge** vs. giant subtype foes

(+1 **Dex**, +9 **armour** [+1 *half-plate*], +4 **shield** [+1 *heavy steel*]); **Shield Focus**

Fort +10 (+12 vs. poison), **Ref** +6, **Will** +7 (+9 vs. fear); +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

hp 88 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +11 (+13 bull rush)

Melee +1 *morningstar* +14/+9 (1d8+7)

Ranged mwk throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +10 (1d6+3)

Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack (-3 attack, +6 damage), Vital Strike, +1 vs. goblinoids and orcs

Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 6

SQ **armour training** (1), **bravery** (+2), **stonecunning**, **weapon familiarity**, **weapon training** (flails +1)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (Morningstar), Weapon Specialisation

Skills as above plus **Appraise** +0 (+2 vs. metal or gems), **Knowledge** (dungeoneering) +6, **Knowledge** (engineering) +6

Languages Common, Dwarven

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, 20 gp

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Teraim is likely encountered in the dark corner of a tavern, well-oiled with liquor.

Often in a foul mood, it is not long before he begins to pick on one of the other patrons in the taproom or begins to make lewd and graphic suggestions to a terrified serving wench. If the PCs intervene, a brawl immediately ensues and although Teraim does not use lethal force, he takes great delight in beating anyone in his way. Rescuing the target of Teraim's attention gains the PCs a friend who could prove a useful future contact able to provide local news or other small resources (such as a place to lie low, news and rumours and so on).

Subsequent encounters with the dwarf escalate as Teraim either reminds the PCs of the beating he meted out to them or tries to reassert his dominance over his new best enemies.

Alternatively, the PCs may be hired to hunt down Teraim and bring him to justice by the orphaned son of Dunstan the smith. Now grown to manhood, the young man thirsts for revenge against the dwarf responsible for destroying his young life and breaking his (now dead) mother's heart. Ironically, his father's death warped and twisted the young man's outlook on life. Now bitter and consumed by revenge, he is little better than Teraim (although he attempts to hide this from the PCs).

Finally, one of the PCs' enemies could hire the dwarf. Along with a gang of hired thugs and hangers-on, Teraim hunts the PCs down and begins to frequent the tavern in which the PCs are staying. His presence in the taproom scares away many of the establishment's other customers. Late one night, he strikes, attempting to cut the PCs down in the taproom. If the battle goes badly, he grabs a terrified serving wench cowering under a table and threatens to kill her unless the PCs let him go. If he escapes, anger over his humiliating defeat consumes him. Several weeks later – ragingly drunk and with a much larger gang of hired thugs – he attacks again. This time, he fights to the death.

ENCOUNTERS

Chance encounters with Teraim probably occur in a dive or other back-alley drinking establishment. He is no-doubt half drunk when the PCs arrive and in a bad mood.

The PCs could encounter Teraim (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Teraim Arasten and two Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

EL 9 (XP 6,400): Teraim Arasten and Grash the Destroyer (CR 7, page 6).

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Teraim Arasten, two Brawlers (CR 5 each, page 10) and four Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

EL 11 (12,800): Teraim Arasten, Grash the Destroyer (CR 7, page 6) and four Brawlers (CR 5 each, page 10).

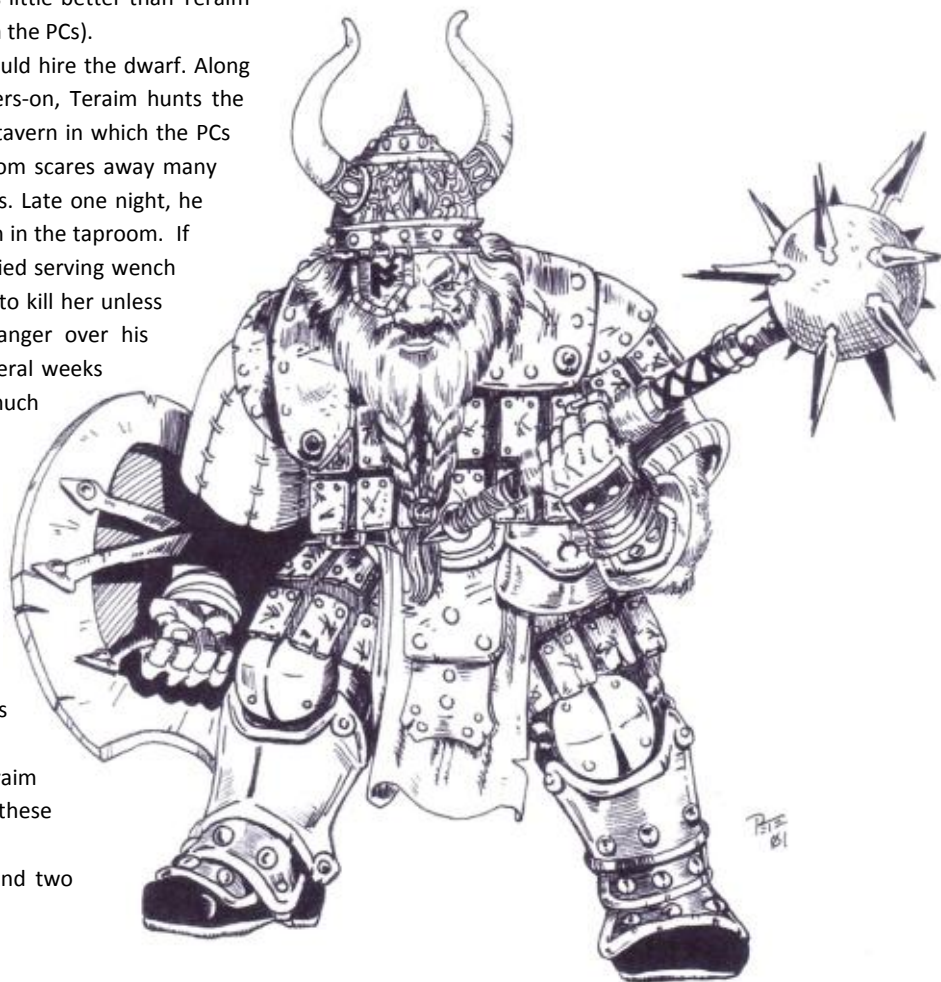
LORE

Characters can learn more about Teraim Arasten with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 17: This is Teraim Arasten, a famed dwarven warrior and notorious drunk known for his sudden, terrible anger.

DC 22: Teraim is wanted for several murders, including that of the man who adopted him after he was cast out of his dwarven home. His favoured weapon – Widowmaker – is a vicious spiked morningstar. He is never without it.

DC 27: Teraim wears a patch over his right eye. He lost the eye beneath in a vicious wolf attack when he was younger.



GAHLGAX ATARRITH

A being almost as powerful as its master, Gahlgax is a nightmarish foe for even legendary heroes.

An elder being of almost unimaginable power and depravity, Gahlgax had lived for millennia uncounted. One of the most powerful Abyssal balor lords, Orcus himself blessed him with undeath a score of centuries ago.

Only the greatest hero has any chance of even reaching Gahlgax's lair, Calaunsur, a benighted place of shadow, fire and death set deep within the Abyss. Even if he should reach Calaunsur, the hero must then fight his way through legions of lesser undead, vampire guards and powerful skeletal spellcasters as well as countless guardian demons before finally reaching Gahlgax's inner sanctum. Here he sits upon The Moaning Throne, a huge edifice of fused skulls crafted from the remains of his greatest enemies and rivals. Using powerful and unique magics unknown to mortals, he has bound the souls of the slain to their skulls, dooming them to an eternity of suffering and madness. The moans of the imprisoned souls emanate from the

throne, acting as a constant reminder to all those nearby of the folly of challenging Gahlgax.

A faithful servant of his lord and master (well as faithful as any demon can be) Gahlgax is served in turn by a triumvirate of graveknight mariliths that lead his armies and protect his person from the rare threat that manages to breach his terrible fortress of fused bone and flaming shadow.

Deeply steeped in the bloody lore of the Abyss, Gahlgax's knowledge on a number of blasphemous and otherworldly subjects rivals that of any mortal sage. Having acted in the mortal world for years almost without number, he is also surprisingly knowledgeable in the ways of men and their allies.

Feared even by other balor and the most powerful of liches, Gahlgax's word is law in his realm; no other dares rise to challenge the vampiric balor.

Background: Gahlgax's climb to become Orcus' most trusted servant has been slow, but inexorable. He has slain countless other demons in his quest for power and slain legions of mortals who have dared to penetrate the benighted realms of the Abyss.



It was Gahlgax who was responsible for the disappearance of Enkidu Shuruppak, the so-called Purple Archmage, after the foolish and colossally arrogant wizard sought to summon and control a balor and it was also Gahlgax who single-handedly destroyed the Temple-Fortress of Barir-Kar after the priests and paladins of that place came dangerously close to discovering certain secrets relating to the *Wand of Orcus*. Countless other heroes have fallen before his blade or been destroyed by his deceptions or sorcerous magics. Such is his depraved infamy that he appears in the holy scripts of many good-aligned faiths with epithets such as the Light Banisher, Destroyer of Hope or simply The Corruptor.

Orcus personally gifted him with vampirism after Gahlgax slew a rival balor that sought (foolishly) to supplant the Prince of the Undead. In truth, the now long-forgotten balor did nothing of the sort, Gahlgax manipulated and miss-reported his rival's actions so that it appeared he sought to steal Orcus' famed wand. Slaying the balor, he then (humbly) presented his evidence to Orcus. Orcus, in rare good mood after torturing and dismembering a particularly obnoxious and strident paladin-hero, drank deeply of Gahlgax's blood to create the unholy abomination that now serves him.

Since that day, Gahlgax has seemingly worked tirelessly for his master.

Personality: Utterly without remorse, empathy, mercy or any other redeeming trait, Gahlgax is as close to an utterly evil being as a mortal can ever "hope" to meet. Although as devoted as any demon could be to its master, Gahlgax is slowly beginning to realise that his power may one day rival his master's. Steeped in the lore of the Abyss and rich in a demon's innate cunning, Gahlgax knows that this day is a long way off, but what matters the passage of millennia to an immortal being?

He has no compunction handing out the most brutal, depraved tortures imaginable to any that displease him.

In truth, Gahlgax greatly enjoys his new status as a vampire; he finds the variety of abilities useful and particularly enjoys dominating his foes (or torture playthings). He particularly enjoys humiliating those in clutches – particularly powerful good-aligned prisoners – making them carry out a vast range of depraved, humiliating tasks before driving them mad.

Distinguishing Features: Huge and wreathed in flame and shadow, Gahlgax is instantly recognisable as a being of immense power. However, those that look closely at him may recognise his undead nature – his fangs are unnaturally long for a demon's and although a creature of darkness himself, he casts no shadow.

TACTICS

Gahlgax is a cunning tactician and warrior. He prefers to fight from a distance, using his multitude of spell-like abilities to confound and terrorise his enemies. He particularly enjoys using his dominate ability to force his enemies to fight among themselves. When only one opponent remains, he strikes mercilessly cutting him down with his terrible longsword.

If given warning of a serious assault upon his person, he briefly wields each Sword of Orcus' *brilliant energy adamantite longsword* giving it the *vorpal* ability for the upcoming battle.

HOOKS

Only the most powerful heroes can hope to survive meddling in Gahlgax's schemes. Many of the plots Gahlgax spins are at the behest of his undying master, but others are fashioned to increase his own powers.

The PCs may come to Gahlgax's attention if they destroy a balor or other powerful demon or undead servant of Orcus. Gahlgax is not one to let a potential threat grow unchecked and so he despatches increasingly large and powerful bands of demons and undead to deal with the upstart mortals.

Alternatively, he may require the souls of one or more powerful good-aligned clerics for some horrific ritual designed to increase his personal power. The PCs could get involved when they are asked to investigate the sudden and mysterious disappearance of several such individuals, or one of their own number could be targeted by Gahlgax's minions.

Finally, it is entirely possible that Gahlgax may use the PCs in some fiendishly complicated scheme; good-aligned mortal are notorious meddlers and he may use them to stymie the plots of one of his rivals (or even his master). He may even subtly guide them to eliminate one of the Swords of Orcus if he believes the marilith is planning to strike against him.

LORE

Characters can learn more about Gahlgax with a successful Knowledge (planes) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 38: This is Gahlgax Atarrith, balor lord and personal servant of the demon prince Orcus. Gahlgax is a power almost without equal in the multiverse; even demi-gods fear his wrath and brutal attention. He is often served and guarded by powerful mariliths.

DC 43: Gahlgax has been blessed by his patron with the powers of undeath and has all the standard undead immunities in addition to those enjoyed by normal demons.

DC 48: Gahlgax is a vampire and has their standard immunities, powers and vulnerabilities.

GAHLGAX ATARRITH, BALOR LORD

CR 23 (XP 819,200)

This large fiendish creature has thick, strong wings and wields a flaming longsword and whip.

Vampire balor fighter 1

CE Large undead (augmented)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *true seeing*; Perception +42, Sense Motive +42

Speed 40 ft., base speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good), *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), spider climb; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +30 (+34 jumping), Fly +35, Stealth +37

Gaseous Form (Su) Gahlgax can assume *gaseous form* (AC 24, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Gahlgax climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

AC 48, touch 24, flat-footed 37; **CMD** 64; unholy aura (+4 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +22 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +2], -1 size)

Unholy Aura (Su) If a good creature hits Gahlgax with a melee attack it takes 1d6 Strength damage (DC 33 Fortitude negates).

Immune electricity, fire, poison, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +33, **Ref** +22 (evasion), **Will** +27 (+31 vs. channelling); **SR** 31

hp 436 (21 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** cold iron and good/15 or magic and silver 10; death throes, *gaseous form*

Death Throes (Su) When killed, Gahlgax explodes in a blinding flash of fire that deals 50 fire and 50 unholy damage to anything within 100 ft. (DC 38 Reflex halves).

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Gahlgax assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Gahlgax must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Gahlgax is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 10 ft. (flaming body); **Base Atk** +21; **CMB** +39

Flaming Body (Su) Dancing flames cover Gahlgax's body. Anyone striking him with a natural weapon or unarmed strike takes 1d6 fire damage. A creature that grapples Gahlgax or is grappled takes 6d6 fire damage each round it is grappled.

Melee +1 *vorpal unholy longsword* (reach 10 ft.) +37/+32/+27/+22 (2d6+18/17-20)

Melee +1 *vorpal flaming whip* (reach 20 ft.) +36/+31/+26 (1d4+9 plus 1d6 fire and entangle) or

Melee 2 slams (reach 10 ft.) +32 (1d10+17 plus energy drain [2 levels])

Atk Options Blinding Critical (DC 31), Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Power Attack (-6/+12), blood drain, create spawn, energy drain, entangle

Blood Drain (Su) Gahlgax can suck blood from a grappled

opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Gahlgax heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Gahlgax can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Gahlgax's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 35 Fortitude restores). Gahlgax can use this ability once per round.

Entangle (Ex) If Gahlgax strikes a Medium or smaller foe with his whip, he can immediately attempt a grapple check without provoking attacks of opportunity. If he succeeds, he draws the foe into an adjacent square. The foe gains the grappled condition, but Gahlgax does not.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, dominate

Change Shape (Su) Gahlgax can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Gahlgax can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Gahlgax can crush a humanoid's will (DC 35 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 21th; concentration +33)

Constant—*true seeing*, *unholy aura* (DC 33)

At will—*deeper darkness*, *dominate monster* (DC 34), *greater dispel magic*, *greater invisibility*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *inflict critical wounds* (DC 26), *mage armour*, *mirror image*, *power word stun*, *protection from energy*, *resist energy*, *shield*, *telekinesis* (DC 30)

3/day—*forcecage*, *interposing hand*, *mind blank*, quickened *telekinesis* (DC 30)

1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 32), *fire storm* (DC 33), *implosion* (DC 34), *summon* (level 9, any 1 CR 19 or lower demon 100%)

Abilities Str 45, Dex 31, Con —, Int 26, Wis 28, Cha 35

SQ master of magic, shadowless, vorpal strike, whip mastery

Vorpal Strike (Su) Any slashing weapon Gahlgax wields gains the vorpal quality. Weapons retain this quality for one hour after he releases the weapon.

Whip Mastery (Ex) Gahlgax treats a whip as a light weapon for the purposes of two-weapon fighting and inflicts lethal damage on a foe regardless of its armour.

Feats Alertness^B, Blinding Critical, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge^B, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (longsword)^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*telekinesis*), Toughness^B, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Bluff +39, Diplomacy +31, Disguise +32, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Knowledge (history) +28, Knowledge (nobility) +28, Knowledge (planes) +31, Knowledge (religion) +28, Use Magic Device +31

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, telepathy 100 ft.

Gear as above *headband of alluring charisma* +6, *luckblade* (0 wishes), *ring of evasion*

WORDS OF ORCUS

Three Swords of Orcus serve as Gahlgax's personal bodyguard, messengers and executioners. Each secretly dreams of supplanting Gahlgax in Orcus' council, but know that they are not yet powerful enough to openly face him.

A Sword of Orcus moves quickly into melee so that she might

SWORD OF ORCUS

CR 21 (XP 409,600)

This snake-bodied fiend has a six-armed woman's torso, pointed ears and glittering, otherworldly eyes.

Graveknight marilith antipaladin 2

CE Large undead (augmented)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +34, Sense Motive +26

Speed 50 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +30 (+34 jumping), Fly +20, Ride +30, Stealth +21

AC 52, touch 18, flat-footed 47; **CMD** 52 (54 vs. disarm, can't be tripped); unholy aura; **Miss Chance** 20%

(+11 armour [+5 *mithral breastplate*], +4 deflection, +5 Dex, +19 natural [*amulet of natural armour +2*], +2 shield [*ring of force shield*], -1 size)

Unholy Aura (Sp) If a good creature succeeds on a melee attack against the marilith, the attacker suffers 1d6 Strength damage (DC 25 Fortitude negates)

Immune cold, electricity, fire, poison, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** acid 10

Fort +41, **Ref** +33, **Will** +32 (+36 vs. channelling); **SR** 32

hp 437 (20 HD); **DR** cold iron and good/10 or magic/10

Space 10 ft. (sacrilegious aura [30 ft.], unholy aura); **Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +32 (+34 disarm, +36 grapple)

Sacrilegious Aura (Su) This aura functions as a *desecrate* spell and the Sword of Orcus' armour acts as an altar. Any creature that attempts to summon positive energy must make a concentration check DC 31. If the check fails the effect is expended but does not function.

Melee +1 *brilliant energy adamantine longsword* (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+10]; cold iron, chaotic, evil) +32/+27/+22/+17 (2d6+14/17-20 plus 4d6 fire), 5 +1 *longswords* (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+10]; cold iron, chaotic, evil) +32 (2d6+14/17-20 plus 4d6 fire) and tail slap (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+5]) +27 (2d6+7 plus grab) or

Melee 6 slams +30 (1d6+11) and tail slap (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+5]) +25 (2d6+7 plus grab)

Atk Options Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical (DC 28), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Disarm, channel destruction, constrict (crushing coils), grab, infuse weapon, multiweapon mastery, smite good (+11 attack, +2 damage, +11 AC)

Constrict with Crushing Coils (Ex [standard]) The Sword of Orcus deals 2d6+18 bludgeoning damage with a successful

slice her enemies to pieces with her longswords. She focuses all her attacks on a single opponent, cutting them down before moving onto her next target. When facing enemies, the Sword of Orcus uses its *hat of disguise* to appear alive and not undead; in this way it hopes to avoid the attentions of enemy clerics or paladins.

grapple check. A creature suffering damage must make a DC 31 Fortitude save or lose consciousness for 1d8 rounds.

Grab (Ex [free]) If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its tail, the Sword of Orcus can try to grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Infuse Weapon (Ex [free]) Any weapon a Sword of Orcus wields gains a +1 enhancement bonus to attack and damage and strikes as if it were a chaotic and evil cold iron weapon (in addition to retaining the qualities of its actual composition).

Multiweapon Mastery (Ex [free]) A Sword of Orcus never takes penalties to her attack roll when fighting with multiple weapons.

Special Actions devastating blast, phantom steed, touch of corruption (12/day; 1d6) undead mastery

Devastating Blast (Su [standard; 3/day]) The Sword of Orcus unleashes a 30 ft. cone of fire; 10d6 fire; DC 31 Reflex halves.

Phantom Steed (Su [standard; 1/hour]) A Sword of Orcus can summon a skeletal horse similar to a phantom steed, but with these modified statistics (AC 18, hp 23, speed 100 ft., fly 100 ft, Fly +16).

Undead Mastery (Su [standard; at will]) The Sword of Orcus can bend any undead creatures within 50 ft. to its will. Each undead must make a DC 31 Will save or fall under the its control. This control is permanent for unintelligent undead, but an intelligent undead can make a new save each day to throw off the control. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by the same graveknight's undead mastery for 24 hours. A graveknight can control 90 HD of undead.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +29)

At will—*detect evil*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *project image* (DC 27), *telekinesis* (DC 26)

3/day—*blade barrier* (DC 27), *fly*

1/day—*summon* (level 5; 1 marilith 20%, 1 nalfeshnee 33% or 1d4 hezrous 60%)

Abilities Str 33, Dex 23, Con —, Int 20, Wis 24, Cha 33

SQ evil aura (overwhelming), rejuvenation, ruinous revivification (fire), unholy resilience

Feats Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative^B, Mounted Combat^B, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack^B, Toughness^B, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Bluff +30, Diplomacy +30, Disguise +28 (+38 with *hat of disguise*), Intimidate +38, Knowledge (engineering) +21, Use Magic Device +30

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

Gear *hat of disguise*, *boots of striding and springing*, *minor cloak of displacement*

VILRAN AZANAE

Tempted into undeath by fear of his own mortality, Vilran Azanae is now the consummate, careful predator ruling a vast, rambling estate from his crumbling ancestral seat.

Background: Vilran Azanae was a man of rare intelligence whose thirst for knowledge and power led him down a very dark road. In life, he was a foul man, born into the luxurious life of the

VILRAN AZANAE CR 15 (XP 51,200)

Male elf vampire wizard (necromancer) 14

NE Medium undead (augmented)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect scrying*, life sight, low-light vision; Perception +28, Sense Motive +21

Life Sight (Su) Vilran gains blindsight (20 ft. range) for 14 rounds a day. These rounds do not have to be consecutive.

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect; Fly +23]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) Vilran can assume *gaseous form* (AC 17, CL 5th) at will and remain gaseous indefinitely.

ACP 0; Fly +15, Stealth +23

AC 28, touch 18, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 27; **Dodge** (+5 Dex, +4 armour [extended *mage armour*], +2 deflection [*ring of protection* +2], +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +10, **Ref** +14, **Will** +15 (Improved Iron Will; channel resistance +4)

hp 121 (136 with extended *false life*) (14 HD); *gaseous form*; fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Vilran assumes *gaseous form* and flees. He must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Vilran is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9

Melee slam +9/+4 (1d4+2 plus energy drain) or

Melee Touch grave touch +9 (shaken [7 rounds])

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, blood drain, create spawn, energy drain, grave touch (9/day)

Blood Drain (Su) Vilran can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Vilran heals 5 hp or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Vilran can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Vilran's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 22 Fortitude restores). Vilran can use

second son of a wealthy nobleman. Spared the burden and responsibilities of a first-born he was a selfish, spoiled (and ignored) brat. His only saving grace was his superior intellect but this led him to seek advancement through the dark arts. He proved an adept student and within a few years had outgrown the best magicians his father's money could buy. It was then he began to gather all manner of arcane artefacts and tomes. This

this ability once per round.

Special Actions Command Undead (9/day; DC 20), change shape, children of the night, dominate

Change Shape (Su) Vilran can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Vilran can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Vilran can crush a humanoid's will (DC 22 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 14th; concentration +20 [+24 casting defensively or grappled]; spell penetration +16; arcane bond [ring])

7th—*finger of death* (DC 25), *spell turning*, *waves of exhaustion*

6th—*circle of death* (2; DC 24), *eyebite* (DC 24), *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*

5th—extended *stoneskin*, heightened *bestow curse* (DC 23), *feblemind* (DC 21), *magic jar* (DC 23), *teleport*

4th—*black tentacles*, ~~*detect scrying*~~, *dimension door*, *enervation* (2), heightened *blindness/deafness* (DC 22)

3rd—*displacement*, ~~*extended false life*~~, *protection from energy* (2), *vampiric touch* (2)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 20), *eagle's splendour* (2), ~~*extended mage armour*~~, *ghoul touch* (DC 20), *see invisibility*, *web* (DC 18)

1st—*expeditious retreat* (2), *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*, *shield* (2), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 19)

0—*bleed* (DC 18), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *necklace of fireballs (IV)*, *pearl of power (2nd, 3rd)*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 20, Con —, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ shadowless, weapon familiarity

Feats Ability Focus (dominate, energy drain), Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes^B, Command Undead^B, Dodge^B, Extend Spell^B, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Heighten Spell^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness^B

Skills as above plus Bluff +18, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (nobility) +16, Knowledge (planes) +16, Knowledge (religion) +16, Spellcraft +23 (+25 identify magic items)

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarf, Elven, Giant, Infernal

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +3, spell component pouch

Spellbook (evocation, illusion) as above plus as GM determined

passion drove him to create, what is today, one of the greatest collections of such items anywhere in the known world.

He persuaded his father to build him a tower on the fringes of the family's estate – from where he could study in peace. Vilran's father died soon after the structure was completed but almost as soon as Vilran's brother Buca succeeded the old man, a terrible sickness struck him down. The fickle and self-obsessed Vilran watched in horror as his sibling aged and wasted away within six months – leaving the ill-prepared younger brother as the family's heir. Vilran had no interest in his title (or its responsibilities) but his brother's death profoundly affected him. Despite being in his late thirties, he became obsessed with death. After two years of searching, during which his estate fell into disrepair, Vilran found what he had been searching for – a way to extend his life beyond a mortal's span – when he discovered a vampire laired in a nearby town.

Vilran tracked down the creature and struck a deal – allowing himself to be turned into a vampire. Within minutes of the deed, Vilran's henchmen slew the creature, freeing him from his sire's control. Revelling in his transformation Vilran well understood the importance of hiding his true nature. After feeding on and killing his companions he returned to his estate and one by one charmed his remaining servants until the entire household (some 35 souls) was in his thrall.

Other nobles now shun the Azanae estate and ordinary folk whisper of the regular disappearances of young women from nearby communities. He carefully disposes of his victims – almost 200 to date – with the bizarre exception of Andriel Rosta, a buxom and feisty farmer's daughter. Andriel now sits at Vilran's right hand – his vampire maiden, lover and accomplice. Secure in his own immortality, Vilran now seeks to further enhance his magical powers. He and Andriel lair in the converted cellar of his tower, while the Azanae mansion continues to deteriorate despite the efforts of their servants. Vilran's minions include his vampire consort, ten veteran bodyguards (who are also responsible for sourcing the majority of Vilran's victims) and the ageing Tomgam Shuttler – once his father's factor and a skilled spy. Shuttler is Vilran's eyes and ears and his most trusted confidant.

Personality: Unlike many vampires, the supremely-intelligent Vilran has spent little time learning the full extent of his powers, instead choosing to study and grow in power as a magic-user. A self-obsessed individual, he can be charming when needs be and views his thirst for blood as a necessity rather than something to be revelled in. His kills are carried out with precision and discretion.

Mannerisms: Vilran has the rather rude habit of never looking at the person with whom he is talking – his mind engaged on unravelling complex magical theories. He is also obsessed with cleanliness and, as such, is constantly preening himself.

Distinguishing Features: In life, Vilran was a strikingly handsome, if somewhat effeminate, man. In appearance, he appears as an adult elven male, albeit with unnaturally pale skin. He is extremely vain and, because he is no longer able to make use of mirrors, is attended daily by a manservant who ensures he is resplendent in regal robes.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

No matter how careful Vilran is, eventually the disappearance of scores of people from outlying communities attracts attention – particularly as his minions are now abducting victims from further afield. The PCs could be hired to investigate such disappearances by local authorities of a town or village close to Azanae's estate.

Alternatively, a party may be hired by a group of nobles concerned by the growing evil reputation of the Azanae estate and the strange, elusive wizard who now heads the family.



DARICK BODEN

A cunning confidence trickster who targets those who would consider him a friend and ally.

Background: Darick was born dirt poor to parents who did not want him. Only his older sister, Demezne, loved him, often going without food so that he could eat. She nursed him through illnesses and protected him from local bullies. The Bodens survived on Darick's father's meagre income brought home from warehouse jobs – when he was sober enough to work. From the age of five Darick fell into a life of begging and petty thievery. When he was 13, fate dealt Darick a terrible blow. Demezne was struck down with the wailing sickness – a fever which sapped her strength and left her gaunt and barely coherent. Within a week she was near death and so Darick sought a local healer named Fanzi the Blue. The old man – an accomplished apothecary – took pity on the pair. He took them in and, initially, his potions and poultices seemed to work. For a few days Demezne rallied, but one morning Darick awoke to find his sister's heart had given out during the night. Darick was so distraught that in a fit of rage he slew the old mage before ransacking the old man's property – stealing money and other valuables along with his prized spellbook. Having buried his sister in a pauper's grave, Darick sought a wizard to school him in the rudiments of the magic arts. Now he uses his arcane skills to supplement his thievery.

Personality: Now 21, Darick comes across as a shy, rather awkward individual. His apparent vulnerability draws females to him like moths to a flame; many feel the need to “mother” him. Darick can be charming but his default demeanour is that of a ruthless mercenary obsessed with himself. Darick's one flaw is his craving for female company and thus he has joined several adventuring bands. In the end, however, he leaves his companions in the lurch – often



light of coin and missing their most treasured possessions.

Mannerisms: Darick is reluctant to make eye contact and avoids physical contact. He speaks at a barely audible whisper and often hums mournful ditties he learned from his sister. He never smiles or laughs.

Distinguishing Features: Strikingly handsome, Darick draws admiring glances from all quarters. He has a tattoo of a fish on his left hand – the same one his sister sported. Darick also wears a locket, containing a lock of his sister's hair.

Hooks: Darick attempts to inveigle his way into the PCs' trust. Once accepted, he performs adequately as a thief and never reveals his arcane prowess. At a point most advantageous to him, he vanishes – leaving broken hearts and empty purses.

DARICK BODEN

CR 2 (XP 600)

Male human rogue 2/sorcerer (destined) 1
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +6 (+7 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +1

Speed 35 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +7, Climb +6, Escape Artist +7, Stealth +7 (fast stealth)

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 14
(+2 Dex, +3 armour [mwk studded leather])

Fort +2, **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +1
hp 24 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee mwk rapier +4 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged mwk shortbow (range 60 ft.) +4 (1d6/x3)

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Special Actions touch of destiny (4/day)

Touch of Destiny (Sp) At 1st level, Darick can touch a creature as a standard action, giving it a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 1st; concentration +2; bloodline arcana)

1st (4/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *shield*

0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilise*

Bloodline Arcana Whenever Darick casts a spell with a range of “personal,” he gains a luck bonus equal to the spell's level on all saving throws for 1 round.

Combat Gear arrows (16), *potion of invisibility*, *potion of cure light wounds*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13

SQ rogue talent (fast stealth), trapfinding (+1)

Feats Alertness^B, Fleet, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Appraise +6, Bluff +6, Disable Device +10, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +6

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus backpack, 50 ft. rope with grappling hook, oil (2), masterwork thieves' tools

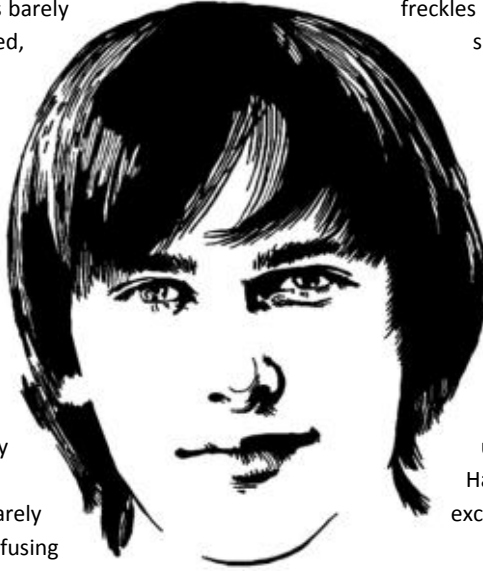
CHALICE BYANFEL

Chalice Byanfel, an accursed halfling antipaladin, lingers in unsuspecting villages, infecting locals with horrific wasting diseases, providing leverage for her glabrezu ally Halestamul.

Background: Chalice's parent sold her into slavery for a meagre handful of silver coins when she was barely four years old. A wretched decade followed, growing up as chattel beneath the city's uncaring streets. Chalice freed herself by releasing the glabrezu Halestamul from the laboratory of a paedophile wizard, and gaining the demon's favour. Since then, Halestamul and Chalice have worked as allies to manipulate souls for the Abyss.

Personality: Outwardly, when Chalice is in disguise, she appears a bubbly human child who makes friends easily and is kind to others. The real Chalice is a hardened cynic, confident beyond care and completely immoral.

Mannerisms: Girl-Chalice appears to be barely six winters old, and fumbles her language, confusing word suffixes such as -ed, -er and -ing. The halfling-



Chalice walks with an undisputedly womanly swagger, like a hunting tigress.

Distinguishing Features: When Chalice is in disguise, she wears her hair as a tight ponytail and applies faux freckles across the bridge of her nose. Otherwise she wears her sandy hair wild.

Tactics: Chalice uses her Childlike feat and Disguise skill to imitate a human child when in a community, infecting as many people as possible with slimy doom or demon fever. During the incubation period she hunts down and murders any healers or priests she can find within the town.

When the desperate plague-ridden townsfolk cry out for aid, she uses her *candle of invocation* to call forth Halestamul to bargain for souls in exchange for curing their loved ones.

CHALICE BYANFEL

CR 3 (XP 800)

This tiny blonde-haired girl gives you a shy wave from a group of youngsters playing in the street.

Female halfling antipaladin 4

CE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 20 ft.; Stealth +7

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 16

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +3 Dex, +1 size)

Immune disease

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8 (+10 vs. fear)

hp 30 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Chalice radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee mwk halfling staff sling +6 (1d6/x3)

Ranged mwk halfling staff sling (range 80 ft.; Deadly Aim [-2 attack/+4], warslinger) +9 (1d6/x3)

Warslinger (Ex) Chalice can reload a sling as a free action. Reloading a sling still requires two hands and provokes attacks of opportunity. This racial trait replaces the sure-footed racial trait.

Atk Options smite good (2/day; +4 attack; +4 damage; +4 deflection to AC)

Special Actions channel negative energy (30 ft. radius; 2d6 damage; DC 16 Will halaves), touch of corruption (6/day; +5

melee touch; 2d6+2 damage; sickened cruelty; DC 16 Fortitude halves)

Plague Bringer (Ex) Chalice does not take any damage or take any penalty from diseases. She can still contract diseases and spread them to others, but she is otherwise immune to their effects. Chalice is currently infected with slimy doom (contact, Fort DC 14, Onset 1 day; Frequency 1/day, 1d4 Con damage, target must make a second Fort save or 1 point of the damage is drain instead; Cure 2 consecutive saves) and demon fever (injury; Fort DC 18, Onset 1 day; Frequency 1/day, Effect 1d6 Con damage, target must make a second Fort save or 1 point of the damage is drain instead; Cure 2 consecutive saves)

Spell-like abilities (CL 4th; concentration +8)

At will—*detect good*

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +5)

1st—*cause fear* (DC 15)

Combat Gear potion of *cure light wounds*, potion of *mage armour* (3), potion of *eagle's splendour*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 18

SQ aura of evil (moderate), cruelty (sickened), fearless, halfling luck, keen senses, unholy resilience, weapon familiarity (halfling)

Feats Childlike, Deadly Aim

Skills as above plus Bluff +11 (take 10 to appear innocent), Disguise +13 (+15 as human child; ignore race/age penalties)

Languages Common, Halfling

Gear as above plus *candle of invocation* (CE), disguise kit

ESELD CASS

Fiercely proud, slightly deranged and obsessed with the destruction of her tribe's enemies, Eseld Cass is a very dangerous woman.

Eseld Cass is the self-styled war leader of the Thunder Sky tribe – a small, proud and fiercely independent group of barbarians living in the shadow of a great mountain. Never before has the tribe been led by someone who was not high-born, let alone a woman.

Eseld firmly believes it is her destiny to lead her tribe to

ESELD CASS

CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Short, stocky and muscular this human woman wears her heavy plate armour with ease. Her long hair is ornately plaited and hangs down to her waist.

Female human barbarian 5/antipaladin 7

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft., base speed 40 ft.

ACP -6; **Acrobatics** -1 (-5 jumping), **Ride** +6

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 26; +1 vs. traps, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

(+10 armour [+1 full plate], +3 shield [+1 heavy steel])

Immune disease; **Weakness** smite evil

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Eseld deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +15, **Ref** +8 (+9 vs. traps), **Will** +11

hp 105 (12 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +15

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Eseld radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee +1 *shock warhammer* +17/+12 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 electricity/19-20 x3)

Melee Touch touch of corruption +15 (3d6 plus sickened for 7 rounds or staggered for 3 rounds [DC 16 negates condition])

Ranged light hammer (range 20 ft.) +14 (1d4+3)

Atk Options Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage), Sickening Critical, fiendish boon (weapon) 1/day, rage (14 rounds), smite good 3/day (+3 attack, +7 damage, +3 AC)

Fiendish Boon (Sp) Eseld can enhance her weapon for 7 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by +1 or by adding the *flaming*, *keen* or *vicious* weapon properties.

Special Actions touch of corruption 6/day (channel negative energy [3d6 damage; DC 16 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Eseld can also touch an undead creature to restore 3d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd—*bull's strength*

1st—*bane* (DC 12), *protection from good*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +15)

greatness. Together with the shaman Dzeko Tsam, she has begun the process of subverting her folk to the worship of Pazuzu. At present the tribe numbers less than 200 and, although only 70 of those are battle-tested males, Eseld has insisted that every able-bodied man, woman and child be trained to handle weapons in readiness for the final confrontation with their rivals the Blood Spears.

Increasingly ambitious, Eseld is currently considering attacking a nearby elven settlement with a view to seizing it as a new home for her folk.

At-Will—detect good

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds (2), potion of fly*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ aura of evil (strong), cruelty (sickened, staggered), fast movement, plague bringer, rage powers (powerful blow, strength surge), unholy resilience

Feats Improved Critical (warhammer), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sickening Critical, Skill Focus (Ride), Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Survival +5

Languages Common

Gear as above plus *belt of incredible dexterity +2, cloak of resistance +1*, 3 light hammers, spell component pouch, unholy symbol

When raging, Eseld has the following statistics:

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 28; +1 vs. traps, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

(-2 class, +10 armour [+1 full plate], +3 shield [+1 heavy steel])

Fort +17, **Will** +13

hp 129 (12 HD)

CMB +17

Melee +1 *shock warhammer* +19/+14 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 electricity/19-20 x3)

Melee Touch touch of corruption +17 (3d6 plus sickened for 7 rounds or staggered for 3 rounds [DC 16 negates condition])

Ranged light hammer (range 20 ft.) +14 (1d4+3)

Atk Options Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage), Sickening Critical, fiendish boon (weapon) 1/day, rage (14 rounds; powerful blow [+3 damage], strength surge [+5]), smite good 3/day (+3 attack, +7 damage, +3 AC)

Abilities Str 21, Con 18

If unprepared for battle, Eseld has the following statistics:

Speed 40 ft.

ACP -1; **Acrobatics** -4 (+8 jumping), **Ride** +11

AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 26; +1 vs. traps, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

(+3 shield [+1 heavy steel])

The death of her lover and her pact with Pazuzu has purged Eseld Cass of any goodness she once possessed. She now lives for battle and glory. When the tribe goes to war she is always in the vanguard, crunching a bloody swathe through her enemies with Skard's warhammer.

Background: An only child and the daughter of a blacksmith, Eseld was taught by her father to handle a hammer from an early age. One of the tribe's foremost warriors, he also schooled his daughter in the ways of battle – teaching her to fight dirty and without honour. Eseld eschewed female friends, instead seeking the company of the tribe's warriors and taking several of them as lovers.

Eseld's rise to power was sudden and dramatic. Her lover, the chieftain Skard, was cut down when warriors from the rival Blood Spear tribe raided the tribe's settlement one autumn night. Overcome with grief and rage, it was Eseld – wielding her dead lover's warhammer – who drove away the intruders. Skard's untimely death left a power vacuum and while the tribe's warriors quarrelled and bargained it was Eseld who seized for herself the position of ultimate power. She struck a bargain with the tribe's shaman – the loathsome and aged Dzeko Tsam. Eseld sacrificed part of her soul to the demon Pazuzu in order to receive Tsam's blessing. Even with the shaman's support, however, she still faced a battle for control. No less than three experienced warriors challenged her in single combat. She slew them all in a matter of minutes.

Personality: Eseld has an intense, unsettling stare. She may be small of stature but, like her father, she is powerfully-built and wields her weapons with great skill and force. Brusque and condescending to men, Eseld is somewhat ostracised by the women of the tribe who view her as an aberration. Thus, she is strangely subdued around females or the young.

Mannerisms: Since the death of Skard, Eseld Cass has become obsessed with leading her tribe to greatness and spends most of her waking hours planning, plotting and training. Her only affection is saved for an extremely fierce and loyal large wolf hound that once belonged to her lover.

Distinguishing Features: Her long plaits and ample curves are Eseld Cass's most

distinguishing features. She is extremely proud of her figure and even attempts to appear alluring when garbed for battle.

She talks unusually loudly and has a remarkably deep voice.

Signature Weapon: Skald's warhammer crackles with electrical energy providing illumination as a candle. The faint odour of ozone hangs in the air around the weapon. Graven with eldritch sigils venerating evil air spirits the weapon has a long, thin haft decorated with spirals of yet more symbols.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Eseld's unbridled ambition could easily bring her into conflict with a group of adventurers. Perhaps they stumble across a skirmish between Thunder Sky warriors and the Blood Spears. A surviving Blood Spear warrior could seek the party's help in ending the feud between the tribes. Or perhaps a refugee from either tribe, terrified by the Thunder Sky's corruption to the worship of Pazuzu, pleads with the PCs to end Eseld's reign.



ARAGAN DOLDAL

Obsessed with his personal vitality, Aragan eschews booze – living only for the glory battle brings.

Background: For generations, Aragan's family worked the silver mines below their mountainous home. Motherless, from a young age, he followed his father and elder siblings into the gloom to act as messenger and water boy until he stood beside his brothers and father at the mine face. The mine's foreman was the brutal, one-eyed Crannog the Unyielding. When Aragan fell ill he was unable to work for several days. Crannog took his frustrations out on the young dwarf's father, beating him to within an inch of his life. The incident changed Aragan's life. Rising from his sick bed, he staggered to the mine and confronted Crannog. Hung-over from the night before, the brute belittled Aragan's father and spat in the young dwarf's face. Aragan flew into a rage, picked up Crannog's own pickaxe and put an end to the foreman's tyranny. Aragan then returned home and cursed his brothers and father as drunken cowards. Gathering his coin and a few belongings he fled – as a mercenary in the Company of the Red Banner.

For several years now he has travelled in the pay of various nobles and merchants. Over time he has earned a reputation for recklessness in battle – breaking ranks with his comrades and charging at enemies, no matter how numerous. Aragan prides himself on keeping fit and his stamina and strength is awe-

inspiring. He rises early each day to go running, lift weights and practise with weapons. Aragan has now amassed enough wealth to buy a cottage with a parcel of land. He has also purchased a human whore named Jezzura who services his every whim and tends the place in his absence.

Personality: Aragan is gruff and arrogant after years of victories. Never once has he been bested in battle. He lives for the adrenaline rush of a fight and afterwards remembers only scant details. He is rude, condescending and treats women as servants. He never backs down, fighting to the death.

Mannerisms: If Aragan has a flaw it is his vanity. He paid a small fortune for a full-length mirror in front of which he admires his physique daily. He has also taken to lacquering and braiding his hair in the style of human nobles. No matter what the weather Aragan rises at dawn to train.

Distinguishing Features: You cannot fight like Aragan Doldal without getting hurt. It is a measure of the mad dwarf's courage that the vast majority of his scars are on his front – criss-crossing his chest and forearms. Remarkably, his face has remained unblemished and his incredible fortitude means he heals quickly.

Hooks: Adventurers are most likely to encounter Aragan fighting with a mercenary company or in the pay of some nefarious individual. Aragan is completely without scruples and works for anyone – if the price is right.

ARAGAN DOLDAL

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male dwarf fighter 2/barbarian 3

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10 (+12 vs. unusual stonework; stonecunning), Sense Motive +2

Speed 30 ft., base speed 20 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics -3 (-7 jumping), Climb +3

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 19 (+23 vs. bull rush or trip); Dodge, +4 vs. giant-type creatures, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+1 Dex, +6 armour [+1 *scale mail*], +1 Dodge, +3 shield [mwk heavy steel, Shield Focus])

Fort +9 (+11 vs. poison), **Ref** +2 (+3 vs. traps), **Will** +3 (+4 vs. fear); +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

hp 61 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8

Melee mwk longsword (Power Attack [-2/+4]) +10 (1d8+3/19-20)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Deadly Aim [-2/+4]) +7 (1d10/19-20)

Atk Options, +1 attack vs. orc- and goblin-type foes, rage (11 rounds)

Combat Gear bolts (10), *potion of bull's strength*, *oil of magic weapon*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ bravery (+1), fast movement, rage power (superstition), trap sense (+1), weapon familiarity (dwarven)

Feats Deadly Aim, Dodge, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Appraise +0 (+2 to value nonmagical metal and gemstones), Knowledge (engineering) +4, Knowledge (nature) +6, Survival +10

Languages Common, Dwarven

Gear as above plus backpack, sack, trail rations (2), waterskin, 10 gp

When raging, Aragan has the following modified statistics:

ACP -4; Climb +5

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 21 (+25 vs. bull rush or trip); +4 vs. giant-type creatures, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(-2 class, +1 Dex, +5 armour [mwk scale mail], +1 dodge, +3 shield [heavy steel, Shield Focus])

Fort +11 (+13 vs. poison), **Will** +5 (+6 vs. fear); +4 vs. spells and spell-like abilities, +2 vs. supernatural abilities

hp 71

CMB +10

Melee mwk longsword +12 (1d8+5/19-20)

Atk Options rage (11 rounds; superstition)

Abilities Str 20, Con 20



ARLIS THE ENDER

A warrior by nature, he has become the hand of death.

This burly warrior is a terror in battle because as well as being a skilled fighter he has learnt many of death's mysteries.

Background: Arlis was abandoned to his dark church as an infant; the reason his parents relinquished the child has been lost to history. While physically healthy, Arlis was



slower in mental development than other children, yet showed a tenacity of will from a young age in struggling again and again against challenges without complaint. Seeing promise in the young boy's strength and focus, the priests arranged for him to learn the ways of combat, intending the puissant young man to accompany the priests into areas hostile to their ethos.

Even as a young teen, Arlis made a dedicated protector, and showed great interest in the teachings of the priest's church.

He developed a devout dedication and absolute obedience to the scriptures, kneeling in prayer numerous times each day. Finally, as Arlis reached maturity, the dark deity accepted the boy's worship and saw fit to grant him clerical magic.

Now, Arlis serves the church, and his fellow priests, as the avenging hand of their god.

Personality: Arlis is driven, following the tenants of his god's scripture with devotion enough to drive most other followers away. He sees no room or reason for compromise on his god's teachings. He recognizes his limited intellect and seeks out more intelligent members of the clergy to guide his hand.

Mannerisms: Arlis quotes the dark scripture frequently, admonishing others for failing to live up to the dark god's demands. He often begins sentences with, "As the Dark Lord says..." or ends them with "...if the Dark Lord is willing".

For the priest of an evil deity, Arlis has a disconcertingly friendly and personable manner; he greets other priests and followers of the Dark Lord with a friendly smile, wave or occasionally, a hug.

Distinguishing Features: Arlis is a broad, powerfully-built man, with a wide brow and small dark eyes. To friends, he has a welcoming smile, but to his enemies, a constant glower. He's readily differential to more intelligent members of his faith, even if they're less devout.

Hooks: Arlis makes a poor leader, but is a supporter and protector without peer. Those that act against Arlis' church may well find that he's become dedicated to their destruction; similarly, he may be responsible for the death of any number of mentors or a PC's slain family members.

Tactics: Arlis is a much greater threat with the opportunity to prepare before a fight. However, he always casts *greater magic weapon* and *magic vestment* (twice, once each for his armour and shield) about two hours after waking.

If Arlis is expecting combat in the next hour, he casts *stoneskin*, *spell immunity* (against *enervation*, *flame strike* and *glitterdust*), *protection from energy*, *freedom of movement*, and *resist energy*.

When combat is about to begin (within 10 minutes), he casts *spell resistance*, *aid*, *bull's strength*, *bear's endurance*, *entropic shield* and *shield of faith*. Finally, immediately before combat he casts *divine power* and *righteous might* on himself and heightens *silence* (targeting himself).

In combat, Arlis closes quickly to melee any spellcasters (so that his *silence* spell cripples them). He then channels energy

each round, while using Improved Vital Strike to quickly eliminate opponents. He's also prepared a number of *cure* spells (among others) with Silent Spell, so that he can heal mid-fight if his channel energy is not enough. If the *silence* fails, or the combat is taking place at range, he uses his *wand of flame strike* to soften up targets and lure them into melee range.

Arlis & Undead: With the ability to both animate and command the undead, Arlis rarely lacks for allies. Whenever possible, Arlis casts *desecrate* before *animate dead*.

In combat, Arlis orders skeletons, zombies or other weak or mindless undead he controls to stay close by to aid his attacks or armour class (using the aid another action). If the undead are not mindless, he'll have them try to flank.

ARLIS

CR 13 (XP 25,600)

A mountain of a man, whose full plate and shield both bear the unholy symbol of a dark god, advances in eerie silence.

Male human cleric 12/fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +10, Sense Motive +10

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -6 (jumping -10)

AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 24

(+10 armour [+1 *full plate of light fortification*], +2 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +2], +3 shield [+1 *blinding heavy steel*])

Resist critical hits & sneak attacks (25%)

Fort +13, **Ref** +4, **Will** +12 (+13 vs. fear)

hp 109 (14 HD); death's embrace

Death's Embrace (Ex) Arlis heals damage from channelled negative energy, regardless of it targeting the living or the dead.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +14

Melee +1 *vicious heavy mace* (Power Attack [-3/+6]) +16/+11/+6 (1d8+2d6+4 plus 1d6 to Arlis) or heavy mace (Power Attack [-3/+6]) +15/+10/+5 (3d8+2d6+4)

Ranged mwk spear (range 30 ft.) +12 (1d8+3)

Atk Options Improved Vital Strike

Special Actions bleeding touch, channel energy, might of the gods, strength surge

Bleeding Touch (Sp [standard; 6/day]) As a melee touch attack, Arlis can cause a living creature to take 1d6 damage each round for 6 rounds, or until stopped by a DC 15 Heal check or any spell or effect that heals damage.

Channel Energy (Su [standard or move; 8/day]) 6d6 negative energy (DC 19 Will halves). Arlis can channel energy as a move action at a cost of expending two of his daily uses of the ability. He can also use Command Undead by expending

one use of channel energy.

Might of the Gods (Su [swift; 12 rounds /day]) Arlis gains a +12 enhancement bonus to his Strength score. This bonus applies only on Strength checks and Strength-based skill checks, and the rounds need not be consecutive.

Strength Surge (Su [standard; 6/day]) Arlis grants a touched creature a +6 enhancement bonus to melee attacks, combat manoeuvre checks, Strength-based skills and Strength checks, for one combat round.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +15; Death, Strength)

6th—*heal*, heightened *silence*, *stoneskin*

5th—silent *cure critical wounds* (2), *spell resistance*, *righteous might*

4th—silent *dispel magic*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*, *spell immunity*

3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic* (2), *magic vestment*, *protection from energy*, *magic vestment*

2nd—*aid*, *bear's endurance*, *desecrate*, *resist energy*, *silence*, *bull's strength*

1st—*bleed*, *cure light wounds*, *entropic shield*, *shield of faith* (2) *cause fear* (DC 15)

0—*bleed*, *detect magic*, *light*, *purify food and drink*

Combat Gear mwk spears (3), pouches of 250 gp diamond dust (4), *wand of flame strike* (CL 10, 5 charges), unholy water (5) plus 25 lbs of silver dust

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 18, Cha 16

SQ aura (overwhelming evil, law)

Feats Command Undead, Extra Channel, Improved Vital Strike, Heighten Spell, Power Attack, Quick Channel, Silent Spell, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills as above plus Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +11

Languages Common

Gear as above plus ornate unholy symbol in gold and steel (worth 200 gp), 5 onyx gems (worth 1,200 gp in total), *headband of mental prowess* (Cha, Wis) +2

SYGAXMERE ETHARVAEROS

Ancient, terrible and supremely powerful, Sygaxmere lurks on Kaer-Sal, a remote, barren island of ash and smoke.

Far out in the storm-tossed outer reaches of the great ocean lies Kaer-Sal, the legendary island of smoke, fire and bloody ruin. A desolate, wild and remote place little grows there among the tumbled ruins of several abandoned mining towns. A trio of volcanoes belch smoke and fire into the air above the island and almost nothing grows in the barren, lava-scorched uplands dominating the interior.

This fabled island is much-feared by mariners and even the most black-hearted, villainous pirates for here, deep below the desolation, lairs the colossal red dragon Sygaxmere Etharvaeros.

Of fearsome aspect and temper, Sygaxmere is one of the oldest of his kind; he was hunting among the rocky crags of his home before all but the oldest of human kingdoms were founded. The long-lived elves know him as Maidar, Death-of-the-World in Elven, while the dwarves name him Darduer, or Burning Darkness, and whisper terrible stories of his lust for their precious metals and shining gems. His depredations are legendary; from the destruction of the elven citadel of Shether, the looting (and subsequent destruction) of Karsil's Treasure Fleet and the savage, gory death of Sargon Paladinson, greatest hero of light to arise in almost four centuries, Sygaxmere's deeds are steeped in fire and death.

Background: Sygaxmere's earliest years were akin to those of most red dragons; living among the lofty crags of his mountain home he fought with his siblings and hunted the lower life forms that cowered below the crags and in the many gullies of the place.

Even from an early age, it became clear that Sygaxmere was stronger, quicker and more savage than his kin. Coupled with a feral, innate cunning that would, in time, evolve into the malign intelligence of a super genius, he quickly dominated his siblings (or slew those that resisted his right to rule).

Sygaxmere first knew fear about 100 years after his birth when his parents – a mated pair of mature adults – were slain by a quartet of powerful wizards who destroyed them with acid and lightning. His siblings were also slain in the fighting and when Sygaxmere emerged alone into the world it was for the first time with a sense of his own mortality.

Vowing never to suffer his parents' fate, he spent the next several hundred years hunting down and kidnapping wizards dwelling in the lands surrounding his mountain home. These unfortunates would be carried back to his lair there to sate first his lust for magical knowledge and then his boundless appetite.

After his depredations came to light and several concerted efforts were made to kill him, Sygaxmere began to search for a safer, more secure lair. It was then that he remembered the

tales of Kaer-Sal he had heard from one of his terrified and doomed captives. Dominated by volcanoes and rich in precious metals and gems, the isolated island seemed to offer him the perfect home.

With single-minded determination, he set about annihilating the miners dwelling there and throwing down their towns and settlements. The island's isolated position worked perfectly in his favour and within several years he had secured the island as his own. Now, centuries later, the island is a blasted wasteland from which he occasionally takes flight to hunt for ships carrying of treasure and food.

Personality: Egotistical in the extreme, Sygaxmere is convinced of his superiority over all other forms of life. In his mind, he is the most perfect hunter that has ever existed or that will ever exist. A creature perfectly adapted to hunting and killing, he has never met a foe he could not defeat and this has bred an almost unquenchable confidence deep inside him.

Linked to the manner of his parents' death, his one fear is that a puissant archmage may manage to unravel the many powerful protective magics with which he protects himself.

Distinguishing Features: Sygaxmere's sheer size is breathtaking; his fangs are as long as greatswords and his claws are as long – if not longer – than many warrior's polearms. His scales are a deep, malevolent red.

Mannerisms: Breathtakingly egotistical, Sygaxmere cannot resist impressing his foes with his virility, intelligence and might. Those falling into his clutches, or that clearly offer no real threat, are often treated to rambling, slightly maniacal, monologues in which he lists his most heinous deeds and rants about his inevitable victory.

GM NOTES

Sygaxmere is an incredibly powerful foe for all but the bravest adventurers. He is also a very complex combatant to run; many of his feats and spells interact to create incredibly dangerous attacks that could potentially slay almost any character in a single round. Before running a combat featuring Sygaxmere study the Tactics section (page 51-52) very carefully and determine if your group have a chance of defeating him.

In particular, his use of *antimagic field* to negate spellcasters can be problematically – its success hinges on whether a GM allows a creature to voluntarily squeeze into a smaller area than it would normally occupy (using the squeezing rules found in the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*). If you find this tactic too horrific, swap out that spell for something more suitable.



TACTICS

Sygaxmere is a fearsome opponent in battle and a cunning tactician. He knows that any adventurers penetrating deep into

SYGAXMERE ETHARVAEROS CR 22 (XP 614,400)

This immense red dragon has claws as long as polearms and teeth the size of greatswords. Its scales are a deep burnished red hue and it regards you with a malevolent, fiendish gaze.

Male red great wyrm dragon

CE colossal dragon (fire)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., blindsense 60 ft. sees four times as well as a human in dim light and twice as well in normal light; permanent *see invisibility* and *arcane sight*, smoke vision; Perception +38, Sense Motive +38

Smoke Vision (Ex) Sygaxmere sees perfectly in smoky conditions

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy); Hover; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics -2 (+2 jumping), Fly +18, Stealth +14, Swim +24

AC 48, touch 13, flat-footed 48; **CMD** 61 (65 vs. trip); Combat Expertise +8

(-8 size, -2 Dex, +4 armour [*mage armour*], +5 deflection [*ring of protection*] +5), +39 natural)

Immune divination magic, fire, *sleep*, paralysis; **Weakness** cold
Fort +26, **Ref** +15, **Will** +23; +8 vs. mind-affecting spells and effects; **SR** 33; contingent *teleport* (if targeted with *mage's disjunction*)

hp 481 (496 with *false life*) (29 HD); **DR** magic/20

Space 30 ft. (fire aura 10 ft., frightful presence 360 ft.); **Base Atk** +29; **CMB** +53 (+57 to start or maintain grapple)

Fire Aura (Su) All creatures within 10 ft. of Sygaxmere take 2d6 fire damage at the beginning of Sygaxmere's turn.

Frightful Presence (Ex) Creatures within 360 ft. of Sygaxmere with fewer than 29 HD must make a DC 30 Will save or become shaken (or panicked if it has 4 HD or fewer) for 5d6 rounds if they see her charge or attack. A creature making a successful saving throw is immune to Sygaxmere's frightful presence for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Melee bite (reach 30 ft.) +43 (6d8+29/19-20),
2 claws (reach 20 ft.) +38 each (4d6+17),
2 wings (reach 20 ft.) +33 each (2d8+9) and
1 tail slap (reach 20 ft.) +33 each (4d6+25)

Atk Options Combat Expertise (-8), Greater Vital Strike, Power Attack (-8 attack, damage +24 with bite, +16 with claws, +8 with wings or tail slap), Snatch, crush (4d8+24), tail sweep (2d8+24)

Special Actions breath weapon (70 ft. cone, 24d10 fire, DC 33 Reflex halves plus incinerate), melt stone, manipulate flames

Incinerate (Su) Creatures reduced to 0 hit points by Sygaxmere's breath weapon must make a DC 33 Fortitude save or be reduced to ash.

Manipulate Flames (Su) Sygaxmere can control any fire spell within 120 ft. as a standard action, moving any fire effect in the area as if he were the caster. He can also reposition stationary fire effects. For 1 round after using this ability, he

his lair are incredibly powerful and resourceful. He fears no warrior's blade, but the awesome might of powerful spellcasters does concern him.

In battle, he cloaks himself in an *antimagic field* if fighting

can control any new fire spell cast within 120 ft. as if he were the caster. He can even cancel the spell if he so desires.

Melt Stone (Su) Sygaxmere can use his breath weapon to melt stone in a 60 ft. radius (range 100 ft.) The area becomes lava to a depth of 1-foot. Creatures on the ground take 20d6 fire damage on the first round, 10d6 on the second and none thereafter as the lava hardens. If used on a wall or ceiling, melt stone creates an avalanche that deals fire damage.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 19th; concentration +25 (+29 casting defensively or while grappled); Quicken Spell)

9th (4/day)—*mage's disjunction, time stop, wish*

8th (7/day)—*form of the dragon III, mind blank, moment of prescience, prismatic wall* (DC 26)

7th (6/day)—*form of the dragon II, power word blind, project image, spell turning*

6th (7/day)—*antimagic field, form of the dragon I, true seeing*

5th (7/day)—*break enchantment, spell resistance, teleport, telekinesis, wall of force*

4th (8/day)—*black tentacles* (CMB +24), *dimension door, fear* (DC 20), *fire shield, greater invisibility*

3rd (7/day)—*displacement, fly, haste, heroism, protection from energy*

2nd (8/day)—*bear's endurance, cat's grace, false life, mirror image, resist energy, web* (DC 20)

1st (8/day)—*alarm, mage armour, magic missile, shield, true strike*

0 (6/day)—*arcane mark, bleed* (DC 18), *dancing lights, detect poison, ghost sound* (DC 18), *mage hand, message, prestidigitation, read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 29th; concentration +35 (+39 casting defensively or while grappling)

At-Will—*detect magic, discern location, find the path, pyrotechnics* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 21), *wall of fire*

Abilities Str 43, Dex 6, Con 29, Int 22, Wis 23, Cha 26

SQ permanent *greater magic fang* +5 (bite), *magic fang* (claws, wings, tail), *resistance*

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Expertise, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Vital Strike, Hover, Leadership, Quicken Spell, Snatch, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills as above plus Appraise +24, Bluff +40, Diplomacy +40, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (planes) +29, Knowledge (religion) +19, Spellcraft +38, Use Magic Device +40

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Infernal, permanent *telepathic bond* (Paradar), *tongues*

Gear as above plus *headband of alluring charisma* +4

obvious spellcasters. Once he has killed all the spellcasters, he dispels the *antimagic field*, casts *mage's disjunction* on the survivors and then uses his breath weapon to incinerate them. (Note, he doesn't use his breath weapon until he is confident he has defeated his enemies' magical protections; he assumes that any enemy powerful enough to reach his lair will have means to counter his fiery breath).

He enjoys using the following tactics:

- **Horrific Bite** (Standard): Sygaxmere casts a quickened *true strike* (5th-level spell) before making a single bite attack using Greater Vital Strike, Power Attack and Snatch (+55 attack, 24d8+53/19-20 [critical 30d8+106] plus immediate CMB check to grapple target if it is Large or smaller); next round Sygaxmere uses his breath weapon (the target in his mouth

ONGOING SPELL EFFECTS

Sygaxmere routinely casts a suite of defensive spells every day. Unless he is targeted by a *mage's disjunction* or is within an *antimagic field*, the following spell effects are active upon his body (and their effects are included in his stat block):

- *False life* (15 temporary hit points)
- *Mage armour* (+4 armour bonus)
- *Mind blank* (immunity to divination magic, +8 vs. mind affecting spells and effects)
- *Moment of prescience* (+19 insight on a single attack, combat manoeuvre check, opposed ability or skill check or saving throw)

This spell casting consumed 8th—2, 2nd—1 and 1st—1.

PREPARED FOR BATTLE

If Sygaxmere is alerted to incoming danger, he casts the following spells (all of which have a duration of least 19 minutes):

- *Antimagic field*
- *Bear's endurance* (+2 Fortitude save, +58 hit points)
- *Cat's grace* (+2 AC, Initiative, CMD, Reflex, Stealth, Fly and Acrobatics)
- *Heroism* (+2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saves and skill checks)
- *Mirror image* (8 images)
- *Protection from energy* (acid 120, cold 120, electricity 120)
- *Resist energy* (acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30)
- *Shield* (+4 AC)
- *Spell turning* (8 levels of spells)
- *True seeing*

This spell casting consumes 7th—1, 6th—2, 3rd—3, 2nd—6, and 1st—1.

receive no saving throw against this effect).

- **Defensive Horrific Bite** (standard): As above but with the following modifiers AC +8, CMD +8, attack -8.
- **Hurl Aside** (standard): Sygaxmere can fling aside a grappled creature. (If near enough to a *prismatic wall*, he hurls his enemy into it.) The flung creature flies 1d6 x 10 feet and takes 1d6 damage per 10 ft. travelled.
- **Project Image**: He often starts a combat by using *project image* so that his enemies waste their most powerful spells and attacks on his illusory self. This is also a handy way for him to target them from a position of relative safety and to learn more about their tactics and powers.

KAER-SAL

Although little more than a blasted wasteland, Kaer-Sal is far from uninhabited. Sygaxmere allows other dragons to dwell among its blasted peaks and to swim in the rivers of lava that cascade down the mountains' flanks. This benevolence on his part is nothing but a sham. In truth, Sygaxmere enjoys having others of his kind around to listen to his monologues and rants and the extra guards and sentinels provide him with warning of approaching enemies. Of course, he suffers no dragon that offers a real threat to his dominance, killing and eating any such individual that arises.

The skeletal, weatherworn ruins of several ports and mining towns yet stand about the island, although all now are abandoned; many of Sygaxmere's lesser brethren dwell in such places and deep in the mines hewn through the island's bedrock.

Unbeknownst to Sygaxmere and his kin not all the original islanders fell during his murderous rampage across the island. In places, a few small enclaves of survivors yet cling to life in the deep places hidden far below the island. Such groups are often small and desperate surviving on fungus and the flesh of the eyeless fish swimming in the deep cold water of the glittering subterranean lakes.

With no prospect of long-term survival, these few survivors are desperate. A mixture of dwarves and humans many of this pitiful remnant have forgotten what the sun looks like and some have never emerged onto the surface.

LEADERSHIP

A close reading of Sygaxmere's stat block and the rules will reveal that the dragon shouldn't really have the Leadership feat; technically, he is not a 7th level character. However, he does cast spells as a 19th-level sorcerer and so I've included the feat and assumed he can have a cohort of up to 17th-level (CR 16). Paradar Levien (CE male human lich sorcerer [draconic {red}] 15; page 62) makes an excellent cohort and could serve as Sygaxmere's agent in the lands of men.

PERRAN GONGYE

Otherwise known as “The Reaping Cat” – Perran Gongye is the stuff of nightmares - an implacable, unstoppable assassin.

Feared across many lands, Perran is the consummate killer-for-hire. No-one knows his real name but people say that a mark is as good as dead when “The Reaping Cat” picks up the contract.

Background: Now in his early forties, Perran Gongye was once a travelling performer cast out by his employers when they caught him stealing. Since then, he has put his supreme acrobatics expertise to good use by first burgling the wealthy and then turning his hand to the more rewarding work of assassination.

Understanding the value of reputation, Perran first hired several travelling bards to spread the legend of “The Reaping Cat” – a remorseless killer said to be the right hand of a sinister, nameless power. Perran is nothing if not a showman and always leaves his calling card, the skull of a cat, next to his victim’s corpse. Legends of his ability to fly, turn invisible, pass through walls and manipulate shadows grow with each passing year. In reality, Perran is a supremely fit and tactically brilliant assassin. His seemingly supernatural ability to be in several places at once is due to his five apprentices (all human males). Chosen for their similar height and build to the masked man himself their occasional deaths have also given rise to the myth that even death does not stop Perran completing a contract. None of his apprentices know his real name and all know better than to ask.

PERRAN GONGYE

CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Male human rogue 6/assassin 6

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +21 (+24 vs. traps), Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft., rogue crawl

Rogue Crawl (Ex) Perran can crawl 15 ft. as a move action and can take a 5-foot step while crawling.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +30, **Climb** +15, **Escape Artist** +19, **Stealth** +19 (fast stealth)

AC 21, **touch** 15, **flat-footed** 17; **CMD** 23; +2 vs. traps, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

(+4 Dex, +5 armour [+1 *glamered mithral shirt*], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence], +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*])

Fort +6 (+9 vs. poison), **Ref** +12 (+14 vs. traps, evasion), **Will** +5
hp 87 (12 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +8

Melee +1 rapier +14/+9 (1d6+1/18-20) or

Melee +1 rapier +14/+9 (1d6+1/18-20) and
+1 rapier +12 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +12 (1d4/19-20)

Atk Options Vital Strike, death attack (quiet death, true death), poison use, sneak attack +6d6, surprise attack

Death Attack (Ex and Su) If Perran studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a successful sneak attack he can kill or paralyze (for 1d6 + 6 rounds) his target (DC 18 Fortitude

In addition to his mastery of blades, Perran is an accomplished alchemist and herbalist, which enables him to create everything from deadly poisons to healing salves and useful tools of the trade such as smokesticks and flash powder.

Hiring The Reaping Cat is a long, laborious process as Perran is meticulously careful when arranging contracts. He sees maintaining his anonymity and further enhancing the reputation of his alter-ego as crucial. Perran and his followers lair in the ruins of an old vineyard. They live within the cellars of the abandoned mansion house and leave and enter only under cover of darkness. The Reaping Cat’s signature items are his twin, magical rapiers.

Personality: Perran is an unusual, cheerless individual driven by his own ego and the pursuit of wealth and notoriety. He takes no great pleasure in killing, but sees it as a necessary means to an end. He is strangely honourable with his apprentices, whom he trusts with everything but his real name. Perran takes half of all profits from a job; his underlings each receive one-tenth of the profits.

Mannerisms: Perran has long admired cats and has owned them since he was a child. He appreciates their free-spirited nature and considers them the perfect, agile hunter-killers. He dotes on the thirty or so felines of every size, shape and colour who roam his hide-out and sleep on his four-poster bed. Anyone who is cruel to a cat invokes Perran’s fearful wrath.

negates). A character slain by this attack is difficult to return to life. A spellcaster attempting *raise dead* or similar spell must make a DC 21 caster level check to succeed. Casting *remove curse* (DC 16) before attempting to bring the creature back to life negates this chance. If Perran uses death attack to kill his victim in the surprise round, he can make an opposed Stealth check to prevent those in the vicinity identifying him as the assassin.

Poison Use (Ex) Perran cannot accidentally poison himself.

Surprise Attack (Ex) Opponents are considered flat-footed against Perran’s attacks during a surprise round even if they have already acted.

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ hidden weapon, rogue talent (fast stealth, rogue crawl, surprise attack), trapfinding, trap sense

Feats Improved Initiative^B, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Two-Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills as above plus Bluff +12, Disable Device +22, Disguise +4, Profession (alchemist) +16, Sleight of Hand +19 (+25 hiding weapons)

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus *boots of elvenkind*, *eyes of the eagle*, 10 pp, 21 gp, 15 sp

Distinguishing Features: Perran is a puissant athlete who well knows the value of fitness. There isn't an ounce of fat on his frame. He wears custom-made, black-dyed leather armour and neither he nor his apprentices appear in public without a disguise or mask obscuring their features.

Perran has a sun tattoo behind his left shoulder which may one day prove his undoing. It is a unique tattoo and, for some inexplicable reason, Perran can't bring himself to have this reminder of his former life magically removed.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The PCs may encounter Perran (or one of his apprentices) if one or more of them is unfortunate enough to be marked for death. Perran stops at nothing once a contract has been agreed upon as to him reputation is everything. His attacks grow progressively more elaborate, involving clever diversions and the deaths of many innocents. If the PCs prove particularly troublesome, he may even set up one of his apprentices so that the PCs believe they have eradicated the threat. A few days after the fake Perran's death, he strikes again.

Alternatively, a merchant may discover that he or she has a price on their head and hire the PCs as a last-ditch attempt to protect himself from this relentless killer. The prosperous merchant barricades himself into his palatial mansion and demands the PCs protect him, offering them much wealth (and possibly even trade concessions). The merchant remains reticent on why Perran is targeting him, but investigations reveal that the merchant is actually a slave trader and that a relative of one of his wares is seeking revenge.

If the PCs fail to protect the merchant they can still try to revenge themselves upon his killer. Alternatively, they may choose to investigate the merchant's business which could lead them to other villains (particularly Digory Odgers [page 20] who would be an excellent source for merchandise).

ENCOUNTERS

Perran normally operates alone, but often tests a mark's defences with waves of hired muscle (whose success or failure he covertly observes).

The PCs could encounter Perran (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Two Veteran Rakes (CR 4 each, page 8) and four Rakes (CR 2 each, page 8).

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Professional Duellist (CR 7, page 8), Tiefling Sneak (CR 7, page 9), two Veteran Rakes (CR 4 each, page 8) and one Thug (CR 3, page 10).

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Perran Gongye.

LORE

Characters can learn more about Perran Gongye with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 21: This is Perran Gongye – killer-for-hire and one-time acrobat. Known as the "The Reaping Cat" for his trade mark cat skulls left at every one of his kills, he is a very dangerous opponent. The street folk whisper that not even death can stop this implacable assassin.

DC 26: Perran is an accomplished alchemist and herbalist. He often uses rare and deadly poison against his marks.

DC 31: Perran has a sun tattoo on his left shoulder blade.



VONIAT IASAN

A clever bandit who uses his knowledge of his woodland home to maximum effect.

Background: Voniāt's mother died giving birth to him. He was raised by his father – a dour human hunter and trapper who never recovered from the loss of his wife and showed his son no affection or kindness. The man resented Voniāt's dual heritage – especially as he aged and grew frail – knowing that his son would enjoy a much longer life-span. Voniāt grew into a bitter and angry young man who avoided contact with other people. He didn't lift a finger as his father lay dying of a wasting sickness – simply watching the life ebb away and enjoying his revenge for a cruel and loveless upbringing.

Alone at the age of 22, Voniāt inherited a ramshackle cottage deep in the woods. Close to the river and surrounded by an abundance of wildlife, he knew he would have no trouble fending for himself. His father had at least taught him how to hunt and ride and he was skilled with both his old man's greatsword and bow.

The half-elf's hide-out is less than a mile and a half from a busy trade route which is part dirt track and part ancient cobbled road. It is a thoroughfare for merchant caravans, all manner of travellers and farm traffic. Voniāt chooses his targets carefully and never strikes in the same place – ambushing or confronting groups and individuals at different spots along the road before melting away into the wood. Often, a few well-placed arrows are enough to loosen purse strings. But, if necessary, Voniāt is perfectly comfortable maiming and killing for loot. It is just more messy than he would like. He never risks capture and flees if he

is overmatched. In just 18 months he



has become relatively rich but is not yet content and believes he needs to rely on banditry for at least another couple of years before moves on to bigger and better things.

Personality: Voniāt is the archetypal loner, deeply uncomfortable in the company of others. His trips to town are rare, swift affairs involving minimal contact with people. There is no joy or happiness in his life. He sees his existence as a daily battle against the elements and other humanoids – one in which only the strongest and most cunning survive.

Mannerisms: Voniāt has a slight lisp and thus seldom speaks. His head also twitches nervously when in conversation or even when looking at his victims.

Distinguishing Features: Voniāt wears clothing which allows him to blend in with his woodland home. His weapon of choice is his father's black-handled greatsword and he carries a hunting horn which he occasionally uses to help create the illusion that he is part of a large band of thieves.

Hooks: Voniāt is unlikely to attack a party of adventurers but would take his chances against one or two. More likely, the PCs may be asked to avenge the death of a traveller or help to recover a precious item stolen by Voniāt.

VONIAT IASAN

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male half-elf fighter 3/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11 (+12 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +5

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; **Acrobatics** +11, **Ride** +5, **Stealth** +11

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 20; +1 vs traps; Dodge, Mobility

(+2 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate], +1 dodge)

Immune sleep

Fort +4, **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear); +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects

hp 40 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +8

Melee greatsword (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +10 (2d6+6/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +8 (1d8/x3)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of divine favour* (+3, CL 9), *potion of haste*, *potion of shield of faith* (CL 3)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), rogue talent (weapon training [longbow]), trapfinding, trap sense (+1)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (local) +5

Languages Common, Elven

Gear as above plus 12 gp

Ibric is one of the worst things to lurk in dark alleys.

Ibric is a brutal thug whose mother spoiled him horribly.

Background: Ibric's mother always told him he was a special little boy, who deserved to be held and hugged. If he got hurt, she held him, kissed him, and gave him sweets to make it better. Being so much bigger and stronger than other children his age, Ibric would accidentally hurt other children, and his mother gave him sweets to make him stop. Ibric rapidly developed a penchant for fighting with other children.

Since his mother's death, Ibric has wandered from town to town, staying long enough to get drunk and brawl before being set back on the road by town guards. Ibric is now a club-for-hire, bludgeoning whomever his employer directs into submission.

IBRIC	CR 8 (XP 4,800)
Male human fighter 6/rogue 3	
NE Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +2; Senses Perception +5 (+6 traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +5	
Speed 30 ft.; ACP 0; Acrobatics +6, Stealth +10	
AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; CMD 24 (+4 armour [+1 <i>studded leather</i>], +2 Dex, +1 natural [<i>amulet of natural armour +1</i>])	
Fort +8, Ref +9 (evasion), Will +5 (+6 vs. fear)	
hp 83 (9 HD)	
Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +8; CMB +12	
Melee +1 <i>greatclub</i> (Bludgeoner, Power Attack [-2/+6]) +15/+10 (1d10+10)	
Ranged light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +10 (1d8/19-20)	
Bludgeoner Ibric takes no penalty on attack rolls when using his greatclub to deal nonlethal damage.	
Atk Options sneak attack (+2d6 plus Sap Adept and befuddling strike)	
Befuddling Strike (Ex) When Ibric deals sneak attack damage, his foe takes a -2 penalty to attacks against Ibric for 1d4 rounds.	
Sap Adept (Ex) Ibric deals +4 damage when using his greatclub to deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack.	
Combat Gear bolts (10), <i>potion of bull's strength</i> (3), <i>potion of cat's grace</i> (3), <i>potion of cure light wounds</i> (3), <i>potion of invisibility</i> (3)	
Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12	
SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), rogue talent (befuddling strike), trapfinding (+1), weapon training (hammers [+1])	
Feats Bludgeoner, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Sap Adept, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greatclub), Weapon Specialization (greatclub)	
Skills as above plus Bluff +10, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +10, Linguistics +0, Sleight of Hand +6, Survival +5	
Languages Common, Orc	
Gear as above plus 3 gold rings (worth 100 gp each), 5 bloodstones (worth 20 gp each)	

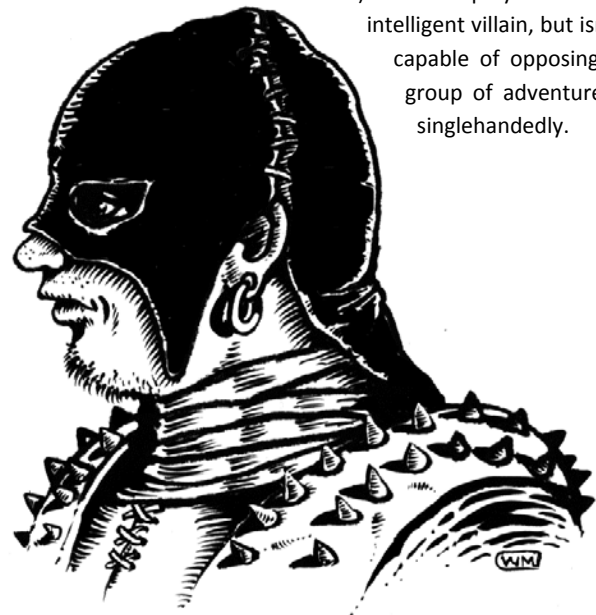
Personality: Ibric is a six-year-old boy in a grown man's body. He doesn't have the emotional or intellectual capacity to understand that what he's doing is wrong. He delights in simple bard's stories, colourful illusions and can consume enough food and drink to floor an elephant; he finds violence and fighting entertaining and enjoyable. He's naturally inquisitive and, if approached in a friendly manner in a neutral setting, is easy to befriend, if you don't mind occasionally being punched for amusement. He particularly enjoys relaying stories (especially about fighting) and jokes, but tells them in a childish fashion, leaving out critical phrases, skipping boring parts and being disappointed with anything less than raucous laughter at the punch line. Ibric is never out of arm's reach of his cudgel.

Distinguishing Features: Ibric is massive, standing 6 ft. 8 in. tall and weighing 300 lbs., but is light-fingered and nimble.

Tactics: Ibric tries to follow direction, but he's not very good at it; complex instructions cause him confusion and frustration. He tries to flank to gain the benefit of his sneak attack and uses his potions liberally, though often not before a fight unless instructed. If reduced to less than half hp, takes a critical hit from a slashing or piercing weapon, or has particularly visually impressive magic used against him, he'll sit down and cry, complaining about how much it hurts and how the whole fight seems unfair.

Hooks: Ibric's club-for-hire business might see him hired to subdue a PC or less reputable characters might have Ibric suggested to them (or foisted upon them) as an aide du camp. Similarly, after (or during) a barroom brawl he could form an unconventional friendship with a PC, even as he beats him into unconsciousness. Ibric makes an excellent brute (and comedic

foil) in the employ of a more intelligent villain, but isn't capable of opposing a group of adventurers singlehandedly.



VAEROSK IXUZYGAX

Once a beacon of light and good, a lurking evil of ancient provenance has corrupted this aasimar's very essence.

Vaerosk Ixuzygax once stood for all that was just in the world – a beacon of light and goodness pushing back the gathering darkness. As a paladin, she lived for decades in a tower on the edge of a great forest. From there she hurled back raiding orcs and scoured the land free of bandits and other lurking dangers. Vaerosk was the self-styled protector of her realm and evil could not flourish while she stood strong and true. However, her exposure to an ancient hidden weapon of demonic origin led to her catastrophic fall into darkness.

Background: Eons ago, a noble human bloodline was blessed

VAEROSK IXUZYGAX CR 15 (XP 51,200)
This woman possesses an ethereal, unearthly beauty. Great wings of white feathers furl about her slender, shapely body clad in brightly polished plate armour.

Female aasimar half-fiend antipaladin 13
 CE Medium outsider (native)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16, Sense Motive +3
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
ACP -5; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping), Fly +15

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 29 (+12 armour [+3 full plate], +1 natural)
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **Weakness** smite evil
Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Vaerosk deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.
Fort +17, **Ref** +9, **Will** +16; **SR** 26
hp 141 (13 HD); **DR** magic/10

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice and despair, and vengeance 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +19
Aura of Despair and Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Vaerosk's radiates an aura of dread and despair that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -2 penalty on all saving throws or a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.
Aura of Vengeance (Su) All non-good allies within 10 ft. gain smite good (+5 attack, +13 damage, +5 AC) if they use the ability by the start of Vaerosk's next turn. The bonuses last for 1 minute. Using this ability is a free action.
Melee +1 flaming greatsword +21/+16/+11 (2d6+10 plus 1d6 fire/17-20) or
Melee Touch touch of corruption +19 (6d6 plus shaken for 13 rounds, staggered for 6 rounds, cursed [as bestow curse CL 13] or blinded for 13 rounds [DC 21 negates condition]) or
Melee bite +19 (1d6+5) and
 2 claws +19 each (1d4+5)
Atk Options Channel Smite, Cleave, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage [+12 with greatsword]),

with the seed of an angelic being; Vaerosk Ixuzygax was the ultimate result of that union. Born an aasimar and raised by Kanaro Ansrathar, a half-elven druid of great power and conviction that nature was a gentle force of good, she quickly gained a deep love of woodlands.

Vaerosk's undoing came one summer's day as she wandered the lost paths of her woodland home. As dusk fell, she came upon an ancient tomb and driven by some nameless compulsion forced open the burial chamber to discover a prize hidden from the world for countless generations. There, wrapped in oiled leather, lay a greatsword which was to change the very nature of her existence. Unbeknown to Vaerosk a sentience of the blackest aspect lurked within the blade and when she touched

fiendish boon (weapon) 3/day, smite good 1/day (+13 damage), smite good 5/day (+5 attack, +13 damage, +5 AC or expend 2 uses to create aura of vengeance)

Fiendish Boon (Sp) Vaerosk can enhance her weapon for 13 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by up to +3 or by spending one or more of these enhancement bonuses to add the *anarchic*, *flaming*, *flaming burst*, *keen*, *speed*, *unholy vicious* or *wounding* weapon properties.

Special Actions touch of corruption 11/day (channel negative energy [7d6 damage; DC 21 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Vaerosk can also touch an undead creature to restore 6d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +15)

3rd—*vampiric touch* (2)

2nd—*bull's strength*, *eagle's splendour*, *undetectable alignment*

1st—*disguise self*, *protection from good* (2), *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +18)

At-Will—*detect good*

3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 19), *unholy aura* (DC 23)

1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 22), *contagion* (DC 18), *daylight*, *desecrate*, *unhallow*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *elemental gem (air)*

Abilities Str 22, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 20

SQ aura of evil (overwhelming), cruelty (cursed, shaken, staggered), plague bringer, unholy resilience

Feats Channel Smite, Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (religion) +9

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common

Gear as above plus *belt of giant strength*, *eyes of the eagle*

Unprepared for battle, Vaerosk has the following statistics:

ACP 0; Fly +20

AC 11, touch 10, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 29 (+1 natural)

the sword's hilt it assailed her mind. So strong was the weapon – crafted by a dread acolyte of the demon Pazuzu – that Vaerosk's personality was instantly corrupted. Drenched in the very essence of the Abyss, the creature that staggered from the hidden tomb was no longer Vaerosk Ixuzygax the holy warrior, but Vaerosk Ixuzygax the unholy servant of Pazuzu.

Returning to her tower, she slew her followers and erstwhile benefactor in an orgy of bloodshed and torture so depraved that it drove the few survivors irrevocably insane. Her transformation – or rebirth as she sometimes terms it – heralded a new reign of darkness over her once tranquil home and the surrounding lands. Fell beasts and undead now roam beneath the trees and bandits own the highways.

Personality: Vaerosk is haughty and arrogant. Believing herself to have been touched by greatness in a way that mortals cannot comprehend, she considers herself Pazuzu's chosen one and dreams of bringing his rule to the world.

Despite her evil nature, however, Vaerosk is honourable in battle – a last vestige of her former life. Thus she never attacks by stealth or when an enemy's back is turned and always salutes her opponent before combat.

Mannerisms: Vaerosk loves to make music and can often be found in an almost trancelike state wandering through the overgrown ruins of her home humming or singing a mournful, half-remembered tune from ages past.

Now plagued with terrible headaches, Vaerosk's beautiful face is often set in a grimace. While in this condition, loud noise and bright light infuriate her.

Distinguishing Features: Vaerosk is breathtakingly beautiful – seeming to shine with an ethereal glow. Her great, white wings give an angelic appearance and only her blood-red eyes betray her fiendish nature. Vaerosk is never parted from her greatsword.

Signature Weapon: Glittering with a sullen and sinister red hue, the flames of the abyss perpetually wreath Vaerosk's greatsword, emitting light and heat as a torch. The weapon is finely balanced and possesses a haft longer than that required by even the biggest warrior. Its simple circular hilt is unadorned with symbols while its elongated acorn-shaped pommel is shot through with serpentine patterns that writhe in the light given off by the blade.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Vaerosk has built up a small army of fiercely-loyal humanoids and now plots to strike against nearby settlements in the name of Pazuzu. Vaerosk's horde

comprises almost 1,000 low-level orc warriors led by champions (male orc fighter 5/barbarian 2) and the mighty warchief Grum (male orc fighter 8/barbarian 3). A dozen elite ogre bodyguards (male ogre barbarian 6) protect her person while four vrocks and a terrifying glabrezu act as shock troops.

The PCs may encounter her minions as they destroy a nearby settlement - leading them to track the killers to the damned forest where the half-fiend resides. Powerful adventurers coming to her attention are subject to nightly attacks by demons summoned by her demonic allies until Vaerosk is slain.

Alternatively, the party may hear rumours of a cursed woodland blighted by some foul creature and investigate. There they discover a terrible perversion of nature. As so Vaerosk has succumbed to the fell magics of the sword she bears so the Abyss has tainted the once-beautiful forest surrounding her home. Here even though the wind no longer blows, the trees are bent into odd, gnarled shapes and blood-red moss smothers every growing thing.



RAINE KARONEN

An unremitting bully and brutish extortionist who is a thorn in the side of the inhabitants of a peaceful hamlet.

Background: The bastard son of the village lay-about, Raine is a drunken thug. Disowned by his feckless father in his early teens, Raine attempted to make his way in the world. For six years he staggered from rag-tag adventuring bands to morally-bankrupt mercenary companies who all quickly tired of his weakness for dwarf spirits and his uncanny ability to start arguments.

Raine returned to Elodie just a few months before his 20th birthday. The good folk of the hamlet hardly recognised the uncouth, bearded, barbaric-looking warrior who swaggered into the inn, stinking of sweat and clad in a breastplate and wolf pelts. Seeing no-one with the strength or ability to best him, Raine began lording over the peasantfolk. He began touching up the women and provoked an almighty bar room brawl which resulted in the death of the hamlet's headman – Donnegal – and serious injury to half a dozen others. His supremacy assured, Raine took the headman's home and bedded Donnegal's wife by force. For almost a year now he has run Elodie as his personal fiefdom – taking what and who he wants. The peasants believe his knowledge of the surrounding area makes it impossible for any of them to escape. Raine insists "his people" refer to him as the Grey Wolf. He also has them speak in revered tones about his useless father. Raine has gathered what little wealth the hamlet has to him and is now planning to give some of the young men limited martial training so they can assist him in his planned campaign of banditry.

Personality: Raine is the vilest of humans. He is beneath contempt. He is driven by the most base desires and an unquenchable need to be obeyed. He is unpredictable, frequently under the influence of alcohol and never does anything which does not directly benefit himself. Like most bullies, Raine is actually



a coward and relies on his rages to see him through trouble.

Mannerisms: Raine is always smiling. He is even prone to breaking into laughter and song while raging.

Distinguishing Features: Foes often smell the Grey Wolf before they see him – such is his stench. He always wears his furs which he believes enhance his savage countenance. In truth he has never slain a wolf and stole the skin from a tavern.

Hooks: PCs may come into contact with Raine if he forces some of his peasants into a bungled attempt at banditry. Alternatively, one of the oppressed farmhands may flee Elodie to seek help in ending Raine's tyranny.

RAINE KARONEN

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male human barbarian 5

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Acrobatics -1 (+3 jumping), Climb +5, Ride +4

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 21; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge, +1 vs. traps (+2 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate])

Fort +5, **Ref** +3 (+4 vs. traps), **Will** +4

hp 47 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9

Melee mwk falchion (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +10 (2d4+6/18-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +8 (1d8+4/x3)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of barkskin*, *potion of shield of faith* (+3, CL 6)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ fast movement, rage power (lesser beast totem, superstition), trap sense (+1)

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +7, Survival +9

Languages Common

Gear as above plus fur robe and as GM determined

When raging, Raine has the following modified statistics:

ACP -4; Climb +5

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 21; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge, +1 vs. traps (-2 class, +2 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate])

Fort +7, **Will** +6; +3 vs. spells, supernatural and spell-like abilities

hp 55

CMB +11

Melee mwk falchion +12 (2d4+9/18-20) or

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d6+6)

Atk Options rage (11 rounds; lesser beast totem, superstition)

Abilities Str 22, Con 16

KRASK "CRUSHES-FOES"

CR 8 (XP 4,800)

Male Orc barbarian 6/fighter 3

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive -1
Speed 20 ft., base 40 ft.; **ACP** -5; Acrobatics -4 (-8 jumping),
 Climb +5, Swim +5

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 24-; **CMD** 25 (27 vs. overrun); +2 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+10 armour [+1 full plate], +1 Dex, +3 shield [+1 heavy steel]);

Weakness light sensitivity

Light Sensitivity (Ex) Krask is dazzled as long as he remains in an area of bright light.

Fort +11, **Ref** +7 (+9 vs. traps), **Will** +3 (+4 vs. fear)

hp 94 (9 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +14 (+16 overrun)

Melee mwk battleaxe (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +16/+11 (1d8+6/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

Atk Options Improved Overrun, Vital Strike, rage (10 rounds)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of bull's strength* (3), *potion of lesser restoration* (3)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 6

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1),rage powers (bestial leaper, reckless abandon, superstition), trap sense (+2)

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills as above plus Appraise +5, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +10, Survival +10, Use Magic Device +5

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above plus 350 gp of mundane gear

Raging, Krask's has the following modified statistics

Climb +7, Swim +7

AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22; **CMD** 27 (29 vs. overrun); +2 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+10 armour [+1 full plate], -2 class, +1 Dex, +3 shield [+1 heavy steel])

Fort +13, **Will** +5 (+6 vs. fear); +3 vs. spells, supernatural and spell-like abilities

hp 112 (9 HD)

Superstition (Ex) While raging, Krask must make saving throws to resist all spells, even those cast by allies.

CMB +16 (+18 overrun)

Melee mwk battleaxe (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +18/+13 (1d8+8/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +11/+6 (1d8+4/x3)

Atk Options bestial leaper, reckless abandon (-2 AC, +2 to hit)

Bestial Leaper (Ex) While raging, Krask can take a standard action at any point during his move action.

Abilities Str 24, Con 18

Repulsive even to his fellows, Krask is still a hero to his tribe.

A powerful, but terribly scarred warrior, Krask is the true power in his tribe, The Bloodied Tusk.

Background: Young Krask quickly distinguished himself as a warrior, drawing the nervous attention of his chieftain. To end Krask's rise, the chieftain plunged the young orc's head into a pool of acid. The tribe's adept was only able to cure a portion of Krask's wounds, leaving him scarred and, the chieftain hoped, ending his ambitions to become chieftain.

As an adult, Krask has proven to be his tribe's greatest warrior and is venerated among his people; the chieftain has to obtain Krask's public support before he is able to command the other orcs. Ironically, Krask's barbaric scarring may be what saved him from the violent power struggles that claim most promising young orcs; the chieftain's attempt at sabotage may well be the most fortunate event to ever befall Krask.

Personality: Krask is brutish and barbaric; like most orcs, he doesn't bother to consider his actions and, instead, simply does whatever strikes his fancy. Krask is used to deference and fawning respect from those around him and responds violently if he doesn't receive his due.

Distinguishing Features: Krask is ugly, even by orkish standards. His face is a mass of smooth burns and his singed lips twist his mouth into a constant snarl. Krask's burnt skin has made him prone to flea and tick bites, frequently resulting in pustules and sores all over his head and upper body.

Tactics: Krask closes quickly then brutally attacks, using Power Attack and reckless abandon until his opponents are dead. In a hard fight, he drinks a *potion of bull's strength*.

Hooks: Krask meets most beings at the other end of his battleaxe. His reputation precedes him as whispered warnings and those the PCs once cared for may have met their end on the blade of Krask's axe.



PARARDAR LEVIEN

A foul abomination, the lifeless sorcerer Parardar is succumbing to the twin draconic lusts of conquest and gold.

In recent months, Parardar has ventured forth from his crumbling fortress to find recruits to fill the ranks of his burgeoning army. Once he has sufficient warriors, he intends to sack the closest towns and villages and lay the foundations of his own domain.

Background: Parardar Levien's mortal life began three hundred years ago when he was born into a well-to-do family headed by his alchemist father. Unbeknownst to anyone in the family, his bloodline was very different to that of normal humans because, centuries earlier, an ancestor had enjoyed a tryst with a red dragon in human form.

Until Parardar's birth, this taint or blessing – depending on your view of life – had lain dormant. In Parardar, it came alive with shocking consequences. As a boy, he was sickly and

PARARDAR LEVIEN CR 16 (XP 76,800)

Male human lich sorcerer (draconic [red]) 15
CE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +28, Sense Motive +10

Speed 30 ft.; wings (fly 60 ft. [average])

ACP 0; Fly +20, Stealth +10

AC 26, touch 17, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 19; Deflect Arrows, Dodge (+2 Dex, +4 armour [extended *mage armour*], +3 deflection [*ring of protection* +3], +1 dodge, +1 insight [*dusty red ioun stone*], +5 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), cold, electricity; **Resist** fire 10

Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14 (channel resistance +4)

hp 190 (205 with extended *false life*) (15 HD); **DR** bludgeoning and magic/15

Space 5 ft. (fear aura 60 ft.); **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +6

Fear Aura (Su) Creatures with less than 5 HD must make a DC 23 Will save or become frightened. Creatures with more than 5 HD must make a DC 23 Will save or be shaken for 15 rounds. A creature making the saving throw cannot be affected by his aura for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Melee Touch touch +6/+1 (1d8+7 negative energy plus paralyzing touch [DC 23 Fortitude negates] or

Melee Touch touch +6 (1d8+7 negative energy plus paralyzing touch [DC 23 Fortitude negates])

Melee claw +6 (1d6-1 plus 1d6 fire)

Paralysing Touch (Su) A living creature failing the saving throw to resist this power is permanently paralysed and appears dead. *Remove paralysis* or any affect able to remove curses can remove this effect. A DC 20 Perception check or a DC 15

lethargic but on reaching his teenage years he started to enjoy excellent health and shook off all illnesses. He began to have strange dreams – echoes of the glorious past lives of his draconic ancestors. In these dreams, he saw towns and villages burning, experienced the awesome sensation of flight and gazed upon vast, incalculable hoards of glittering treasure.

Parardar soon realised these dreams were visions of his draconic ancestor's past and quickly understood that only he among the Levien family experienced them. Determined to ensure that only he claimed this draconic birthright he smothered his younger sister in her bed one night and, months later, poisoned his own mother. His grieving father he left alone while he learned all he could of the alchemist's trade.

As Parardar grew to manhood, further signs of his unique heritage began to manifest. For weeks his arms were wracked with indescribable pain which confined the young man to his

Heal check reveals the subject is not dead.

Atk Options claws 9/day

Special Actions breath weapon (30-foot cone, 15d6 fire, DC 23 Reflex halves)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 15th; concentration +21 (+25 casting defensively or when grappled); ranged touch +9; Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Quicken Spell, bloodline arcana [fire])

7th (4/day)—*form of the dragon II, project image, spell turning*

6th (7/day)—*disintegrate* (DC 23), *form of the dragon, greater dispel magic, true seeing*

5th (7/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 22), *cone of cold* (DC 22), *feeblemind* (DC 22), *spell resistance, teleport*

4th (7/day)—*dimension door, enervation, fear* (DC 21), *greater invisibility, stone shape*

3rd (7/day [6 remaining])—*displacement, fireball* (DC 20; +10 damage), *fly, lightning bolt* (DC 20), *protection from energy*

2nd (8/day [7 remaining])—*blur, false life, glitterdust* (DC 19), *mirror image, see invisibility, resist energy*

1st (8/day)—*disguise self, expeditious retreat, mage armour, magic missile, shield, true strike*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash, bleed* (DC 17), *dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 17), *mage hand, prestidigitation, touch of fatigue* (DC 17), *read magic*

Combat Gear *scroll of acid fog* and *prismatic wall, staff of fire* (25 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con –, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 24

SQ rejuvenation

Feats Combat Casting, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Eschew Materials^B, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell^B, Toughness

Skills as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +20, Spellcraft +20

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, permanent *telepathic bond* (Sygaxmere)

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +2, headband of alluring charisma +2*

bed until, one day, the suffering abruptly ended and he found he could bring forth claws. Now convinced of his birthright and destiny, Parardar slew his father. With that final sacrifice, his draconic pact was sealed, and it unleashed within the young man sorcerous abilities which, at first, he struggled to control.

Hiding away for months, he battled to gain mastery over the mysterious energies flowing within him. Eventually, his intellect and force of will overcame the magical powers which threatened to consume him, but the process robbed the driven young man of what little humanity he had left. Loading all the worldly wealth his family possessed onto a wagon, he set off to find a secluded place from where he could continue his studies.

After several months, Parardar settled in the ruins of an ancient hill fort far from civilisation, only returning to nearby settlements for essential supplies. As the years passed, he became a supremely powerful sorcerer but, in spite of his magical prowess and his unusual bloodline, he was unable to halt the inevitable ageing of his weak human form. Desperate to prolong his existence in order to master his draconic heritage, he undertook the lengthy, complicated and costly ritual to transform himself into a lich. With the ritual complete, Parardar found that it had granted him unusual boons – the ability to breathe fire as his forebear and to sprout wings.

Personality: For almost two centuries, the lich-sorcerer has lived a reclusive existence – content with his studies and dealing with travellers and intruders alike with ruthless efficiency. Parardar has been without company for so long that he has forgotten how to be around others and he rarely speaks other than to utter an incantation or when reading aloud from some forbidden, eldritch tome.

However, something of his kin is now stirring within him – the pursuit of the earthly treasures so coveted by dragons.

Mannerisms: Parardar is determined to fulfil his draconic destiny and, as such, has begun to exhibit bizarre patterns of behaviour. For example, he has taken to sleeping, as a dragon would, amid the growing pile of treasures looted from unfortunate travellers straying too close to his lair.

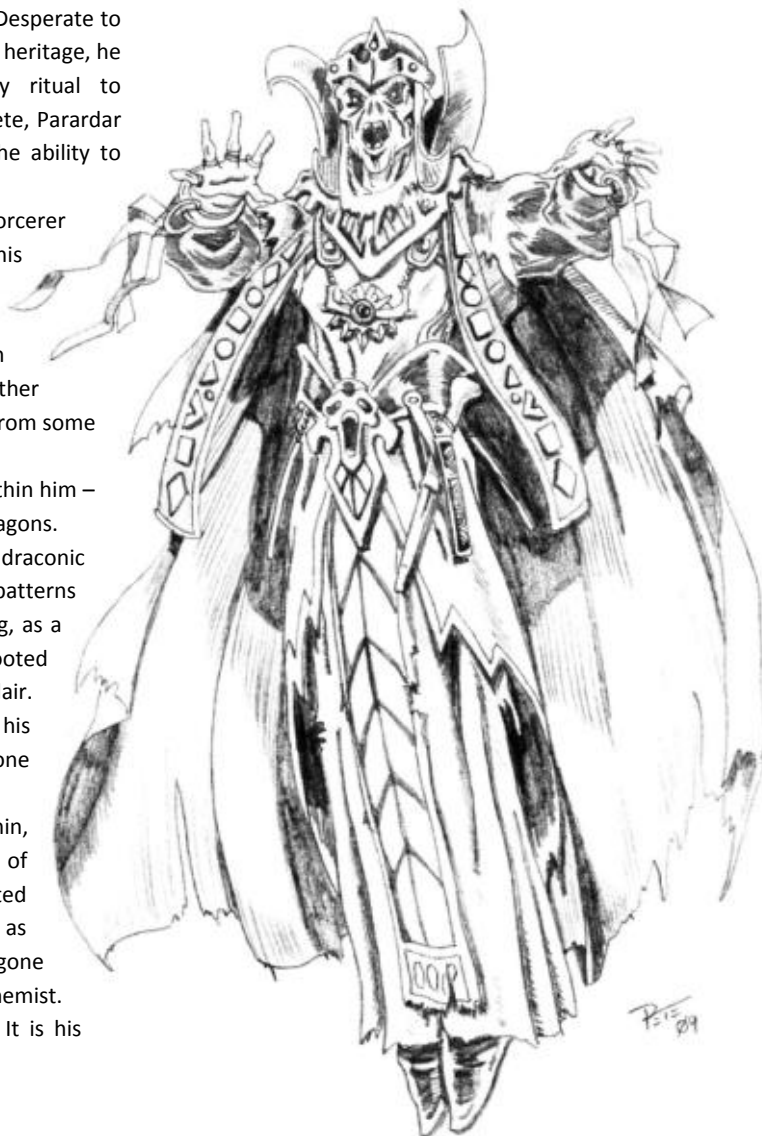
He also has the unnerving habit of speaking to his long-dead father in a very dismissive and chiding tone when attempting various alchemical experiments.

Distinguishing Features: Tall and impossibly thin, Parardar exudes an aura of power – a potent mix of sorcerous might and draconic menace transmitted through the blood-red pin-pricks of light that serve as his eyes. He dresses in the tattered robes of a bygone era and is adorned with the tools of wizard and alchemist. He is never without his wondrous magical circlet. It is his most prized possession.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The PCs may encounter Parardar when they wander too close to his hidden lair. The lich approaches them and demands their fealty in exchange for their miserable lives. If they refuse, he attacks. If they drive him away, he marks them for vengeance.

Alternatively, the PCs could be investigating whispered rumours of a rising evil. Following the trail of the mercenary bands flocking to serve Parardar they discover that his hill fort lair has been transformed into a vast armed camp. The PCs must infiltrate the camp, find Parardar and crush him before the undead sorcerer unleashes his minions in an orgy of blood and suffering.



IRDENSEYR LHAMGOS

The proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing, Irdenseyr Lhamgos is a breaker-of-hearts with a devilish smile and a kiss to die for.

Background: Many centuries ago there lived a wealthy man so lustful, so self-obsessed and so amoral that when he died - the victim of several irate husbands and fathers - his soul, rather than ascending to peaceful rest, spawned a demon imbued with a prodigious appetite for those same vices.

The incubus formed from Irdenseyr's spirit continues to live a wholly selfish and destructive existence revolving around its rapaciousness, the pursuit of personal gratification and the promotion of infidelity.

Irdenseyr enjoys weaving webs of deceit, betrayal and chaos among the populace so much that he has taken to living among them. He uses *change shape* to appear as a handsome thirty-something man who is an expert with both bow and blade. Posing as a ranger for hire, one of his favourite means of sowing anarchy is to be accepted as part of an adventuring group. He then forms intimate relationships with some (or even all) of his companions (irrespective of their gender), before luring them into acts of betrayal which inevitably end in broken hearts,

IRDENSEYR LHAMGOS

CR 15 (XP 51,200)

Incubus fighter 8

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*; Perception +35, Sense Motive +18

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

ACP 0; Acrobatics +12, Fly +22, Stealth +22

AC 37, touch 18, flat-footed 29; **CMD** 38; Dodge, Mobility (+7 Dex, +9 armour [+3 *mithral breastplate*], +3 shield [+2 *buckler*], +1 dodge, +7 natural)

Immune electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 20, cold 10

Fort +17, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16 (+18 vs. fear); **SR** 18

hp 192 (16 HD); **DR** cold iron or good/10

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +20

Melee +1 *longsword* +21/+16/+11/+6 (1d8+5/19-20) and claw +19 (1d6+2) or

Melee claw +20 (1d6+2) and claw +19 (1d6+2)

Ranged +2 *distance longbow* (range 220 ft.; Deadly Aim [-4 attack, +8 damage], Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot) +28/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+9/x3)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Greater Vital Strike, energy drain
Energy Drain (Su) Irdenseyr drains energy from a mortal he lures into an act of passion (such as a kiss). An unwilling victim must be grappled. His kiss bestows one negative level (DC 22 Fortitude removes) and has the effect of a *suggestion* (DC 22 Will negates), asking the victim to accept another act of passion.

Special Actions profane gift (1/day)

Profane Gift (Su) As a full-round action, Irdenseyr can grant a

friendships sundered and lives ruined.

Irdenseyr never stays in one place or with one group of individuals for very long. He moves from village to town to city with persistent regularity to avoid suspicion or the detection of his true nature. By playing the act of a simple hunter, he is readily accepted into most communities and at first goes out of his way to earn the trust of everyone he meets. A thoroughly charming and plausible individual, he seduces hand-picked victims to receive what he terms "his blessing" – the kiss of an incubus. Irdenseyr particularly enjoys having females in his thrall and stirring up jealousy among male rivals. He lives for the chaos he creates – and is happy when destroying the marriage of a simple farmer or driving a wedge between nobles or members of an adventuring party. Irdenseyr's minions are those who have entered into a dark pact with him in order to receive his infernal blessing. In almost every city, town and village where Irdenseyr plies his "trade" there are at least one or two women – usually of some standing – who are under this nefarious creature's influence.

Personality: Irdenseyr is outwardly charming, witty and thoughtful. If he has a weakness, it is his vanity. Irdenseyr cannot

profane gift to a willing humanoid by touching it for 1 full round. The target gains a +2 profane bonus to an ability score of its choice. A profane gift enables Irdenseyr to communicate telepathically with the target across any distance (and he may use *suggestion* through it) and persists until removed by *dispel evil* or *dispel good*. Irdenseyr can remove the gift as a free action (which causes 2d6 Charisma drain to the victim, no save). A victim may not benefit from more than one profane gift at a time.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +20)

Constant—*detect good*, *tongues*

At will—*charm monster* (DC 22), *detect thoughts* (DC 20), *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 lbs of objects only), *suggestion* (DC 21), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *vampiric touch*

1/day—*dominate person* (DC 23), *summon* (level 3, 1 babau 50%)

Combat Gear *horn of evil*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 24, Con 22, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 27

SQ armour training (2), bravery (+2), change shape (*alter self*, Small or Medium humanoid), weapon training (bows +1)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deadly Aim, Dodge, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Specialisation (longbow)

Skills as above plus Bluff +19, Diplomacy +23, Disguise +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +14

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, *tongues*, telepathy 100 ft.

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +3, *eyes of the eagle*, *boots of elvenkind*, jewellery (worth 1,000 gp), 23 gp

resist proving he is the best at whatever he does. Thus he often enters archery tournaments where his almost supernatural ability with the bow comes to the fore. He also has a fondness for gems and baubles of rare value and is not above stealing to enhance his own impressive collection.

Mannerisms: By a strange quirk of the arcane, Irdenseyr's true reflection is revealed by traditional lead-lined mirrors. Thus he goes to great pains to avoid them – feigning illness or inventing all manner of excuses to make his escape. Despite many attempts, Irdenseyr retains this irksome flaw no matter what form he assumes.

Distinguishing Features: Devilishly handsome, Irdenseyr prides himself on his appearance. He seldom assumes his true form – that of a hairless, horned and winged demon – unless fighting to the death (when appearances become irrelevant).

IRDENSEYR'S GUISES

Although he has the power to assume almost any form, Irdenseyr often uses one of the personas below. He always uses his real name – so his victims know who is responsible for their woes.

- **Forester:** Appearing as a simple, but devastatingly handsome forester, Irdenseyr wanders the woodlands and forests seeking out groups in need of his "aid". He often lurks out of sight until the group is in peril before appearing to save the day. He uses this pretext to join travellers whereupon he begins to seduce its female members. In this form he has long, black hair, piercing blue eyes and a rugged, muscular frame. He is heavily tanned and wears typical forester's gear.
- **Shy Warrior:** Assuming a painfully shy, humble demeanour Irdenseyr poses as a poor man-at-arms seeking employment. Once he has chosen a victim he seeks them out and haltingly offers his services explaining that he must find work so that his young orphaned nephews (Rhys and Solfan) can keep a roof over their heads. Once employed, he mercilessly works the sympathy angle – morosely staring into campfires, whittling small wooden figurines, appearing upset when confronted with other children and so on. Appearing as a young human male seemingly unaware of his stunning good looks

Irdenseyr has fair skin, blond hair and striking blue eyes.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

PCs may have the misfortune to require an additional party member and a mischievous GM may decide that Irdenseyr fits the bill. Alternatively, a party member may compete against Irdenseyr with bow or blade at a fete, celebration or tourney. Irdenseyr may also be introduced to the party as "the man" who ruined a marriage or "ran off with my wife, sister, daughter, or friend" never to be seen again. Irdenseyr leaves a trail of emotional devastation in his wake and the chances are that, sooner or later, someone will want to make him pay.



FIRHAR LUEDUL

Firhar is a seeker of lost knowledge, a dabbler in the dark arts and a skilled magicker now seeking to prolong his life through nefarious means...

Even by half-elf standards, Firhar is into his twilight years and has become obsessed with death magic and prolonging his own life. Thus, he has taken his first steps towards becoming a lich.

Background: In his younger days, Firhar Leudal made his name as a founder member of *The Fallen Lance* adventuring party. Even then, he was preoccupied with the study of ancient texts pertaining to necromancy and was admonished on several occasions by the group's leader – the half-elf paladin Tanesha Brightstar – to stick resolutely to the path of light.

Firhar gave up the adventuring life long ago and now lives a perfectly respectable life in his mansion in the wealthy part of town. It was Tanesha Brightstar's death of old age that precipitated his spiral into darkness. The paladin's demise made Firhar, the Fallen Lance's last surviving member, acutely aware of his own mortality. Simply unable to bear the thought of the great, black unknown, Firhar gladly embraced the pursuit of eternal life – even at the cost of his own soul. If and when he

completes the transformation into a lich, Firhar intends to take all his wealth and relocate to a new home where his pursuit of arcane knowledge can continue undisturbed. To this end, he has identified a remote lighthouse a good fifty miles from his current salubrious home that will become his new lair.

A forceful, engaging and erudite speaker, Firhar's expertise and wisdom are often called upon by the town leaders (who do not know his dark secret) who find him knowledgeable but rather arrogant. Firhar has quietly gathered a coven of seven apprentices whom he has ensorcelled. In the cellar beneath his home, his minions - all low-level spellcasters (four human males and three elven females) - assist in his pursuit of eternal life through the acquisition of various evil artefacts, ritual scrolls and, of course, victims. Firhar will stop at nothing to achieve his ultimate goal and has already sacrificed several lives on the altar of his own ambition.

Personality: Firhar is outwardly charming, an exceedingly clever man and a generous host. However, scratch beneath the surface of his public persona and you find a morbidly self-obsessed individual. He never enquires after others, preferring instead to recall his own experiences and exploits or boast about

FIRHAR LUEDUL

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

Male half-elf wizard (diviner) 10

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +10 (forewarned); **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +5, Sense Motive +0

Forewarned (Su) Firhar can always act in the surprise round even if he did not spot his foes. He is still flat-footed until he takes an action.

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 16

(+1 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +1])

Immune scrying adept, *sleep*

Scrying Adept (Su) Firhar is always aware when he is observed via magic as if he had a permanent detect scrying running.

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 57 (10 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +4

Melee dagger +4 (1d4-1/19-20)

Special Actions Heighten Spell, diviner's fortune (7/day)

Diviner's Fortune (Sp) Firhar can touch a creature to give it a +5 insight bonus on all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14 [+18 casting defensively or grappling]; spell penetration +12; barred schools: conjuration, evocation; shared spells)

5th—*feeblemind* (DC 19), *magic jar* (DC 19), *prying eyes*

4th—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *heightened charm person* (DC 18), *confusion* (DC 18), *phantasmal killer* (DC 18), *scrying* (DC

18),

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *haste*, *heroism*, *tongues*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *detect thoughts*, *false life*, *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*

1st—*comprehend languages*, *detect secret doors*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *protection from law*

0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *pearl of power* (1st-level), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *wand of black tentacles* (5 charges), *scroll of blink*, *fly*, *invisibility*, *stoneskin* and *teleport*, *wand of lightning bolts* (10 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ familiar (raven [Night Eyes]), multitalented (sorcerer, wizard), scrying adept

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll^B, Skill Focus (Spellcraft)^B, Spell Penetration

Skills as above plus Appraise +15, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (engineering) +8, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Spellcraft +20

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon, empathic link

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch

Spellbook as above plus as determined by the GM

his collection of art and antiques. An increasingly shallow individual, Firhar measures people by their wealth, importance, notoriety or usefulness to him and his quest.

Mannerisms: The wizard has the very rude and off-putting habit of staring absent-mindedly into the distance when in conversation. He is also vain and self-conscious, unable to pass a mirror without admiring his own reflection and horrified if he discovers a grey hair (because it feeds his fear of ageing and death). As a result, he surrounds himself with young and beautiful people, be they servants or guests.

Distinguishing Features: Handsome, bearded Firhar is always immaculately presented in exquisitely tailored clothes with his hair oiled and scented in the fashion of noblemen half his age. No matter what the occasion, his familiar – the raven Night Eyes – is never far from his side.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The PCs may be invited to Firhar's mansion for a party along with other notable individuals. A few days later, they learn that another guest has vanished and begin to make enquiries into her fate.

Alternatively, PCs may be hired by the wizard Goranil Lodestar from the nearby elven settlement of Evenlight. Goranil is beside himself with worry at the disappearance of his daughter, Lucretta. At the GM's discretion, Lucretta could have been kidnapped by Firhar or could actually be the newest member of his coven.

Finally, Firhar could hire the PCs to investigate the lair of a lich he believes lies nearby. Firhar's own investigations into lichdom have struck a dead-end and in desperation he has taken to looting libraries, tomes and other locations that may contain relevant information. Firhar has already tried to sack the lich's lair, but was driven back by the foul creature's magics. Not wishing to risk his own destruction again, he approaches the PCs in the guise of a local sage worried about the lich's sudden awakening (an awakening he himself precipitated). Firhar tells the PCs he fears the lich is near the culmination of some dark scheme and that he needs the foul creature's notes and research materials to reverse the process. He offers to pay the PCs handsomely and even keeps his word (if they don't work out his deception); after all, he may need expendable dupes to steal other works of interest.

ENCOUNTERS

Firhar could be encountered almost anywhere in town. Whenever abroad he is very aware of his perceived station and does not openly move against enemies.

The PCs could encounter Firhar (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Firhar Luedul and two Mercenary Leaders (CR 7 each, page 7).

EL 12 (XP 19,200): Firhar Luedul, two Mercenary Leaders (CR 7 each, page 7) and four Elite Mercenary Warriors (CR 5 each, page 7).

EL 13 (XP 25,600): Firhar Luedul and six Mercenary Leaders (CR 7 each, page 7).

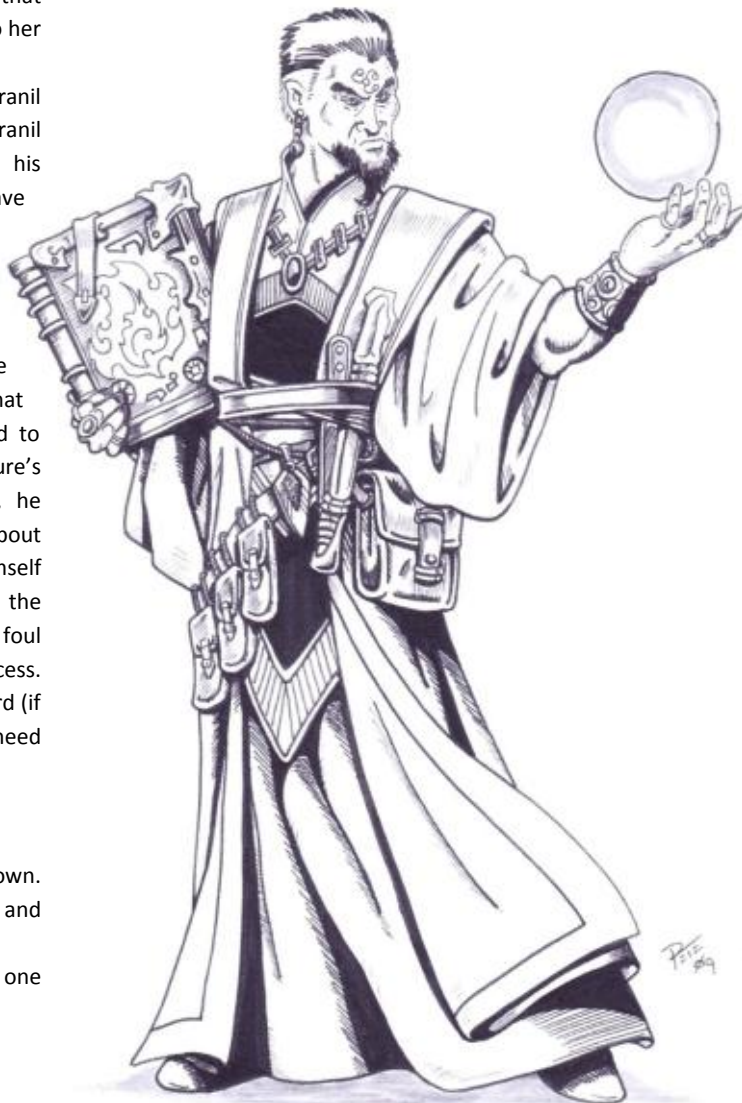
LORE

Characters can learn more about Firhar Luedul with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 19: This is Firhar Luedul, a powerful diviner.

DC 24: Firhar is much in-demand by the town's leaders who often call upon his wisdom and magical powers.

DC 29: Firhar craves eternal life and has begun to research the process of transforming himself into a lich. He has gathered about a small coven of lesser wizards to aid in this task.



AELIRE MAIARAL

It was unrequited love which drove the adventurer Aelire Maiaral into utter despair, insanity and corruption.

Aelire Maiaral was chosen for greatness by the half-elf ranger Kemzin Dryrnach and joined him and his companions in the adventuring party The Black Swans, a band of semi-successful treasure hunters and tomb looters who had gained a small amount of fame after discovering and comprehensively sacking the Lost Shrine of the Crimson Guardian.

Young, lacking intelligence and emotionally immature, Aelire quickly fell in love with Dryrnach and – after storing up her feelings for more than two years – finally found the courage to confront the handsome and charming leader of the group one moonlit night as they shared a watch together. The ranger's brutal rejection, coupled with his confession that he was secretly betrothed to the party's elven wizard Aluora Reemartas, was simply too much for Aelire to bear.

As Dryrnach attempted to console her, Aelire drew the ranger's dagger from its sheath and slashed his throat. As the ranger fell to the ground, his lifeblood drenching the grass and his vision dimming, the last thing he saw was Aelire approaching the slumbering wizard with his bloody knife clutched in her hands.

Without a shred of remorse Aelire slew her remaining

companions as they slept quenching what little humanity she had in a night of murder and madness. Aelire then peeled the skin off the face of her love-rival, taking it as a macabre trophy of her victory before looting anything of value. Taking Dryrnach's black steed, she rode away from the slaughter – leaving the stark bodies of her erstwhile companions to the crows.

One of the items she stole was an ancient tome belonging to the group's tielfling sorcerer and she paid good money to have the book translated – before, of course, killing the scribe. The tome, containing the mad scribbling of a disciple of the demon Arachne, fascinated Aelire. She now lives her life by the “code” of Arachne and considers herself a devotee of the monstrous demonic spider.

Background: The youngest daughter of simple farm folk, Aelire's early life was bereft of affection. Her parents – hard-working folk who lived a hand-to-mouth existence – did not have enough time to lavish the attention their daughter so desperately craved. She resented her siblings, who all found love in the community and started their own families, but her sour demeanour and caustic tongue kept potential suitors at bay.

Poorly educated, she seemed destined for a life of back-breaking drudgery until the leader of a fledgling adventuring party spotted her athleticism and tenacity. What she lacked in intelligence and social skills, however, Aelire more than made up

AELIRE MAIARAL

CR 3 (XP 800)

Tall and statuesque, this imposing woman's facial features are set in a sneer. Her shoulder length black hair hangs lankly.

Female half-elf antipaladin 4

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7, Sense Motive +2
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -6; Acrobatics -6 (-10 jumping), Ride -1

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 17

(+8 armour [+1 banded mail], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Immune disease, *sleep*; **Weakness** smite evil

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Aelire deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 34 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Aelire radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee mwk longsword +9 (1d8+2/19-20) or

Melee Touch touch of corruption +7 (2d6 plus sickened for 4 rounds [DC 14 negates condition])

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +4 (1d6+2)

Atk Options smite good 1/day (+2 attack, +4 damage, +2 AC)

Special Actions touch of corruption 6/day (channel negative energy [2d6 damage; DC 14 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Aelire can also touch an undead creature to restore 2d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)

1st—*protection from good*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +6)

At-Will—*detect good*

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ aura of evil (moderate), cruelty (sickened), plague bringer, unholy resilience

Feats Extra Lay on Hands, Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Bluff +6, Knowledge (religion) +4

Languages Common, Elven

Gear as above plus unholy symbol, spell component pouch, 200 gp in mixed coins

If unprepared for battle, Aelire has the following statistics:

Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Acrobatics -1, Ride +4

AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 17

(+3 armour [studded leather])

for with her courage and stamina and this made her a useful, if never popular, addition to The Black Swans.

Personality: Aelire is cold and utterly devoid of emotion. Her every move is now driven by the hope that Arachne will note her actions and that she will be further blessed by the demon.

She is disdainful of peasants (“scum” as she refers to them), seeing their pathetic lives as mockeries of her own, difficult upbringing. In particular, obviously happy peasant families drive her into a near homicidal rage, followed quickly by a deep depression that can last for weeks. Often, she only surfaces from her depression when she has caused the family in question great grief and suffering.

Aelire reserves special hatred for men of all races. If a man so much as looks at her wrong in the wrong way she flies into a rage. She also loathes elven women for they remind her of her dead love rival. To other women and children she is, at best, disinterested and, at worst, downright condescending and/or violent.

Mannerisms: Aelire is aloof and rude; her large brown eyes have a permanent far-away look. She speaks slowly, almost begrudging every word, and her face is set in what appears to be a constant expression of contempt for everyone and everything.

She has taken to keeping a dozen or more spiders in a small, leather box which hangs from her swordbelt and, on occasion, tips them on to the bar or table of an inn in order to play with her “little pets” and for the amusement value of watching the reaction of other patrons. Anyone harming her pets gains her immediate and everlasting ire.

Distinguishing Features: Aelire would be considered pretty were it not for her slightly hooked nose and the cruel set of her mouth. Her black hair is also greasy and lifeless – much like its owner.

She favours wearing a long, dark-hued cloak because she believes it gives her a dramatic appearance when first accosting her victims.

Signature Weapon: Aelire wields a thick-edged masterwork longsword in battle. The weapon’s blade is jet black and it has a large, ornate hilt, which is chipped in many places. The weapon’s haft is of darkwood wrapped with faded and sweat-stained leather while the pommel depicts a stylized clenched fist.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

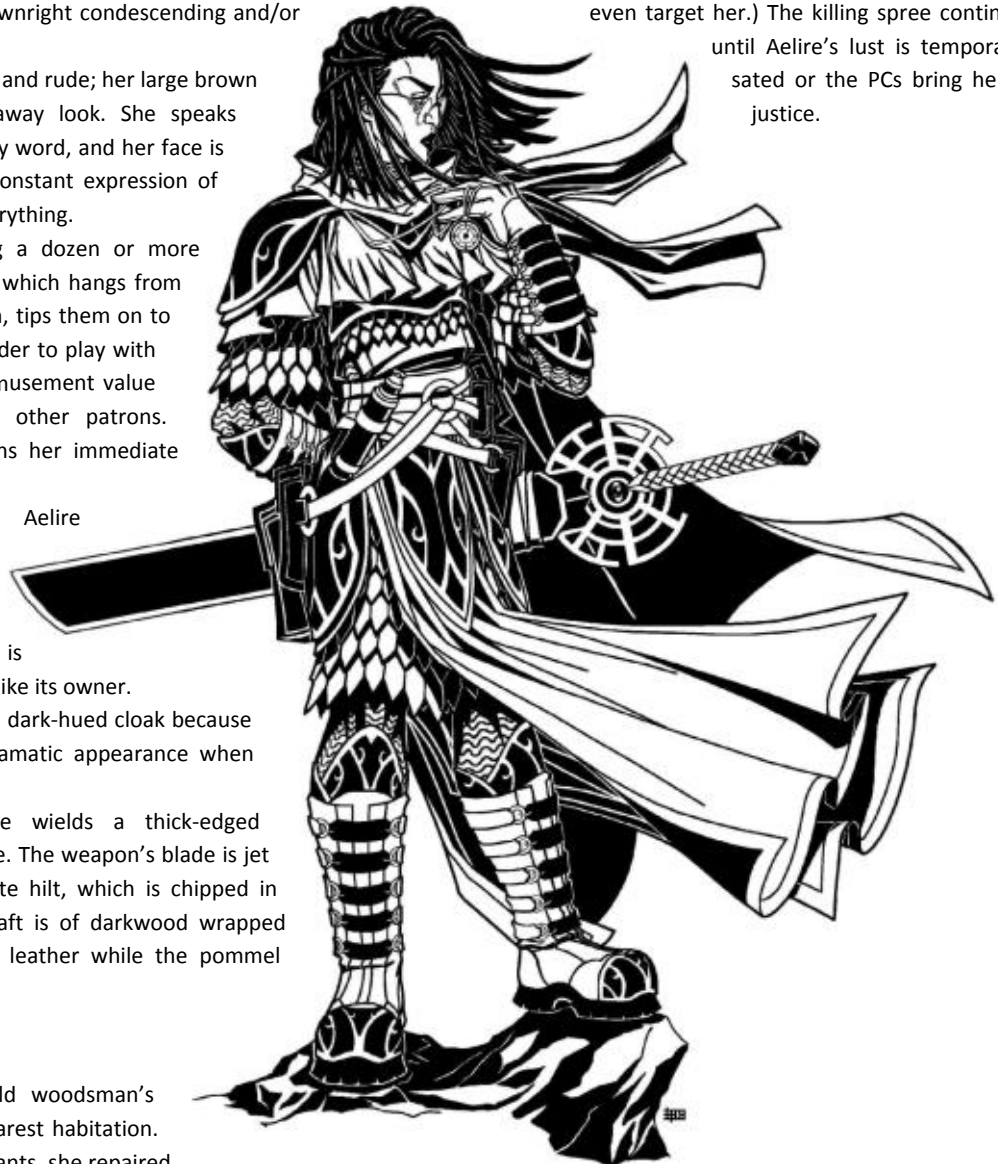
Aelire bases herself in an old woodsman’s cottage five miles from the nearest habitation. After killing the previous occupants, she repaired

the place and is now virtually self-sufficient. Dwelling there alone, the only folk who see the inside of the ramshackle cottage are those destined to die within.

Over the last 12 months, Aelire has taken to highway robbery, riding Kemzin Dryrnach’s horse and wearing a horrific mask made from the skin of her dead love rival. She targets only men and favours wandering priests who follow good-aligned deities or lone adventurers. As her victims lie dying, she pours her pet spiders into their mouths and holds them shut – suffocating her wretched victim in the name of Arachne.

Alternatively, the PCs could be investigating a spate of murders involving horribly mutilated elven and half-elven women (they may even know one of the victims). The culprit is, of course, Aelire who yet sates her lust for revenge against her long-dead love rival by slaying any who even vaguely resemble her. (If a PC is an elven or half-elven female, Aelire could even target her.) The killing spree continues

until Aelire’s lust is temporarily sated or the PCs bring her to justice.



EILUANNA MAIASAR

Eiluanna is a twisted and bitter woman who (wrongly) believes she was left to die at the hands of a band of orcs by her adventuring companions...

The warrior Eiluanna Maiasar was tortured and suffered unspeakable cruelties at the hands of the Torn Entrails orcs for almost a year until she eventually escaped. Upon reaching civilisation, she was a changed woman, filled with hatred and a burning desire for revenge. She now leads a group of murderous bandits.

Background: A member of the adventuring company, *Tylos' Cauldron*, Eiluanna was captured when she and her companions encountered an orc raiding party while travelling through a dense forest. Two of Eiluanna's companions were slain and the rest scattered. Separated from her friends, she was beaten to the ground, knocked unconscious and carried away. Eiluanna's time with the orcs purged her of all goodness and mercy. Gone was the idealistic young fighter who set forth to conquer evil and, in her place, stands a grim and hopelessly malign woman who values only strength of arms and seeks naught but personal riches and the joy of slaughter.

Eiluanna gathered a group of vile mercenaries, travelled back to the orcs' nest and slew them all – young and old alike - in a night of bloody savagery. Collecting the spoils of her victory, Eiluanna saw the potential for great wealth with her new allies.

Her band of brigands now operates from the old orc encampment, which is well off the beaten track. Her seven most trusted minions comprise five human warriors, the elven sorcerer Cuthalion Telrunya and a hulking half-orc fighter called Kriuk the Skull-Stalker, whose life Eiluanna spared during the raid on his home.

For three years now, Eiluanna's band has preyed upon travellers using the highway skirting the forest and anyone foolish enough to leave the trail. Several attempts to capture or kill the bandits have failed – with one troop of cavalry going missing and two troops of foot soldiers being led a merry dance in the trackless forest. Eiluanna is a superb combatant, lithe but powerful, and her minions – even Kriuk - are in awe of her battle prowess. She is a master with any edged weapon and, while showing no mercy to her enemies, does not allow her band to torture or mistreat captives, preferring instead to end their lives quickly by slitting their throats.

Personality: Eiluanna considers herself to have been forged into an unbreakable warrior by her captivity and has vowed that she will never again take orders from anyone. These days she is driven by personal gain and her growing reputation as someone who operates outside the law of the land. She particularly covets intricate items of gold and silver jewellery.

Mannerisms: Having suffered the depraved attentions of her orc captors, Eiluanna does not like to be touched by anyone. Even brushing against her provokes fury.

She can often be found sitting alone with a faraway look in her eyes, combing her long, lustrous black hair. Eiluanna sleeps fitfully, always with a dagger close at hand, and suffers nightmares that usually wake the entire camp.

Distinguishing Features: Eiluanna is an imposing, but lithe individual standing a full two inches over six feet. Her signature item is the vicious, enchanted battleaxe *Severrak* which she wrested from the dead orc chieftain who had subjected her to months of cruelty and humiliation. Using this gruesome weapon gives her (an albeit temporary) feeling of control and a measure of satisfaction.

She has several scars – inflicted by knives, whips and other devices of torture – on her back, which she keeps hidden. Her voice is strikingly light and melodious, strikingly in contrast to her dark mien.

EILUANNA MAIASAR

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

Female elf fighter 10

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -3; Acrobatics +8 (+4 jumping), Climb +3, Ride +9, Swim +3

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 27; Dodge

(+3 Dex, +9 armour [+2 *banded mail*], +1 dodge)

Immune *sleep*

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 89 (10 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +12

Melee +1 *battleaxe* +17/+12 (1d8+8/19-20 x3) or

Melee +1 *glaive* (reach 10 ft.) +14/+9 (1d10+5/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +15/+10 (1d8+2/x3)

Atk Options Power Attack (-3 attack, +6 damage [+9 with battleaxe or glaive]), Vital Strike

Combat Gear 20 arrows, *potion of aid*, *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ armour training (2), bravery (+3), weapon familiarity, weapon training (axes +2, polearms +1)

Feats Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialisation (battleaxe)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +5

Languages Common, Elven

Gear as above plus *boots of elvenkind*, 15 gp, 3 golden rings (worth 200 gp each), pair of silver and gold earrings (worth 500 gp)

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The local authorities recently grew tired of Eiluanna's depredations and despatched a large company of soldiers to seek and destroy the bandits. Many of the soldiers did not return and those that did spoke of an implacable enemy able to strike and retreat at will. In desperation, the local lord turns to the PCs and asks them to eradicate this threat.

Eiluanna's bandits attack a merchant caravan the PCs are either travelling with or guarding and they must fight off her attack. Tracking the retreating bandits through the forest, the PCs eventually discover Eiluanna's lair. Eiluanna has many captives in her lair, having recently turned her hand to kidnapping. One of the captives is a friend of the PCs, or at the least a friend of someone who has hired the PCs to effect a rescue while he stalls over the price of freedom. The PCs must infiltrate the old orc lair and rescue the captive before Eiluanna grows tired of the negotiations over price and simply slits the captive's throat.

Alternatively, the sorcerer Tylos Cinbar (leader of the remnants of Tylos' Cauldron) recruits the PCs. Tortured by feelings of guilt over Eiluanna's ordeal he asks them to hunt down his erstwhile companion. Tylos doesn't want her dead, rather he asks the PCs to capture her so that he may try to mend the trauma to her psyche. However, he knows that this may not be possible. If they slay her, he asks that they return her body so that he might bury her properly. He cares nothing for her minions.

ENCOUNTERS

Normally encountered in the woodland wilderness, Eiluanna rarely enters towns or cities unless she has specific business within.

Along with the named minions mentioned above, the PCs could also encounter Eiluanna (and/or her minions) in one or more of these groups:

EL 9 (6,400): One Mercenary Leader (CR 7, page 7), one Elite Mercenary Warrior (CR 5, page 7), and two Mercenary Warriors (CR 3 each, page 7).

EL 10 (9,600): Eiluanna Maiasar and Kriuk the Skull-Stalker (use Grash the Destroyer's details; CR 7, page 6).

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Eiluanna Maiasar, Kriuk the Skull-Stalker (use Grash the Destroyer's details; CR 7, page 6) and one Mercenary Leader (CR 7, page 7).

EL 12 (XP 19,200): Eiluanna Maiasar, Kriuk the Skull-Stalker (use Grash the Destroyer's details; CR 7, page 6), one Mercenary Leader (CR 7, page 7) and four Elite Mercenary Warriors (CR 5 each, page 7).

LORE

Characters can learn more about Eiluanna Maiasar with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 19: This is Eiluanna Maiasar, a deadly and black-hearted elven warrior. She is famed for her skill with a battleaxe.

DC 24: Eiluanna carries the enchanted battleaxe Sevrarak, which she wrested from an orc chieftain who tortured her for months.

DC 29: Eiluanna was once part of the adventuring party, Tylos' Cauldron, but a disastrous adventure left two of her companions dead and her in the clutches of an orc chieftain. His unspeakable tortures broke her mind and she fell into evil.



KORAVEL NAHEL

The founder and head of a secretive cabal of werewolf druids, Koravel has carved out a substantial forest kingdom but is slowly losing control of his mind to the beast lurking in his very mind.

A natural lycanrope and a druid of surpassing power, Koravel Nahel is fanatical in his devotion to the protection of nature in all her savage, uncaring glory.

Background: Koravel never asked to be different, he was born that way. Indeed, he arrived screaming and wailing into the arms of a family whose blood had been tainted for centuries by the curse of lycanthropy. One of Koravel's ancestors – a skilled hunter named Rannech – was left for dead when a werewolf attacked his family's cabin and slaughtered his wife and three young children. Overcome with grief at his loss, he tracked down the creature on a night when the full moon once again hung in a cloudless sky. Rannech then transformed into a slavering beast and slew the thing which had taken away his humanity.

Koravel's ancestor went on to have another family and his descendents have carried the "moon curse," as the Nahel clan

now term their heritage, ever since. To the outside world, the Nahels are mere trappers, fur traders and fishermen. They guard their secret well. Koravel, however, is different. In a now forgotten tongue, Nahel means "pack".

Koravel revels in his primal heritage and left his homestead more than eight decades ago. Over the years he has lived an almost feral existence in his woodland home and has become a figure of immense power and influence.

Some forty years ago, Koravel founded a secretive cabal of druids known as Rannech's Brethren. These men and women – once idealistic young woodland wardens – were corrupted by Koravel's honeyed promises of power and a closer bond with the natural world. Each has now given themselves willingly to the curse by allowing Koravel to taste of their flesh. According to Koravel's twisted doctrine, were-creatures are nature's highest form of evolution: the supreme predators. Feeding on the flesh of humans is considered natural by members of Rannech's Brethren, who grow more wild and inhumane with each passing season. Despite their corruption, Koravel's druids remain

KORAVEL NAHEL (NORMAL FORM) CR 19 (XP 204,800)

Male half-elf natural werewolf druid 19

NE Medium humanoid (augmented humanoid, elf, human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +38, Sense Motive +11

Speed 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; trackless step, woodland stride

Woodland Stride (Ex) Koravel can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects him.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +6 (+10 jumping)

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 32

(+1 Dex, +4 deflection [*ring of deflection* +4], +5 natural [extended *barkskin*])

Immune poison

Fort +18, **Ref** +11, **Will** +22; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. fey's spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities

hp 184 (19 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +17 (+19 grapple)

Melee unarmed strike +18/+13/+8 (1d3+4 nonlethal)

Atk Options Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple

Special Actions change shape, wild shape (8/day; *beast shape III*, *elemental body IV*, *plant shape III*, Natural Spell)

Change Shape (Su) Koravel has three forms (humanoid, animal and hybrid) which he can shift between as a move action. His equipment does not meld with the new form between humanoid and hybrid forms but does between these forms and animal form.

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 19th; concentration +29 [+33 casting defensively or grappling]; share spells)

9th—*foresight*, *mass cure critical wounds*, *shambler*, *storm of vengeance* (DC 28)

8th—*earthquake*, *finger of death* (DC 27), *reverse gravity*, *word of recall*

7th—*control weather*, *creeping doom* (DC 26), *fire storm* (DC 26), *heal*, *wind walk*

6th—*find the path*, *fire seeds* (DC 25), *greater dispel magic* (2), *wall of stone*

5th—*baleful polymorph*, *call lightning storm* (DC 24), *control winds*, *death ward*, *stoneskin*, *wall of thorns*

4th—*air walk*, *cure serious wounds* (3), *flame strike*, *rusting grip*

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 22), *cure moderate wounds*, extended *barkskin*, *protection from energy* (2), *water breathing*

2nd—*animal messenger*, *barkskin*, *fog cloud*, *lesser restoration* (2), *tree shape*

1st—*cure light wounds* (4), *endure elements*, *faerie fire*, *speak with animals*

0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *stabilize*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 28, Cha 14

SQ lycanthropic empathy (wolves), multitalented, nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, timeless body, wild empathy +21 (+17 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell, Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Toughness

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +2 (+6 vs. wolves), Handle Animal +14, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +20, Survival +28

Languages Common, Druidic, Elven, link

Gear as above plus *belt of physical might* +4, *headband of inspired wisdom* +6, *boots of striding and springing*, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *cloak of resistance* +2, spell component pouch, holy symbol, 2 gp

devoted to nature – working together to protect their homeland against any and all perceived threats (which include incursions by tribes of orcs, excessive logging and even the pollution of waterways by the region’s nascent industry).

Personality: Originally, Koravel saw himself as the father-figure of a group of like-minded guardians of the wild – using their atavistic nature to protect the woodland and creatures dwelling within it. Over the years, however, Koravel has slowly surrendered to the beast within and much of his human personality has now been replaced by more base instincts. He is quick to anger and tends now to think only in terms of the basic needs of his "family."

Koravel’s bestial nature, combined with his love of nature, and in particular the grey wolves of the deep woods, have led him down a very dark path. Unable to feel any connection with other humanoids – except his closest companions – he has formed a deep (and inappropriate) relationship with his wolf animal companion. To Koravel, Shadow is his mate; savage and terrible retribution is swiftly meted out to any who dare harm her.

Mannerisms: Koravel now lives like the creature he reveres, foregoing all the comforts of a more civilised human existence. He discharges his bodily functions and sleeps wherever he pleases – be that under a tree, in a cave or under the stars. At night, when the wolves howl, Koravel has taken to stripping naked and joining their haunting chorus.

Distinguishing Features: Although Koravel is middle-aged he looks much younger. He has a menacing visage; in human form his teeth seem too big for his mouth which gives him what appears to be a permanent scowl; his eyebrows meet in the centre and his nose is sharply pointed. Koravel, caring nothing for his appearance, is unkempt and reeks of body odour and animal scents.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Lumber merchants may hire the PCs to investigate the disappearance of a six-strong logging crew. The group, sent to begin operations in a new area of woodland bordering a fast-flowing river, have been missing for three weeks. Unbeknown to the merchants, the area infringed on the Brethren's domain. Two days after the first trees were felled, Koravel and his druid allies fell upon the loggers and slew them all. PCs visiting the logging camp find no bodies but traces of blood and evidence of a massacre.

Alternatively, the PCs could be investigating rumours of a particularly powerful and fearless wolf pack that has recently migrated into the area. The pack has already fallen upon several isolated farmsteads, slaying all who cowered within. The PCs quickly discover that the wolves have also utterly destroyed a clan of goblins living in a series of deep forest caves. The goblins served the green dragon Balavaer Calaunrurr who was also slain in the battle. Investigation of the dragon’s corpse reveals massive burns over much of her body and a welter of deep slashing wounds.

Such aggressive behaviour is out of character for wolves and hints at some kind of deeper purpose and power behind their actions.



RANNECH'S BRETHREN

The Brethren are at heart blood-thirsty savages and under the full moon's influence their true bestial nature asserts itself. They live a nomadic existence, roaming through the woodlands in the company of the grey wolf pack who act as both protectors and hunting partners. Other creatures of the wild tolerate them but do not have the kind of close relationships which other creatures form with druids. Koravel and his minions tell themselves this is simply a manifestation of the fear shown by lesser creatures to those at the top of the food chain.

Koravel has five druid minions:

KORAVEL NAHEL (HYBRID FORM) CR 19 (XP 204,800)

Male half-elf natural werewolf druid 19

NE Medium humanoid (augmented humanoid, elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +38, Sense Motive +11

Speed 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; trackless step, woodland stride

Woodland Stride (Ex) Koravel can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects him.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +7 (+11 jumping)

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 34

(+2 Dex, +4 deflection [*ring of deflection* +4], +7 natural [extended *barkskin* {+5}])

Immune poison

Fort +19, **Ref** +12, **Will** +22; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. fey's spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities

hp 203 (19 HD); **DR** silver/10

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +18 (+20 grapple)

Melee bite +19/+14/+9 (1d6+7 plus trip and curse of lycanthropy)

Atk Options Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, curse of lycanthropy, trip

Trip (Ex) If Koravel hits with his bite attack, he can attempt to trip his opponent as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If this attempt fails, he is not tripped in return.

Curse of Lycanthrope (Su) Koravel's bite attack infects a humanoid target with lycanthropy (DC 15 Fortitude negates)

Special Actions change shape, wild shape (8/day; *beast shape III*, *elemental body IV*, *plant shape III*, Natural Spell)

Change Shape (Su) Koravel has three forms (humanoid, animal and hybrid) which he can shift between as a move action. His equipment does not meld with the new form between humanoid and hybrid forms but does between these forms and animal form.

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 19th; concentration +29 [+33 casting defensively or grappling]; share spells)

9th—*foresight*, *mass cure critical wounds*, *shambler*, *storm of vengeance* (DC 28)

8th—*earthquake*, *finger of death* (DC 27), *reverse gravity*, *word*

- **Massen Faull (NE male human afflicted werewolf druid 13):** A devoted acolyte of Koravel, Massen is the werewolf's most trusted humanoid companion and his first "creation." Now in his late middle-age, Massen spends little time actively hunting, instead watching over the grey wolf pack accompanying the werewolves. Massen has begun to think of suggesting to Koravel that the pack should revive one of the ancient places of worship they sometimes uncover in the deep woods. He feels drawn to these locations and has spent many hours communing among their moss-wreathed, brambled-choked precincts. The most cerebral of the pack, Massen is often the butt of jokes targeting his serious, thoughtful demeanour.

of recall

7th—*control weather*, *creeping doom* (DC 26), *fire storm* (DC 26), *heal*, *wind walk*

6th—*find the path*, *fire seeds* (DC 25), *greater dispel magic* (2), *wall of stone*

5th—*baleful polymorph*, *call lightning storm* (DC 24), *control winds*, *death ward*, *stoneskin*, *wall of thorns*

4th—*air walk*, *cure serious wounds* (3), *flame strike*, *rusting grip*

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 22), *cure moderate wounds*, extended *barkskin*, *protection from energy* (2), *water breathing*

2nd—*animal messenger*, *barkskin*, *fog cloud*, *lesser restoration* (2), *tree shape*

1st—*cure light wounds* (4), *endure elements*, *faerie fire*, *speak with animals*

0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *stabilize*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 28, Cha 14

SQ lycanthropic empathy (wolves), multitalented, nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, timeless body, wild empathy +21 (+17 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell, Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Toughness

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +2 (+6 vs. wolves), Handle Animal +14, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +20, Survival +28

Languages Common, Druidic, Elven, link

Gear as above plus *belt of physical might* +4, *headband of inspired wisdom* +6, *boots of striding and springing*, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *cloak of resistance* +2, spell component pouch, holy symbol, 2 gp

When in animal form, Koravel has the following altered statistics:

Senses low-light vision, scent

Speed 60 ft., base speed 50 ft.

Acrobatics +6 (+18 jumping)

CMD 34

CMB +19 (+21 grapple)

Melee bite +20/+15/+10 (1d6+8 plus trip and curse of lycanthropy)

Abilities Str 20

- **Jory Endean (NE male human afflicted werewolf druid 10/ranger 3):** A skilled tracker as well as a druid of power, Jory survived his initial encounter with the pack, managing to flee the woods before being overcome. The very next full moon, the werewolf's curse took him and after slaughtering all those slumbering in the same inn he fled into the woods. Drawn by the howls of the pack and the throb of his new shared heritage, he joined his new family. Always fascinated by wolves, he is an enthusiastic member of the pack and has gratefully embraced his new life. Jory still has friends among the rangers and druids frequenting the woodlands, who are unaware of his new status. Careful not to slay those yet of use to him, he often shares their fires — swapping stories of matters of import in the local area. In this way, he becomes quickly aware of any growing threats to the pack's existence.
- **Ebrel Odgers (NE female human afflicted werewolf druid 9/sorcerer [fey] 5):** Drawn to the woods by the calling of her long-dormant fey heritage, Ebrel is passionate in the defence of the woodlands from all encroaching threats. If anything, she is more merciless in her dealings with outsiders than Koravel. In human form, Ebrel is beautiful and often stalks the woods in search of loggers and other trespassers to seduce. These trysts are always fatal for her partner as she transforms into a wolf at the culmination of their love-making.
- **Talan Nehus (NE male human afflicted werewolf ranger 4/druid 7):** The son of a logger slain by Koravel two decades

ago, Talan was spared because he showed no fear in the face of the blood-splattered werewolf. In truth, Talan hates Koravel for the death of his family, but is not suicidal enough to strike at his sire. Rather, Talan bides his time, waiting the moment when his long-harboured dreams of revenge finally become a reality. To Talan's shame he enjoys the power and freedom that comes with his transformation, and often ranges through the woods for days in wolf form. When wandering thus, he rarely attacks travellers instead tracking them for many miles. Sometimes, he stealthily enters their camp at night and leaves tracks and other unmistakable signs of his presence to terrify the travellers when they wake.

- **Rensah Lythar (NE female elf afflicted werewolf druid 7/bard 6):** A child of the woods and a student of ancient lore, Rensah was drawn to Koravel by a primal love of the atavistic forces coursing through his veins. In truth, her love for Koravel is as deep as her tastes are depraved. She resents Koravel's attachment to Shadow, and although she fears to strike at the wolf directly she has no compunction entertaining Koravel when his tastes allow. She would gladly sacrifice herself for Koravel and if a fight goes badly for the pack, she hurls herself at those nearest to her love so that he might retreat. She cares nothing for Shadow — and doesn't help the wolf if it is in trouble, instead hoping that she will replace it in Koravel's affections.

SHADOW (WOLF COMPANION)

CR – (XP 0)

N Large animal

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

Speed 50 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +5 (+13 jumping), Stealth +9

AC 31, touch 15, flat-footed 25; **CMD** 37 (41 vs. trip); Dodge, Mobility

(-1 size, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +16 natural)

Fort +13, **Ref** +14 (improved evasion), **Will** +8; +4 vs. enchantment spells and effects

hp 142 (15 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +21

Melee bite +20/+15 (2d6+13 plus trip)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Trip (Ex) If Shadow hits with her bite attack, she can attempt to trip her opponent as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If this attempt fails, she is not tripped in return.

Abilities Str 29, Dex 20, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ trained (combat [attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel], hunting [attack, down, fetch, heel seek, track], attack), devotion

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will, Mobility, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills as above plus Survival +9



MYGHAL NANKERIS

Once a force for good, the monk Myghal Nankeris is now utterly insane and lives only for battle...

Myghal's descent into madness began when he returned to his monastery to discover that his spiritual home had been destroyed by bandits and all his brethren slain. Having spent years tracking down and punishing those responsible, he quickly lost his focus and, over time, his mind.

Background: Myghal was the son of a peasant farmer who left the back-breaking drudgery of his family life at the age of 12 to devote himself to the mysterious, secluded existence of a monk of the Way of Sorrows, a religious order devoted to protecting the weak against evil. Monks of the order take vows of poverty and chastity and spend a decade undergoing rigorous physical training to prepare them for all manner of dangers outside the walls of the monastery. Once their training is complete, they are sent out into the world with the sole aim of tackling evil wherever they may find it and dispensing justice. Myghal was taken under the wing of Brother Solace, a battle-scarred veteran of the order in his eighties. He proved to be the best acolyte the ageing monk ever knew – with remarkable fortitude and incredible physical prowess. At the age of 22, Myghal left the monastery and travelled far and wide, aiding the helpless for almost two years. One day, however, he had cause to deliver a letter to his brothers and what he discovered upon his return changed the young monk forever.

The monastery was a blackened ruin. His brethren had all been slain; none survived to speak of the monastery's doom. Weeping and shocked to his very core, scrabbling amid the ruins and the charred corpses, Myghal became unhinged. Speaking to townsfolk he discovered that the Black Blade Gang (a vicious, thirty-strong gang of thieves) had looted and torched his monastery under cover of darkness six months earlier. Although the bandits had since gone their separate ways, Myghal pursued them with a dogged determination borne of grief and madness. First seeking out their leader, he tracked down each and every killer and challenged them to single combat – slaying them all.

Personality: The fallen monk is only at peace in the midst of combat and so seeks perfection of mind and body for what he terms "the ultimate kill." Myghal actively seeks out the toughest possible opponents – be they warriors or spellcasters – and challenges them to single combat to test himself and the order's teachings. He spends his days running, climbing, lifting weights and pushing his body to its absolute limits. His evenings are spent in quiet contemplation and meditation as he seeks "the silent conscience" – a warrior's state of mind where fear and remorse are absent.

Myghal rarely speaks except when issuing orders to his followers. Gone are the days when he would stop to help

ordinary folk with whatever troubled them. His mind is closed to emotion; his goal is to become the best warrior he can be.

Eschewing most material things, Myghal's prized possession is a rune-carved staff, which once belonged to his mentor Brother Solace.

Mannerisms: Observers notice that Myghal has an unsettling habit of suddenly breaking into laughter for no apparent reason before his face returns to its normal, expressionless state; an obvious indication of his deeply disturbed mental state.

Distinguishing Features: Now approaching his mid-thirties (and looking much older), Myghal doesn't care at all about his appearance but one should read nothing into his dishevelled appearance. Dressed in simple, worn vestments the bare-foot monk is a peerless combatant and his lean, wolf-like physique and far-away stare are the real clues to his deadly motivations. He wears the signature lengthy, unkempt beard of the monks of the Way of Sorrows.

MYGHAL NANKERIS

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

Male human monk 10

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +15, Sense Motive +2

Speed 60 ft., Spring Attack

ACP 0; Acrobatics +15 (+37 jumping), Climb +12, Stealth +15, Swim +12

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 24; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Mobility

(+2 Dex, +4 class, +2 armour [*bracers of armour* +2], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge, +1 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +1])

Immune diseases

Fort +8, **Ref** +9 (evasion, improved evasion, slow fall [50 ft.]), **Will** +9; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 78 (10 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +14 (+16 disarm or grapple)

Melee +1 *unarmed strike* +13/+8 (1d10+5/19-20) or

Melee +1 *unarmed strike* +14/+14/+9/+9 (1d10+5/19-20)

Atk Options Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist (DC 17, 12/day), Vital Strike, flurry of blows, ki pool (7 points; magic, lawful)

Special Actions wholeness of body (10 points)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ fast movement, high jump, manoeuvre training, slow fall (50 ft.), still mind

Feats Deflect Arrows^B, Dodge^B, Improved Critical (unarmed strike)^B, Improved Disarm^B, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist^B, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +8

Languages Common

Gear as above plus *amulet of mighty fists* +1

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Much to his indifference, a small cadre of acolytes, eager to learn from this lethal combatant, now follow the renegade monk. They dwell in a cave complex five miles from the nearest village or town where they hone their deadly skills in endless mock battles. Occasionally, one or more of the acolytes travel to the nearby town to cause trouble, show off their skills or extort money, food and wine from the townsfolk. If the PCs defeat the acolytes and Myghal hears of their accomplishments, he seeks them out to test his mettle against them.

The PCs could also randomly encounter Myghal (or his minions) on the road where a fight to the death inevitably ensues – irrespective of how the PCs react.

Alternatively, the nobleman Braemar D'evillis could hire the party to track down the renegade monk to avenge his killing of Sir Androl – Braemar's only son. Myghal's "sin" was to kill Sir Androl in single combat for no other reason than to prove his superiority over a warrior hiding behind heavy armour. Even worse, Sir Androl fell in full sight of common townsfolk and Braemar demands that this dishonour be erased.

Finally, and unbeknownst to Myghal, another monk could have survived the monastery's fall. Travelling in a similar fashion to Myghal, the monk returns after the deaths of his brethren. Instead of descending into evil and madness like Myghal, however, the monk dedicates his life to rebuilding the order. Eventually he hears tales of Myghal and vows to defeat the one who brings so much shame on his nascent order. Sadly, it is a long journey to Myghal's new home and thus the monk asks the PCs to accompany him, both for company on the road and to deal with Myghal's pupils.

ENCOUNTERS

Every battle Myghal fights is in search of the perfect kill. If encountered alone, he challenges the most warrior-like of the PCs to single combat.

The PCs could encounter Myghal (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 9 (XP 6,400): Myghal Nanmeris.

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Myghal Nankeris, one Brawler (CR 5, page 10) and two Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Myghal Nankeris, two Brawlers (CR 5 each, page 10) and four Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

LORE

Characters can learn more about Myghal Nankeris with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 19: This is Myghal Nankeris, a famed open-handed fighter.

DC 24: Once an adherent of the Way of Sorrows, Myghal turned to darkness after his monastic fellows were slain by bandits. His resultant quest for vengeance brought out the worst in the monk.

DC 29: In search of the perfect kill, Myghal waylays travellers for no other reason but to test himself against them.

Additionally, the PCs can learn about the Way of Sorrows with a Knowledge (religion) check:

DC 15: The Way of Sorrow was a religious order devoted to protecting the weak against evil. The order was famed for teaching its adherents bare-handed fighting styles.

DC 20: The order is now all but extinct; its monastery destroyed by marauding bandits.



TAIM NOBEN

Some grave robbers pursue more than just gold.

This charming undertaker and embalmer lusts after the fine things in life and uses the recently deceased to get them for him.

Background: Taim's human father was a blacksmith while his elven mother worked as a seamstress. When his father died in an accident, Taim watched as his grieving mother made the funeral arrangements. The amount of money involved in the funeral made an impression on Taim and he decided, in that moment, what his future career would be.

Personality: Taim has establishing rapport down to an art form; with a touch and a nod, he convinces most people that he is the person who should handle the care of their deceased loved ones.

Mannerisms: Taim speaks just above a whisper and shakes hands firmly, touching the person's shoulder as he lets go. He nods along when others are speaking and avoids disagreements.

Distinguishing Features: The scent of potpourri and mothballs cling to Taim's clothing. When working, he keeps his long hair in a simple braid.

Hooks: Characters looking for items belonging to the recently deceased or a body that fell into the wrong hands, might be directed to Taim's funeral parlour; similarly, investigations of how a dead woman's jewellery ended up on the black market will probably eventually lead to Taim's door.

Tactics: Taim has mastered the art of grave robbing. While preparing a body for burial, Noben casts *lesser animate dead*, and instructs the body to lie motionless. A few nights after burial, Noben goes to the grave and has the corpse exhume itself so he can steal any



expensive burial goods. Noben then compels the corpse to rebury itself and leaves with the treasure, nobody the wiser.

He hates combat and flees as quickly as possible.

TAIM NOBEN

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

Male half-elf wizard [necromancy] 5/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (human, elf)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12 (+13 vs. traps), Sense Motive +10

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +10, **Stealth** +10

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 14

(+2 Dex, +2 shield [+1 mithral buckler])

Immune *sleep*

Fort +2, **Ref** +6 (evasion), **Will** +4; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 36 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2

Melee dagger +1 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +6 (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options grave touch, sneak attack (+1d6)

Grave Touch (Sp [standard; 6/day]) Successful melee touch attack (+2) causes a living creature to become shaken for 2 rounds; if used on a shaken foe with less than 5 HD, the creature becomes frightened for 1 round.

Special Actions power over undead

Power over Undead (Su [standard; 6/day]) Noben can Command Undead, as the Feat (DC 14 Will resists).

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

3rd—*lesser animate dead*, *ray of exhaustion* (2; DC 18)

2nd—*false life*, *haunting mists* (DC 15), *hideous laughter* (DC 15), *invisibility*

1st—*mage armour*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2; DC 16), *ray of sickening* (2; DC 16)

0—*detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*

Combat Gear bolts (20), potion of *blur*, wand of *glitterdust* (7 charges), *invisibility* (12 charges), *scorching ray* (11 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 15

SQ rogue talent (charmer), trapfinding (+1)

Feats Craft Wand, Deceitful, Eschew Material, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Persuasive, Scribe Scroll^B, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills as above plus Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10 (charmer), Disable Device +10, Disguise +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Sleight of Hand +7, Spellcraft +10, Use Magic Device +10

Charmer (Ex [1/day]) Noben can roll two dice while making a Diplomacy check, and take the best result. He must choose to use this talent before making the Diplomacy check.

Languages Aklo, Common, Celestial, Draconic, Elven

Gear as above plus masterwork thieves' tools, masterwork mortician's equipment, 3 onyx gems (100 gp each)

Spellbook (barred schools conjuration and transmutation): as above plus 1st—*charm person*, *detect undead*, *magic missile*, *shield*; 0—all except conjuration and transmutation spells

THADRIM NYTRILUATH

A travelling show magician, feted for his charm and tricks, who hides a dark secret.

Background: Thadrim was born and raised in a whorehouse by a mother who never wanted him and saw him as nothing more than a slave. No sooner could he dress himself than he was forced to run errands, do chores and serve his mother's fellow whores. His mother taught him to read and write to further his usefulness; eventually, however, this would be the key to his freedom. Thadrim's mother had him steal small amounts of coin and the odd trinket from customers, but he kept any books he found for himself, eventually building up a small library. In the ruckus surrounding the untimely, embarrassing death of the celebrated local magicker Kardur The Shining – he stole what was to become his most treasured possession. Fascinated by the smell and the feel of the night-blue leather binding and the mysterious runes covering the spellbook's pages, the half-elf stole enough money to buy rudimentary training in The Art.

His mother didn't learned his secret until his 17th year. While drunk she tried to beat him; without thinking, he hurled

conjured acid into her face – leaving her horrifically scarred. In the ensuing chaos, Thadrim stole his mother's stash of coin and fled town. Wandering, Thadrim worked initially as a conjurer and trickster whose shows earned him board and lodgings at dozens of inns. During this time he met Lady Mink, a cutthroat, burglar and former whore – and the pair forged an unlikely alliance. For several years now they have worked together. The lovers are driven by only one thing: the pursuit of wealth. Generally, Lady Mink pickpockets gormless audiences at Thadrim's shows or steals from their rooms. However, the pair is certainly not above murder if the prize is tempting enough.

Personality: Thadrim is a handsome and charming man. He is the consummate flirt and flatterer. Behind the façade, however, he is a man with little self-worth who desires only coin to further his arcane studies. He has no respect for women and views Lady Mink as a short-term business partner. This truth would destroy her as the cold-hearted thief loves Thadrim.

Mannerisms: A showman, Thadrim makes expansive arm gestures when talking and speaks with a deep, baritone voice.

Distinguishing Features: Thadrim dresses to impress and wears many gold rings. His back bears several scars from his mother's many beatings.

Hooks: PCs most likely encounter Thadrim as he puts on a show in the tavern where they are staying. They may fall foul of Lady Mink's nimble fingers or awake to discover a treasured possession gone. Alternatively, they may be hired to investigate a similar theft or the murder of an important tavern patron.

THADRIM NYTRILUATH

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male half-elf wizard (illusionist) 5

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Escape Artist** +7, **Fly** +10, **Ride** +4

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 14; **Dodge**

(+2 Dex, +1 dodge)

Immune *sleep*

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5; +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects

hp 35 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

Melee dagger +2 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged Touch blinding ray (7/day; range 30 ft.) +4 (5 or fewer HD blinded; 6 or more HD dazzled; 1 round)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +9; Heighten Spell, arcane bond [ring], extended illusions [2 rounds])

3rd—*displacement*, *fly*, heightened colour spray (DC 17)

2nd—*fox's cunning*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *mirror image*

1st—*colour spray* (2; DC 15), *disguise self*, *mage armour*, *shield*

0—*arcane mark*, *acid splash*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *scroll of knock* (2), *scroll of stoneskin*, *wand of fireball* (DC 14, 5 charges)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Heighten Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Spellcraft +12

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

Gear as above plus 15 gp, traveller's robes, spell component pouch

Spellbook (enchantment, necromancy) as above plus GM determined



LILLIAN ORXAL

Curiosity killed both the cat, and Lillian Orxal.

Slain by a secretive cult, Lillian searches for her killers so that she might enact a terrible revenge upon them.

Background: Lillian Orxal was cursed with curiosity. When her elderly mentor died, the Watch considered it a heart attack. When Lillian got too close to the truth, she was killed.

Personality: While living, Lillian was a kind, if absent-minded, woman with an inquisitive nature. Her harsh existence as an undead has twisted Lillian into a resentful creature. If carefully approached, though, remnants of the woman she was remain.

LILLIAN ORXAL CR 13 (XP 25,600)

Female human spectre sorcerer [arcane] 10

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24, Sense Motive +15

Speed Fly 80 ft. (perfect; Flyby Attack); **ACP** 0; Fly +15, Stealth +10

AC 25, touch 20, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 31 (can't be tripped or grappled); Mobility

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +5 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); critical hits, precision damage (unless from a *ghost touch* weapon), nonmagical weapons, falling damage; **Weakness** resurrection vulnerability; sunlight powerlessness

Resurrection Vulnerability (Su) A *raise dead* or similar spell cast on Lillian destroys her (Will negates). Using the spell in this way does not require a material component.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex) If caught in sunlight (not merely the *daylight* spell) Lillian cannot attack and is staggered.

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +17 (+19 vs. channel energy)

hp 173 (18 HD); incorporeal

Incorporeal (Ex) Only incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spell-like or supernatural abilities, and spells can affect Lillian. Spells and magic weapons deal only half damage, except for channelled energy. Effects that do not cause damage only have a 50% chance of affecting her, although force spells and effects affect her normally. Lillian can enter solid objects, but must remain adjacent to the object's exterior, and cannot pass through an object more than 5 ft wide or a force effect. Lillian senses creatures or objects adjacent to her location, but enemies have total concealment while she is inside an object.

Space 5 ft. (unnatural aura 30 ft.); **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +10 (cannot trip or grapple)

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals sense Lillian within 30 feet and do not approach nearer than that, panicking if forced to

Distinguishing Features: Lillian appears as a translucent woman with sunken cheeks, hollow eyes and a distant gaze.

Tactics: Lillian uses Flyby Attack to dart out at enemies from within solid objects, casting *dominate person* or *hold person* against clerics or heavily armoured foes while using a quickened *shield* spell to protect herself, then casts *confusion* to hinder as many enemies as possible. Finally, she uses touch attacks on those who resisted her spells.

Hooks: Characters might seek Lillian for advice, or they may be her descendents. They also could be seeking information on the secretive cult that murdered her and her mentor.

approach unless its master makes a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride or wild empathy check.

Melee Incorporeal Touch slam +17 (1d8 plus energy drain/19-20)

Atk Options Critical Focus, create spawn, energy drain

Create Spawn (Su) Humanoids Lillian slays become spectres (with a -2 penalty on all d20 rolls, -2 hp per HD and only drain one level on a touch) in 1d4 rounds. Lillian commands such spawn until her death, when their penalties disappear and they become free-willed spectres.

Energy Drain (Su) Lillian's touch bestows two negative levels; each negative level gives Lillian 5 temporary hit points for one hour. Creatures with negative levels must attempt a DC 21 Fortitude save 24 hours later; if successful, the negative level goes away, but on a failure it becomes permanent.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +15; metamagic adept)

5th (4/day)—*dominate person* (DC 21)

4th (5/day)—*confusion* (DC 20), *dimension door*, *enervation*, *greater invisibility*

3rd (7/day)—*displacement*, *dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 19), *protection from energy*

2nd (7/day)—*scorching ray*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *web* (DC 17)

1st (8/day)—*detect undead*, *grease* (DC 16), *identify*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *shield*

0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*

Metamagic Adept (Ex [2/day]) Lillian can apply her Quickened Spell feat without increasing the spell's casting time.

Abilities Str -, Dex 20, Con -, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 20

SQ arcane bond (familiar [none]), new arcana (*enervation*)

Feats Ability Focus (energy drain), Critical Focus, Dodge, Eschew Material^B, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Quickened Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)

Skills as above plus Bluff +15, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Linguistics +8, Spellcraft +15, Use Magic Device +10

Languages Aklo, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Infernal, Orc, Undercommon



DIGORY ODGERS

Once an accomplished cut-purse and burglar, Digory is an odious bully who runs a gang of street urchins, thieves and prostitutes.

Digory's taste for the finer things in life means he no longer demeans himself by scaling walls or slipping through the shadows. Instead, he leaves the hard work to his lackeys, dubbed "The Diggers", who live in fear of this handsome, callous brute.

Background: Digory Odgers came from the gutter and some say this rascal never left it. The son of a drunken prostitute, Digory never knew his father and was left to fend for himself on the streets from a very early age. At just eight-years-old, his mother was murdered in an alleyway and it was young Digory who found her. With a remarkable absence of emotion, the little boy took the coins secreted in his dead mother's boot and left the body to the crows.

Hiding in a dockside warehouse the smart and intimidating youngster gathered about him a small group of urchins, most of whom were older than him, and they set about carving for themselves an empire based on petty crime and the kind of espionage that can only be done by children.

In the absence of any real organised crime in the town, Digory and his gang prospered. Aided by his chief lieutenant Jarek, Digory made sure his guild established itself as top dogs with a finger in every illegal pie.

In the early days, Digory himself was no slouch and led by example, becoming a skilled break-in merchant and a master combatant with the knife. "The Diggers" – as his gang became known – monopolised prostitution, forgery, extortion and burglary. Nowadays, after dark, they own the streets. The gangmaster (as he still styles himself) doesn't often get his hands dirty anymore; instead he masterminds operations from his hidden base in a reputedly haunted mansion.

Digory's personal wealth, accumulated over two decades, is quite staggering but his greed is boundless. In recent months, he has even begun to bribe important local folk (including magistrates and noblemen) in order to expand his power and influence within the town.

His signature items are a pair of eldritch daggers to which he often applies poison.

Personality: Money is what drives Digory Odgers, pure and simple. His increasing wealth means he now has a penchant for finely-tailored clothes, the best wines and (strangely) antique furniture and ornaments. Contrasting these civilised traits, however, is his cruel and twisted personality. Digory is an unremitting bully without scruples who cares nothing for his underlings.

He reserves particular distaste (and beatings) for the whores within his employ as a reflection of his disdain for his own mother.

Mannerisms: Digory is outwardly charming if forthright. However, his lackeys are under no illusion that the gangmaster would knife each and every one of them as soon as look at them. He has developed an unnerving habit of singing mournful ballads while toying with the knives of which he is so fond – just before he uses them on some poor, unfortunate wretch.

Distinguishing Features: A lithe and handsome man in his early thirties, Digory cuts a dashing figure. His jet black hair and piercing green eyes turn ladies' heads when he occasionally ventures out.

Although always immaculately presented, Digory is too wary to ever be without his enchanted studded leather armour and blades.

DIGORY ODGERS

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male human rogue 5/fighter 3

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +12 (+14 vs. traps), Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +13, **Climb** +8, **Escape Artist** +10, **Stealth** +13

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 24; **Dodge**, **Mobility**, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 *studded leather*], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9 (evasion, +10 vs. traps), **Will** +1 (+2 vs. fear)

hp 55 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +10

Melee +1 *dagger* +12/+7 (1d4+3/19-20) or

Melee +1 *dagger* +12/+7 (1d4+3/19-20) and

mwk *dagger* +12/+7 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged mwk *dagger* (range 10 ft.) +12/+7 (1d4+2/19-20)

Atk Options sneak attack +3d6

Combat Gear *potion of protection from evil*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10

SQ armour training (1), bravery, rogue talent (combat trick, weapon training), trapfinding, trap sense

Feats Agile Manoeuvres, Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger)^B

Skills as above plus Disable Device +17, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +10, Perform (sing) +5, Sleight of Hand +13

Languages Common, Halfling

Gear as above plus fine clothing, belt pouch, 10 gp, 10 sp

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Digory's most trusted minions are all human and comprise five (now grown) urchins (NE male human rogue 4/fighter 2), two tavern prostitutes (NE female human rogue 6) and his enforcer, the cold-hearted killer Jarek the Stalker (NE male human rogue 3/fighter 4).

Digory oversees operations from his base in an abandoned mansion on the outskirts of town. Reputed to be haunted, the chained gates of the old house are avoided by locals, giving Digory the perfect hideaway. The PCs may encounter Digory if one of the last few remaining uncorrupted town council members contacts them with a desperate plea to rid the town of The Diggers before their gangmaster controls every facet of government.

Low-level adventurers investigating the mansion are probably doomed. Digory and his minions could easily overcome such foes. However, instead of killing the intruders, Digory instead sells them to a morally-flexible merchant of his acquaintance specialising in slavery and kidnap. Once the PCs finally escape their new life, they have a powerful enemy to revenge themselves against. (This hunt for revenge could spell the beginning of a campaign-long plot arc).

Alternatively, a PC (or one of their acquaintances) could be robbed blind (or worse) by one of Digory's lackeys – leading to a hunt through the town's dark and dangerous alleys.

Finally, the PCs could be contacted by a desperate townsman. A close relative has fallen into Digory's clutches and is being forced to work at a local brothel. The local authorities are powerless (or too corrupt) to do anything and thus the man throws himself on the PCs' mercy. If the PCs rescue the unfortunate relative and disrupt the brothel operation, they make a powerful enemy in Digory Odgers.

ENCOUNTERS

Digory's minions are always encountered in town – their interests start and stop at the town gate. He tolerates no challenge to his rule, mercilessly crushing opponents under waves of hired thugs and other desperate brethren of the street.

The PCs could encounter Digory (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Shamil the Poisoner (CR 6, page 6).

EL 7 (XP 3,200): One Brawler (CR 5, page 10) and two Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Digory Odgers and two Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Digory Odgers, Grash the Destroyer (CR 7, page 6) and four Thugs (CR 3 each, page 10).

LORE

Characters can learn more about Digory Odgers with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 17: This is Digory Odgers. Son of a prostitute and an unknown father, he has risen to control an entire guild, The Diggers. The Diggers control much of the larcenous activity of the town and are not to be crossed lightly.

DC 22: Outwardly charming, Digory is ruthless and would knife his own mother (if she lived) if she crossed him. His greed is boundless.

DC 27: He dwells in an abandoned mansion, reputed to be haunted, on the outskirts of town. No one goes anywhere near the mansion for fear of the building's unquiet spirits.



HEEMA PHANINI

Beneath the surface world, deep in the most secret depths lies the gilded city of Mel-Sarranthas. Ziggurated temples and square-topped buildings, constructed of stone blocks as tall as a man, fill the arching natural cavern – every surface covered with glittering gold made from the transformed flesh of living sacrifices.

God-Queen of the city, Heema Phanini, rules over hordes of slavishly obedient degenerate serpentfolk who provide sanguine sacrifices for their dark naga overlord.

Background: Heema Phanini has lived in Mel-Sarranthas surrounded by her fawning serpentfolk worshippers her whole life, drinking in the secret lore of the city after matricide slew the previous God-Queen. The city itself dates back to the great epoch of the serpentfolk, and the ruins are a bare glimmer of their former glory.

Personality: The dark naga is a megalomaniacal tyrant, believing in her divine right to rule over lesser creatures. Heema is serene in the face of conflict, and is unflappable in any situation.

Heema covets the cities of the surface and their contemporary lore, and sends serpentfolk agents to infiltrate the institutions of the world above. Once enough serpentfolk are in place, the dark naga plans to make war on the surface cities from the inside out, casting down their rulers in a single night assisted by her asura iconoclasts. Heema's yearning does not stop at

arcane might – she also requires a mate to reproduce with, and she has no desire to bear one of the degenerate's whelps. Her initial overtures, unfamiliar with human society, involve sending powerful humans nightly gifts of elaborate gold jewellery, wrought by her serpentfolk craftsmen from transmuted viscera, which dissolve into boiling blood at the first touch of daylight.

Mannerisms: Heema inclines her head when asking questions. In the rare instances when she is provoked, the naga displays her hood and hisses audibly. Heema's snake-hair unblinkingly transfixes its eyes on any creature within sight.

Distinguishing Features: Heema's large body is black and shimmering green, with a kaleidoscopically-patterned hood. Her face is stern and beautiful beneath a mass of writhing taipans.

Ecology & Society: In addition to the masses of serpentfolk, Heema Phanini has called a number of aghasura asura (*Bestiary 3*) and other, lesser asura through *greater planar binding*. The outsiders enjoy their positions as guardians and demigods within the city.

The serpentfolk have little society other than that required for complete subservience to their false god.

Hooks: Heema hears of the PCs' exploits from one of her doom captives and decides that one of the group would make a perfect mate. The PC starts receiving horrific golden gifts (as detailed above). Eventually, she sends her servants to spirit her chosen one away.



LAIRS

The God-Queen resides in the 300-foot high ruined ziggurat-temple at the heart of Mel-Sarranthas. The summit is topped by a single-room shrine covered in ancient bloodstains. Stone colonnades gilded with transmuted entrails hold aloft the roof, itself wrought from more golden cadavers hammered into thick beams. Here she receives her servants and doom captives. She rarely leaves her lair, unless the safety of Mel-Sarranthas is at risk.

Tactics: Heema monitors potential threats with serpentfolk and asura scouts, supported with *scrying*. The dark naga casts the full set of her protective spells before combat begins.

HEEMA PHANIN CR 19 (XP 204,800)
This large black and green shimmering serpent has a regal, serene human face bearing an elaborate golden crown.

Female advanced variant dark naga serpentine sorcerer 9
LE Large aberration

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect thoughts*; Perception +27, Sense Motive +27

Detect Thoughts (Su) Heema can continuously use *detect thoughts* as the spell (CL 9th; Will DC 18 negates).

Speed 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +9 (+13 jumping), Escape Artist +23, Fly +23, Stealth +27

AC 32, touch 18, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 34
(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +9 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

Immune mind reading, poison

Fort +10, **Ref** +15 (evasion), **Will** +18; +2 vs. charm effects
hp 211 (19 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +15

Melee bite (reach 10 ft.) +19 (1d4+3) and
sting (reach 10 ft.) +19 (2d4+3 plus poison [Fort DC 22; *freq.* 1 round; *effect* sleep for 2d4 minutes; *cure* 1 save)

Atk Options serpent's fang

Serpent's Fang (Ex [free action; 14 rnds/day]): Heema can grow poisonous fangs as a free action. These fangs are treated as a natural weapon inflicting 1d6+4 points of damage plus poison (Fort DC 21; *freq.* 1/rnd for 6 rnds; *effect* 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 2 saves).

Special Actions chrysopoeian gaze (Fort DC 26)

Bloodline Arcana (Su) Heema Phanini's powers of compulsion can affect even bestial creatures. Whenever she casts a mind-affecting or language-dependent spell, it affects animals, magical beasts, and monstrous humanoids as if they were humanoids who understood her language.

Chrysopoeian Gaze (Su [standard; 30 ft. range]) Heema's gaze causes flesh to turn into gold, inflicting 1d6 Dexterity damage per attack (DC 26 Fortitude save negates). The save DC is Charisma-based. If the target is reduced to 0 Dexterity it is permanently transmuted into a golden statue similar to that created by a *flesh to stone* spell. The gold created by Heema's gaze is reactive to sunlight, subliming away when subjected to natural sunlight, a *daylight* spell or similar effect. This photosensitive transformation is devastating to

Typically Heema Phanini casts *quicken dispel magic* enhanced by her Destructive Dispel and Dispel Synergy feats to lower a creature's magical defences before striking with focussed *mass hold person* against a single target or heightened *mass hold person* against a group of foes. Against spellcasters the dark naga instead uses heightened *disintegrate*.

Heema flees via *teleport*, *overland flight* or *expeditious retreat* if reduced to less than 40 hit points. She has very long memory and returns to wreak her revenge on those responsible for her humiliation.

the target, inflicting the accumulated Dexterity damage as Constitution damage at the rate of 2 points per round. The chrysopoeia gaze is ineffective in sunlight. Heema's CR is 1 higher due to this unique ability.

Sorcerer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +20)
constant—*speak with animals* (reptiles only)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 16th; concentration +27; spell penetration +18; serpentine bloodline; Destructive Dispel, Dispel Synergy; Focused Spell; Heighten Spell; Quicken Spell)

8th (4/day)—*greater planar binding* (DC 29)

7th (7/day)—*mass hold person* (DC 30), *spell turning*

6th (8/day) —*acid fog*, *disintegrate* (DC 27), *mass suggestion* (DC 29)

5th (8/day)—*dominate person* (DC 28), *overland flight*, *telekinesis*, *teleport*

4th (8/day)—*black tentacles*, *confusion* (DC 27), *poison* (DC 25), *scrying* (DC 25), *stoneskin*

3rd (9/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *heroism*, *protection from energy*, *summon monster III* (reptiles only)

2nd (9/day)—*acid arrow*, *delay poison*, *glitterdust* (DC 23), *hideous laughter* (DC 25), *mirror image*, *see invisibility*

1st (9/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *hypnotism* (DC 24), *mage armour*, *protection from good*, *shield*, *unseen servant*

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 29, Con 24, Int 22, Wis 21, Cha 33

SQ bloodline arcana, *freedom of movement*, guarded thoughts, serpentfriend, snakeskin

Feats Destructive Dispel, Dispel Synergy, Eschew Materials^B, Focussed Spell, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Penetration, Heighten Spell, Persuasive, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Penetration, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +33, Diplomacy +28, Intimidate +37, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (engineering) +19, Knowledge (religion) +19, Spellcraft +27

Languages Aklo, Common, Infernal, Terran, Undercommon

Gear as above plus *headband of alluring charisma* +6, *ring of evasion*, *ring of freedom of movement*

LUNGEN RASUR

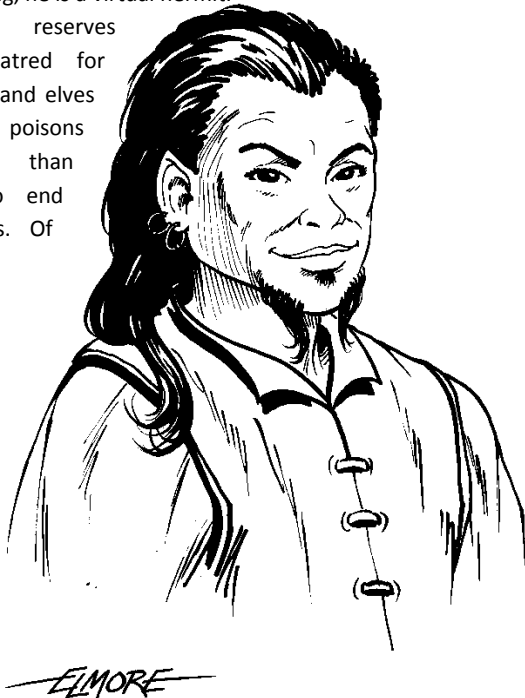
A seemingly affable guide-for-hire who leads groups out into the wilderness and murders them as they sleep.

Background: Lungen's young life was a happy one, living with his parents and sister on the farmstead of Oakenfold. Young Lungen liked to fish and worked alongside his father who was a skilled hunter and trapper. Lungen's life changed one stormy winter's evening when three half-elves arrived at the farmstead, soaked to the skin and bitterly cold. Lungen's father welcomed them, fed them and gave them a place at their hearth. Having enjoyed the Rasurs' hospitality the strangers bedded down for the night in front of the fire's dying embers.

Lungen was relieving himself outside when he heard his sister scream. The three half-elves had awoken in the dead of night, slipped into his parents' bedroom and slit their throats. His sister was raped before they showed her the same kindness. To his eternal shame, Lungen fled into the night – ignoring his sister's pitiful pleas for help. He returned two days' later to find Oakenfold still standing, but utterly ransacked. It was the sight of his murdered family which sent poor Lungen mad. Having burned their bodies he resolved to never again trust strangers and to dedicate his life to avenging his kin. He lusted for revenge and developed an irrational hatred of travellers. Becoming a guide, he now leads individuals and small groups into the wilds – winning their trust before killing them as they slumber.

Personality: Lungen is a friendly, smiling and helpful man who appears the perfect guide. He enjoys his forays into the wilderness and the short-lived companionship they offer. When not working, he is a virtual hermit.

He reserves special hatred for half-elves and elves and uses poisons rather than blades to end their lives. Of



course, each death brings Lungen no closer to absolving himself of the guilt he feels at not acting to save his sister.

Mannerisms: Lungen enjoys playing the flute and is always busy which means it is difficult for people to notice that his hands have “the shakes” – a side-effect of the trauma which robbed him of his family.

Distinguishing Features: The skin under Lungen's fingernails is black from years of poison use.

Hooks: PCs may hire Lungen as a guide – in which case he inevitably attempts to end their lives. Alternatively, they may be hired to investigate the disappearance of a young nobleman. Lungen comes highly recommended as he has taken great care to ensure that when he leads the local militia on an expedition they return safely.

LUNGEN RASUR

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

Male halfling ranger 3/rogue (poisoner) 4

NE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +8 (+10 in forests); **Senses** Perception +13 (+15 in forests or vs. elves, 17 vs. elves in forest), Sense Motive +8 (+10 vs. humans)

Speed 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +13 (+9 jumping), **Climb** +5, **Escape Artist** +11, **Stealth** +18 (+20 in forests; fast stealth)

AC 22, **touch** 15, **flat-footed** 22; **CMD** 19; **uncanny dodge** (+1 size, +4 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Fort +7, **Ref** +12 (evasion), **Will** +6 (+7 vs. fear)

hp 53 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5

Melee mwk rapier (Power Attack [-2/+4]) +13 (1d4/18-20)

Ranged composite longbow (range 110 ft.; Rapid Shot [+9/+9]) +11 (1d6/x3)

Atk Options, favoured enemy (elves +2), poison use, sneak attack +2d6

Poison Use (Ex) Lungen is trained to use poison and cannot accidentally poison himself when applying poison to a blade.

Combat Gear drow poison (6), *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of haste*, tanglefoot bag (4)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10

SQ combat style (archery), favoured terrain (forest +2), master poisoner, rogue talents (fast stealth, weapon training [rapier]), track (+1), wild empathy (+3, -1 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills as above plus **Bluff** +0 (+2 vs. elves), **Knowledge** (geography) +6 (+8 in forests), **Knowledge** (local) +7 (+9 vs. elves), **Knowledge** (nature) +6 **Spellcraft** +6, **Survival** +11 (+12 tracking, +14 tracking elves or tracking in forest, +16 tracking elves in forest)

Languages Common, Halfling

Gear as above plus GM determined

KORGAN RIMESTONE

Korgan Rimestone uses cunning and guile to lure unsuspecting adventurers into his confidence so he can murder and rob them after their moment of triumph.

A black-hearted dwarf, Korgan is utterly obsessed with himself and lacks any empathy with those he slays.

Background: Korgan's always believed that his magical power sets him above others and instead of using it to help them, he uses it to get what he wants. Exiled from his clan after experimenting with compulsion magic on his kinsmen, Korgan

KORGAN RIMESTONE

CR 3 (XP 800)

Male dwarf wizard (enchanter) 4

NE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1 (+3 vs. unusual stonework; stonecunning), Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft. (slow and steady), **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +1 (-3 jumping)

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. bull rush or trip); +4 vs. giant-type creatures (+1 Dex)

Fort +4 (+6 vs. poison), **Ref** +3, **Will** +6; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

hp 24 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +1

Melee mwk dagger +2 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger (range 10 ft.) +4 (1d4-19-20)

Atk Options +1 attack vs. orc and goblin-type foes

Special Actions dazing touch

Dazing Touch (Sp [standard; 6/day]) Korgan can cause a living creature to become dazed for 1 round as a melee touch attack (+1). Creatures with more 4 Hit Dice are unaffected.

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7 [+11 when casting defensively or grappling]; arcane bond [ring]

2nd—*daze monster* (DC 16), *hideous laughter* (DC 16), *touch of idiocy* (DC 16), *web* (DC 15)

1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *disguise self*, *hypnotism* (DC 15), *mage armour*, *sleep* (DC 15)

0—*daze* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (3), *wand of colour spray* (30 charges), *wand of magic missiles* (30 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ enchanting smile, weapon familiarity (dwarven)

Feats Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills as above plus Appraise +10 (+12 vs. nonmagical metals and gemstones), Bluff +7, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +5 (+7 with disguise kit), Intimidate +3, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Spellcraft +10

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1 plus 150 gp

Spellbook (divination, necromancy) as above plus GM's determination

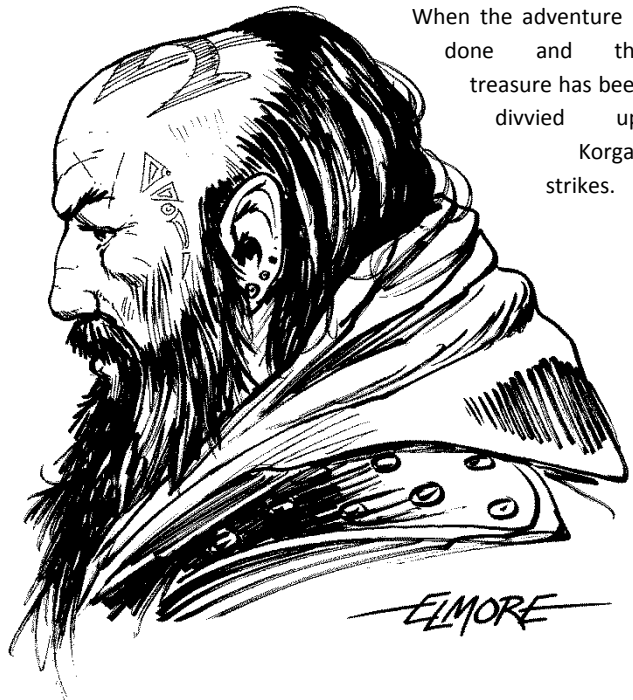
fell in with a naïve group of young adventurers looking to augment their party with potent magic. The group explored a nearby ruin but the treasure, especially split into shares, wasn't all that Korgan expected. As he took his watch that night and studied the sleeping forms of his comrades, he realized how easy it would be to just take the treasure and leave. He did just that, but not before using his magic to cast *sleep* on everyone and slit their throats. Pleased with his success, Korgan pulled the same trick, again and again on different adventuring groups. To protect his identity, Korgan goes to great lengths to disguise his features, changing the colour and shape of his beard, applying fake warts, spectacles and so on. He frequents taverns where adventurers gather and seeks out those who appear to be young and trusting. Grizzled, battle-scarred veterans, he avoids.

Personality: Korgan appears at first to be a kind and gregarious dwarf with a ready laugh. This is a ruse to lure others in. Truthfully, Korgan is a greedy sadist who enjoys having the power of life and death over others. He relishes ensnaring one or two of his victims in a *web* spell so they can watch while he dispatches them one by one.

Mannerisms: Korgan is slightly allergic to the makeup he wears to disguise himself, causing him to sneeze or scratch at odd moments.

Hooks: Korgan typically approaches a gathering of young adventurers, offering to buy them a round of ale. After showing them a map he claims to have found, he regales them with tales of riches. If successful, he travels with the adventurers, acting as a kind mentor to gain their trust.

When the adventure is done and the treasure has been divvied up, Korgan strikes.



RUMAIRA SHERAE

Serving as a guardian of her woodland realm, this druid's motives are far more selfish than others of her kind.

Background: From childhood, Rumaira knew that she was different. From an early age she would often lie awake in the dead of night listening to the sounds of her forest home, feeling as though the very trees and animals were speaking directly to her. She could predict, with uncanny accuracy, when rain or snow would arrive. She seemed to have a preternatural sense for danger and, unlike most of her fey kin, would shrug off injury or illness with remarkable ease.

Indeed, when the raging fever claimed the lives of her brother, sister and mother one bitter winter, it was Rumaira who nursed her father back to health. Sadly, however, it was a loss which Celador the huntsman never overcame. It transformed the once loving husband and father into a bitter, spiteful man who resented his daughter both for surviving and saving him when the rest of their family perished.

Celador had always been suspicious of Rumaira's strange

RUMAIRA SHERAE

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

Female elf druid 3/sorcerer (empyrean celestial) 4

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9, Sense Motive +3

Speed 30 ft.; trackless step, woodland stride; **ACP** 0

Trackless Step (Ex) Rumaira leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. She can leave a trail if desired.

Woodland Stride (Ex) Rumaira can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects her.

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 18 (+3 Dex)

Immune *sleep*; **Resist** acid 5, cold 5

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10; +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects
hp 42 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5

Melee mwk elven curve blade +6 (1d10+1/18-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +8 (1d8/x3)

Ranged ray of enervation (range 55 ft.) +8 touch (1d4 negative levels)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, heavenly fire 5/day, storm burst 6/day

Heavenly Fire (Sp) Rumaira can unleash a ray of heavenly fire as a standard action, targeting any foe within 30 feet as a ranged touch attack. Against evil creatures, this ray deals 1d4+2 points of damage. This damage is divine and not subject to energy resistance or immunity. This ray heals good creatures of 1d4+2 points of damage. A good creature cannot benefit from her heavenly fire more than once per day. Neutral creatures are neither harmed nor healed by this effect.

abilities and became convinced that she was bewitched. He talked openly of his fears to other villagers who started to avoid the young girl with the faraway eyes. It was this rejection that, together with the trauma of her loved ones' deaths, shaped Rumaira's fragile soul – changing her from a carefree young woman whose laughter would bring sunshine – into a solitary individual who avoided contact with others.

Rumaira began to experiment with her talents, tapping ever deeper into a long-dormant celestial bloodline she would never fully understand. She found sorcerous cantrips simple to master and was soon harnessing even greater magicks. As her power grew, so did her father's mistrust and bitterness until one day it spilled over into violence. Celador struck his daughter only once. The fire that sprung from her hands in self-defence not only took her father's life, it also burned their home to the ground and forced Rumaira to flee into the night with only the clothes she wore. From that moment on she vowed to eschew contact with people in favour of a deeper relationship with nature. For while

Storm Burst (Sp) As a standard action, Rumaira can create a storm burst targeting any foe within 30 feet as a ranged touch attack. The storm burst deals 1d6+1 points of nonlethal damage. In addition, the target is buffeted by winds and rain, causing it to take a –2 penalty on attack rolls for 1 round.

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6; spell penetration +8; Weather; spontaneous casting [*summon spells*])

2nd—*barkskin*, *fog cloud*^D, *owl's wisdom*

1st—*entangle* (DC 14), *faerie fire*, *goodberry*, *obscuring mist*^D

0—*detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*, *stabilise*

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +7 spell penetration +6)

2nd (4/day)—*hideous laughter* (DC 15)

1st (7/day)—*bless*, *burning hands* (DC 14), *colour spray*, *shield*

0—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 13), *dancing lights*, *disrupt undead*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*

Combat Gear arrows (20), *scroll of mirror image*, *scroll of stonewood*, *wand of bull's strength* (5 charges), *wand of enervation* (4 charges), *wand of false life* (CL4, 10 charges)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8

SQ bloodline (empyrean celestial), celestial resistances, nature sense, nature bond (domain), wild empathy (+2, -2 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Eschew Materials, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (ray), Toughness

Skills as above plus Heal +9, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (religion) +4, Spellcraft +7 (+9 to identify magic item properties), Survival +9

Languages Common, Elven

Gear as above plus GM determined

those she had loved and trusted had let her down, the forest and all its treasures had never forsaken her.

She survived a tortuous journey across many hundreds of miles until she found a secluded grove where she immediately felt at home. Rumaira spent months creating a simple home from her surroundings and became entirely self-sufficient. Acting as the guardian of her grove, she has nurtured close bonds with all the animals in the locale – including a wolf pack and a fearsome dire bear which Rumaira refers to as her “forest uncle” (but who is not her animal companion). These animals are her eyes and ears and defend her to the death. They care not that Rumaira’s powers as a sorceress are growing – as is her moral ambivalence – for she is good to them. She thinks nothing of murdering travellers unfortunate enough to come close to her home in order to steal the few things she needs. Of late, Rumaira has been specifically targeting spellcasters to rob them of scrolls and arcane items.

Personality: Rumaira is insane. She long ago lost comprehension of the value of life and seeks only to further her own powers to protect her grove. She has no real interest in the material world – and the items she steals from those she slays are simply a means to an end.

She finds it impossible to trust humans or other civilised races, preferring instead to love her animal friends. Rumaira has a particular hatred for her own kind and a pathological fear of

disease. She is no coward, however, and if forced into battle fights with a barely contained feral savagery.

Mannerisms: Rumaira enjoys being part of her animal “family” and often rolls around in the mud, crawls on all fours, barks, howls and in other ways imitates her companions.

When speaking with normal folk she rarely makes eye contact and maintains her physical distance from them.

Distinguishing Features: Those unfortunate enough to cross paths with Rumaira often consider her more feral than civilised, dressed as she is in furs and leaves.

Her speech is curt and, used to dealing with animals rather than people, she often relies on gestures and grunts to get her point across.

Her hair is long, dirty and unkempt.

Hooks: PCs may come across Rumaira if they stray into her territory or are asked to search for someone who has gone missing near her grove.

Alternatively, they may encounter her “forest uncle” – the great dire bear – who proves a formidable adversary. If they injure the bear (but it escapes) Rumaira soon learns of their actions and quickly moves to have her revenge.

Rumaira is a clever foe who not only makes the most of her animal allies but also of the woodland environment she knows so well. If in danger she can call on not only forest uncle but also a large pack of wolves that roams the woodlands around her home.

FOREST UNCLE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This huge and powerfully-built bear, has black, matted fur and a huge maw full of sharp teeth.

Dire bear

N Large animal

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +12, Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft. Run; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +1 (+5 jumping), Stealth -3, Swim +19

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 26 (30 vs. trip) (+1 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

Fort +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

hp 95 (10 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +15 (+19 grapple)

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d6+7 plus grab) and bite +13 (1d8+7)

Atk Options grab

Grab (Ex) If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its bite, the bear can try to grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Abilities Str 25, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Run, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above



CORNES SOLETHAR

Power is what Cornes Solethar has always craved and this was what the demon Arachne promised him in return for his soul.

This corrupt magicker has converted a ruined chapel into a shrine dedicated to his demonic patron and revived an ancient evil to aid him in the service of his dark mistress.

Background: Disillusioned by an adventurer's life and dismissive of his companions, this greedy sorcerer took what little wealth he had gained and artefacts he had acquired and settled down to a life of earnest study.

The discovery of certain blasphemous tomes led him to discover the worship of the demoness Arachne. His initial interest soon turned into an unhealthy obsession. Desperate for power, he begged Arachne to let him enter her service.

Once the pact was struck and Cornes entered her service, Arachne led him to a crumbling, windswept chapel overlooking jagged cliffs. Beneath this fallen holy place, the sorcerer discovered a tomb containing a very old and powerful servant of the monstrous spider demoness. The vampire Oleander had been sleeping for centuries until the blood of sacrificial victims brought to him by Cornes reawakened the undead fiend. Now the sorcerer and his vampiric ally have rebuilt and fortified the chapel and set about carefully binding the locals to their will. In addition to being able to call upon his undead servant, Cornes has charmed several farmers and fishermen who are now his eyes and ears in the area – ensuring that no-one gets near his lair without his knowledge.

CORNES SOLETHAR CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Male half-elf sorcerer (infernal) 12

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3, Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 20

(+2 Dex, +4 armour [extended *mage armour*], +2 deflection [ring of protection +2], +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

Immune sleep; **Resist** fire 10

Fort +7 (+11 vs. poison), **Ref** +8, **Will** +13; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 44 (60 with extended *false life*) (12 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d4/19-20) or

Melee Touch *corrupting touch* +6 (shaken [5 rounds])

Atk Options *corrupting touch* (8/day)

Special Actions hellfire (1/day)

Hellfire (Su) Cornes can call down a column of hellfire (as a 10-foot-radius burst) that deals 11d6 fire damage (DC 21 Reflex halves).

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +17 [+21 casting defensively or grappling]; Extend Spell, Heighten Spell)

Oleander chooses his victims carefully, usually passing travellers, to avoid suspicion but is now considering siring a female companion to take to the catacombs beneath the church where he lairs. Meanwhile, Cornes is slowly building an extensive library of powerful spells and rituals with which to further the ambitions of Arachne. In time, the sorcerer intends to attract more capable followers, like warriors and apprentice sorcerers to help his fledgling church expand its sphere of influence.

Personality: Cornes is a deranged but supremely intelligent practitioner of the dark arts, motivated by his own thirst for knowledge and arcane power and an unswerving loyalty to his demonic mistress. Simply being in his presence is an unnerving experience. He is a thoroughly black-hearted individual whose eyes seem to pierce the soul of anyone he meets. Prone to sudden, violent rages, he is a dangerous opponent whom even Oleander fears.

Cornes is not mad, but there is a fine line between genius and insanity and the half-elf walks it daily.

Mannerisms: The half-elf has a sickly constitution which means he is plagued by a hacking cough that he can never shake. He often wanders the grounds of the chapel talking to himself and becoming quite agitated by the conversation. His frustration at the slow progress of his schemes often manifests itself in fits of petulance during which he throws and kicks inanimate objects. The only affection he ever shows is reserved for a small, stray black dog which wandered into the chapel one day and

6th (3/day)—*mass suggestion* (DC 24)

5th (6/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 19), *dominate person* (DC 23), *teleport*

4th (7/day)—*charm monster* (DC 19), *fire shield*, *lesser geas* (DC 22), *stoneskin*,

3rd (7/day [6/remaining])—*dispel magic*, *fly*, *hold person* (DC 21), *lightning bolt* (DC 18) *suggestion* (DC 21)

2nd (7/day [6/remaining])—*eagle's splendour*, *false life*, *hideous laughter* (DC 20), *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*

1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 17), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *shield*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *scroll of cure serious wounds* (2), *wand of flame strike* (10 charges), *wand of scorching ray* (25 charges),

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 20

SQ bloodline *arcana*, *multitalented*

Feats Combat Casting, Eschew Materials^B, Extend Spell, Great Fortitude, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Iron Will^B, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device)^B, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +16, Knowledge (*arcana*) +12, Spellcraft +12, Use Magic Device +23

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, 15 gp, fine robes

which, bizarrely, the sorcerer has taken a liking to. Indeed, he thinks more of the unnamed animal than any of his minions.

Distinguishing Features: Cornes is a book-worm, constantly sifting through mouldering tomes and dabbling with ancient magicks. His long hours of study means his eyes are constantly ringed through lack of sleep and the odour of mouldy parchment hangs about him. He is never without his voluminous, black hooded cloak gifted to him by Arachne herself (or so he believes).

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The PCs may encounter Cornes and his cult of Arachne when they investigate the sudden disappearance of several travellers in the area.

Cornes could come to the PCs' attention when he breaks into a sage's home in search of certain elder tomes the unfortunate savant possessed. The sage is found the next morning – seemingly slain by his own hand – but the PCs are tasked with looking into the matter by a suspicious relative.

Otherwise, rumours of a dark cult operating in the area draw a curious, good-aligned party to Cornes' domain. It quickly becomes obvious that a vampire is somehow involved and the PCs track the attacks back to Cornes' lair. Alternatively, a local villager may ask the PCs to help when a loved one's personality suddenly changes dramatically.

Finally, the PCs could be in a village near to Cornes' lair when they witness a bizarre scene. A traveller kicks a small black dog and is immediately set upon by several villagers who in turn beat and kick the traveller. Investigations reveal the villagers are absolutely terrified of the dog's owner who often sends his servants to punish those hurting or neglecting the dog. The villagers deliberately paint a bleak view of the situation in the hopes that the PCs will rid them of Cornes and his servants.

ENCOUNTERS

Often surrounded and protected by charmed guards and minions, Cornes only bothers himself with foes if they prove particularly resilient. Foes entering his presence, however, can expect to have their will crushed and to become his willing slaves.

The PCs could encounter Cornes (and/or his minions) in one or more of these encounter groups:

EL 12 (XP 19,200): Two Mercenary Leaders (CR 7 each, page 7), Grash the Destroyer (CR 7, page 6) and six Elite Mercenary Warriors (CR 5, page 7).

EL 13 (XP 25,600): Cornes Solethar and four Mercenary Leaders (CR 7 each, page 7).

LORE

Characters can learn more about Cornes Solethar with a successful Knowledge (local) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 21: This is Cornes Solethar. Cornes is a powerful sorcerer, whispered to have the taint of the Abyss flowing through his veins.

DC 26: Cornes is a devotee of Arachne and has at least one undead servant of great power in his entourage.

DC 31: A cold-hearted scion of evil, Cornes' one weakness is his love for a small black dog. Anyone harming the dog earns his unending ire; indeed he has slain entire families to punish transgressions (both real and imagined) against the dog.



PRAXUS TELEMOS

Devilborn, the warlord, Praxus Telemos, seeks to bring an ignorant world out its own darkness through bloody war and brutal conquest.

Born of a loving mother, but horribly marked by fate as different to his fellows, Praxus' life has been hard and full of bloodshed.



Now with the resources of a barony at his command he seeks to extend his dominion over the weak, the helpless and the chaotic.

Background: Born a tiefling to the local witch in a small town, Praxus's childhood was difficult. Bullied, if not outright ignored by the villagers, Praxus could not wait until he was old enough to leave. Though he worried about his outcast mother, she bade him to go, telling him that she foresaw a great destiny before him. Praxus then travelled far and wide, seeing much of the world in the employment of various mercenary companies. His brute strength, fearsome devilish appearance and merciless pursuit of his assigned objective, gained him the nickname, "Hellhound."

Rising to the rank of captain in a prominent mercenary company, Praxus found himself one day stationed near his home town. He decided to visit his mother, planning to use some of his new wealth to set her up with a fine house and servants to care for her. When he arrived, he found a mob gathered in the town square and his mother tied to a stake. A recent spate of infant deaths had been laid erroneously at her door and the villagers craved brutal justice. Before Praxus could reach her, the mob set her on fire. Her screams mixed with the villagers' own as Praxus cut his way towards her but it was too late. Enraged at the ignorance displayed by the villagers, Praxus brought his regiment down on the town and utterly destroyed it.

At that moment, he had an epiphany. The incident with his mother only confirmed what he had seen in his years fighting for one kingdom or another – people were sheep, wallowing in their own ignorance and stupidity, giving into their base desires. Someone needed to rule them with an iron fist. Thus started Praxus's reign of conquest. Gathering able-bodied warriors from the various mercenary companies in which he had served, Praxus started his own small company that grew larger as his brutal assaults toppled enemies more numerous than himself, bringing him renown and attracting more men to his banner.

The longer life of a tiefling against that of a human has given Praxus the time to carve out a

respectable holding of his own. He does not go by the title of “King” instead using “General” believing that he will always be at war with the world. However, age has tempered him somewhat causing him to fight as much through words and subterfuge now as he does swords. He attempts to provoke other kingdoms into declaring war on him, disguising his own warmongering as an act of defence. In his kingdom, rules and laws are brutally enforced. Praxus believes making an example of someone deters others from the same behaviour. He allows open practice of the dark arts and worshipping of evil gods of the lawful variety. Any god, good or evil, of a chaotic alignment is strictly forbidden. Even neutrality is frowned on. The law is the law for without it his citizens would be nothing but ravaging savages. And if he has to break them on the rack to convince them, then so be it.

Personality: When he was younger, Praxus pursued objectives with single-minded determination. Age and the

PRAXUS TELEMOS

CR 17 (XP 102,400)

Male tiefling fighter 18

LE Medium outsider (native)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0
Speed 20 ft., base speed movement 30 ft., **ACP** -5; Acrobatics -2 (-6 jumping), Climb +6, Ride +3, Stealth +0, Swim +3

AC 29, touch 14, flat-footed 25; **CMD** 38

(+14 armour [+5 *spiked full plate*], +3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 natural [*amulet of natural armour +1*])

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

Fort +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8 (+13 vs. fear)

hp 211 (18 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +24

Melee +2 *flaming keen greatsword* (Power Attack [-5/+15]) +32/+27/+22 (2d6+19/15-20 plus 1d6 fire)

Atk Options Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical, Combat Reflexes, Deafening Critical, Staggering Critical, Tiring Critical

Spell-Like Abilities Spells (CL 18th; concentration +18)

1/day--*darkness*

Combat Gear *elemental gem (fire)*, *horn of evil*, *potion of eagle's splendour* (2), *potion of enlarge person* (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (4)

Abilities Str 22, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ armour training (4), bravery (+5), weapon training (heavy blades [+4], pole arms [+3], spears [+2], close [+1])

Feats Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical^B, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Critical Mastery^B, Deafening Critical, Dodge^B, Improved Critical^B, Improved Initiative^B, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Greater Weapon Focus^B (greatsword), Greater Weapon Specialization^B (greatsword), Power Attack^B, Staggering Critical^B, Tiring Critical, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization^B (greatsword),

Skills as above plus Bluff +6, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +27, Profession (soldier) +5, Survival +5

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus *belt of giant's strength* +4, *ioun stone (pink)*, 175 gp

politics of rulership have tempered him somewhat but he remains as ruthless as ever. Pity, mercy and compassion have no meaning to him anymore. He believes the strong exist to rule the weak because the weak will not only hurt themselves through their ignorance but others as well.

Praxus displays a general's cunning, viewing every situation as a battlefield. He utilizes people as pawns. He may set someone up for victory only for the person to realize at the last minute that he is an expendable piece in a ruse of a greater scheme. This makes dealing with Praxus dangerous as he twists words and situations to his own advantage.

Mannerisms: Praxus realizes his devilish appearance frightens others and makes diplomacy difficult. Instead, he plays up his demonic appearance to put others off guard. He is used to inspiring confidence and loyalty in his men, as those who follow him are rewarded well. However, Praxus has no qualms about bullying others who do not fall in line with what he wants.

Distinguishing Features: Praxus otherworldly heritage is readily apparent with a jutting set of tusks and a long studded tail. His greatsword, *Hell's Hound*, glows with a dark red fire that flickers like flowing blood on his black, spiked armour. Disdaining the silks and velvet robes of a king, he wears his armour, even at state events, to let his followers to know that he is always prepared for battle.

A faint stench of brimstone wafts from him, when he is angry.

Hooks: Praxus rules his kingdom with an iron fist. Secret networks of spies constantly feed him information about possible dissidents and potential revolutionaries. The populace is used to people disappearing from their beds at night. Adventurers may get caught up in a plot to overthrow Praxus or maybe a close ally mysteriously disappears. If the adventurers succeed in turning the people against Praxus and raise an army to oppose them, they will have to go toe to toe with the Hellhound himself on the field of battle.

Adventurers may be sent to Praxus's kingdom as part of a diplomatic mission. Once they arrive, Praxus is quick to have his agents frame the adventurers for a crime that could embroil the country they are representing in war.

Rumours reach the adventurers' ears that the devil progenitor of Praxus's fiendish bloodline has the soul of his deceased mother captive. In order to win her freedom, Praxus has been coerced into conducting a ritual to permanently open a gate to a nether plane large enough for an infernal army to march through. Even though it goes against his own plans, Praxus is displaying his renowned doggedness in seeing it through and only utter defeat will stop him.

DUERRIN THRAMEK

This scarred duergar is an outcast from his own kind and a ferocious, merciless combatant.

Even among the twisted dwarves of the Durgyth clan, Duerrin Thramek was renowned for his cunning and cruelty. Several of his family, many of his brethren and countless foes have fallen to the pounding of his warhammer. Due to a serious injury sustained while raiding a human settlement, Duerrin carries a burning hatred for all humans and the most overt displays of his innate cruelty are reserved for human captives.

DUERRIN THRAMEK

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

With dull gray skin and a thick beard this wide-shouldered dwarf's face is twisted into a perpetual sneer.

Male duergar antipaladin 6/fighter 4

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft.

ACP -5; **Acrobatics** -4 (-8 jumping)

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 25; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. bull rush and trip)

(+1 Dex, +11 armour [+2 full plate], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

Immune disease, paralysis, phantasms, poison; **Weakness** light sensitivity, smite evil

Light Sensitivity (Ex) When in an area of bright light or daylight spell, Duerrin is dazzled (-1 on attack rolls and sight-based perception checks).

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Duerrin deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +13, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10; +1 vs. fear, +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

hp 105 (10 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +12 (+14 bull rush)

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Duerrin radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee +1 warhammer +14/+9 (1d8+5/19-20 x3) or

Melee Touch touch of corruption +12 (3d6 plus sickened for 6 rounds or staggered for 3 rounds [DC 14 negates condition])

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +12 (1d10/19-20)

Atk Options Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack (-3 attack, +6 damage), fiendish boon (weapon) 1/day, smite good 2/day (+1 attack, +6 damage, +1 AC)

Fiendish Boon (Sp) Duerrin can enhance his weapon for 6 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by +1 or by adding the *flaming*, *keen* or *vicious* weapon properties.

Special Actions touch of corruption 4/day (channel negative energy [3d6 damage; DC 14 halves])

Cast out of clan Durgyth's stronghold for eschewing the traditional duergar gods in favour of venerating Lamashtu Duerrin has since sought out other like-minded individuals. He currently leads "The Anvil" – a motley collection of derro, troglodytes and outcast drow who, from their subterranean lair wrested from a now extinct goblin tribe, creep forth to prey upon nearby settlements both above and below ground. Duerrin has amassed a small fortune in loot and is particularly fond of gemstones. He rules his band with an iron fist and, while his followers are terrified of him, they appreciate that they are

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Duerrin can also touch an undead creature to restore 3d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*protection from good*, *protection from law*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +11)

At-Will—*detect good*

1/day—*enlarge person*, *invisibility*

Combat Gear *elemental gem (stone)*, *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ armour training (1), aura of evil (strong), cruelty (sickened, staggered), plague bringer, unholy resilience

Feats Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialisation (warhammer)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (engineering) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

Gear as above plus 10 bolts, spell component pouch, unholy symbol, 15 gp

While enlarged, Duerrin has the following statistics:

ACP -5; **Acrobatics** -5 (-9 jumping)

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 25 (29 vs. bull rush and trip)

(-1 size, +11 armour [+2 full plate], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

Ref +4, **Space** 10 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **CMB** +14 (+16 bull rush)

Melee +1 warhammer (reach 10 ft.) +14/+9 (2d6+6/19-20 x3) or

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10

If unprepared for battle, Duerrin has the following statistics:

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +1 (-3 jumping)

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 22; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. bull rush and trip)

(+1 Dex, +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

becoming wealthy and feared under his leadership.

Duerrin venerates the female demon Lamashtu. As part of his worship, he drinks the warm blood of slain combatants after every battle and keeps the skull of each such victim at a makeshift shrine hidden in his quarters. There are currently 149 skulls in the pile – including those of members of his family and former companions.

Background: Born the runt of the litter, Duerrin survived countless beatings from his elder siblings which possibly go some way to explaining the dark dwarf's remarkable toughness and fortitude. He was trained in the ways of war from an early age and is a peerless fighter. Only two of his five elder siblings survive – one brother and one sister – and both are senior clerics of the clan Durgyth. It is a widely-known among his fellows that Duerrin killed his other brothers in single combat and strangled one of his sisters when she made a disparaging comment about his facial scar.

Personality: Duerrin is large for one of his race – tall, broad-shouldered and powerful. A dark, brooding figure Duerrin spends much of his time alone and never engages in the usual bacchanalian drinking which accompanies feasts or post-battle celebrations.

Duerrin is short-tempered and does not suffer fools or any perceived challenges to his authority or wisdom.

He is cold, calculating and ruthless in the extreme. He never jokes or laughs and is obsessed with personal power and glory.

Mannerisms: Duerrin favours black clothing and is rarely seen out of his platemail armour.

While talking, he often unconsciously holds up his hand in an attempt to hide the livid scar which runs from just beneath his left eye to his jawline. Being in Duerrin's presence is a nerve-wracking experience as he is prone to inexplicable fits of rage.

Distinguishing Features: During a raid, Duerrin's face was badly scarred by a savage spear thrust. The redoubtable duergar disarmed the human warrior responsible before caving the poor soul's head in with his eldritch hammer. The facial scar is Duerrin's most distinguishing feature. Inherently vain, Duerrin is acutely embarrassed by the scar and any mention of it leads to an explosion of violence.

Despite his vanity, Duerrin's teeth are broken and yellowed and he suffers from repulsive bad breath.

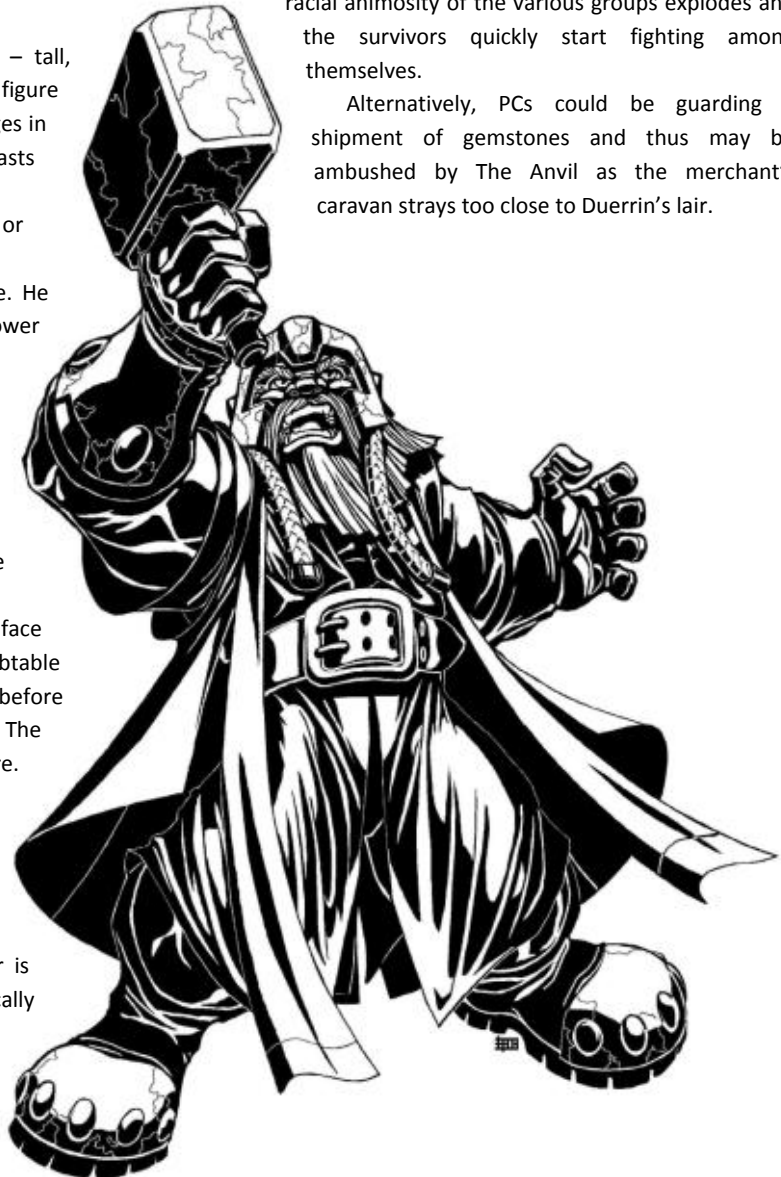
Signature Weapon: Duerrin's massive warhammer is seemingly crafted from a rectangular chunk of magically hardened granite shot through with red flecks. A multitude of tiny cracks run across its surface but the weapon is yet solid. Its short haft is of black iron.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Adventurers could come across the aftermath of a raid by The Anvil. A lone survivor tells of savage raiders led by a ferocious warrior wielding a mighty warhammer. Clad all in black, the leader slew all in his path, including men, women and children, and drank the blood of the slain in a grisly ceremony that seemed to unnerve even his followers.

Tracking The Anvil could lead the party to Duerrin's subterranean lair where the antipaladin is at his most deadly. The Anvil comprises a core of a 20 or so troglodytes (each warrior 5), a trio of mad derro scouts (ranger 2/rogue 7) and two sadistic noble drow wizards (male wizard [evoker] 9 and female wizard [conjurer 8]). All are exiles or outcasts from their own kind and fight ferociously to defend the wealth they have garnered under Duerrin. If Duerrin falls, however, the simmering racial animosity of the various groups explodes and the survivors quickly start fighting among themselves.

Alternatively, PCs could be guarding a shipment of gemstones and thus may be ambushed by The Anvil as the merchant's caravan strays too close to Duerrin's lair.

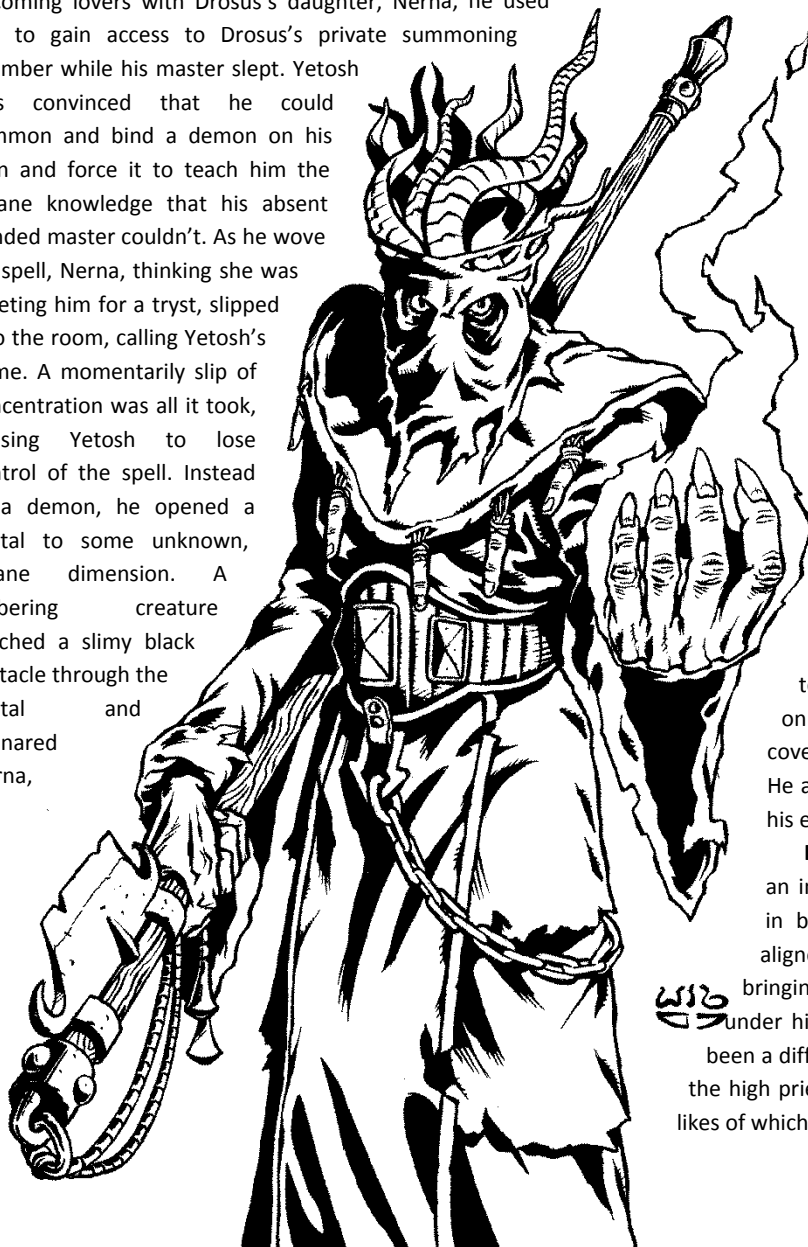


YETOSH THRANE

His quest for knowledge to save a loved one now twisted by terrible dark truths, Yetosh Thrane desires nothing more than to drag this world screaming into madness.

Once a student of lore for knowledge's sake, Yetosh's blasphemous research have brought him nothing but sorrow, madness and loss.

Background: A precocious youth, it was no surprise that as a child Yetosh Thrane apprenticed to the great, but aging wizard, Drosus Uptower. Eager for knowledge and knowing that his master's lifespan was nearing its end, Yetosh took unnecessary risks in his insatiable hunger for the secrets of magic. Eventually becoming lovers with Drosus's daughter, Nerna, he used her to gain access to Drosus's private summoning chamber while his master slept. Yetosh was convinced that he could summon and bind a demon on his own and force it to teach him the arcane knowledge that his absent minded master couldn't. As he wove his spell, Nerna, thinking she was meeting him for a tryst, slipped into the room, calling Yetosh's name. A momentarily slip of concentration was all it took, causing Yetosh to lose control of the spell. Instead of a demon, he opened a portal to some unknown, insane dimension. A gibbering creature reached a slimy black tentacle through the portal and ensnared Nerna,



dragging her through into another realm. Before Yetosh could recover from the shock, the portal closed.

The next morning, a guilt-ridden Yetosh confessed the night's events to Drosus who immediately cast him out.

Yetosh deeply loved Nerna and vowed to free her soul from whatever hell claimed it. As he began his research and discovered the first blasphemous secrets of other, darker worlds, he realized arcane magic would not be enough. He turned to the cults that worshipped such dark things as the creature he summoned. At first, his intentions were noble; he told himself he was learning the cults' vile secrets for a greater good. But the further he delved into evil lore, the more his mind began to comprehend the maddening darkness that awaits all humanity. Slowly, he turned to from trying to destroy such evil to working out how he could use it to further the insane plans already taking root in his diseased mind. He no longer cares about rescuing Nerna and in fact, hardly remembers her at all.

Personality: Yetosh is undoubtedly insane, yet his insanity is because he knows too much about the dark things in the universe. This makes him haughty with arrogance and consider others to be less than insects because of their ignorance.

Mannerisms: The only thing left of the original Yetosh is his hunger for knowledge. If offered obscure knowledge, Yetosh can be quite reasonable. However, if that knowledge is withheld, he quickly turns violent.

Physical Appearance: Strange rituals and contact with alien beings have permanently altered Yetosh giving him the reality warped template (see overleaf). As such, his skin has taken on a black-purplish coloration. Writhing tentacles cover his body, most kept hidden under his ratty robes. He arms himself with a glaive, the favoured weapon of his eldritch patrons.

Hooks: Adventurers may hear terrible stories about an increase in ritual murders, unholy symbols painted in blood on public buildings, and churches of good aligned gods attacked. This is the work of Yetosh who is bringing the small and fragmented cults of elder evils under his authority. As insane as those he leads, this has been a difficult task. Slowly, Yetosh is setting himself up to be the high priest of a unified group of madmen and lunatics the likes of which the world has yet to see.

REALITY WARPED TEMPLATE (CR + I)

The quick build rules are the same as the rebuild rules.

Rebuild Rules: **Type** creatures type changes to aberration; **Senses** gains darkvision 60 ft.; **AC** gains a +4 bonus to its natural armour; **Special Qualities** alien physiology, tentacle

Alien Physiology (Ex) A reality warped creature becomes so twisted it is almost unrecognizable. A reality warped creature

YETOSH THRANE CR 17 (XP 102,400)

Male reality warped human cleric 3/wizard (conjurer) 4/mystic theurge 10

CE Medium aberration

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +20

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 24

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +3 deflection [*ring of protection* +3], +1 dodge [Dodge], +6 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +2])

Resist critical hits and precision based damage (25%)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +17

hp 97 (17 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +8

Melee +1 *anarchic glaive* (reach 10 ft.) +9/+4 (1d10/x3 plus 2d6 vs. lawful creatures) and tentacle +8 (1d6-1 plus tentacle)

Ranged acid dart (Sp; range 30 ft.; 8/day) +9 (1d6+2 acid)

Atk Options acid dart, tentacle, touch of evil, vision of madness

Tentacle (Ex [free]) If Yetoch hits with his tentacles he can attempt a grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Touch of Evil (Sp [standard; 7/day]) With a melee touch attack (+8), Yetosh causes a creature to be sickened for one round.

Vision of Madness (Sp [standard; 7/day]) With a melee touch attack, Yetosh chooses one of the following: attack rolls, saving throws or skill checks. The affected creature receives a +1 bonus to the chosen roll and a -1 bonus to the others.

Special Actions channel negative energy (4/day; 2d6; DC 12; Alignment Channel)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +17 [+21 casting defensively or grappling]; spell penetration +21; Evil, Madness; combined spells (5th-level); spell synthesis; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells])

7th—*insanity*^D (DC 21), *word of chaos* (DC 21)

6th—*forbiddance* (DC 20), *phantasmal killer*^D (2; DC 20)

5th—*nightmare*^D (DC 19), *plane shift*, *slay living* (2; DC 19)

4th—*chaos hammer* (DC 18), *dimensional anchor*, *planar ally*, *lesser poison* (DC 18), *tongues*, *unholy blight*^D (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 17), *deeper darkness*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*^D, *prayer*

2nd—*death knell* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *owl's wisdom*, *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 16), *touch of idiocy*^D

1st—*comprehend languages*, *doom* (DC 15), *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*^D, *shield of faith*

0—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Combined Spells: Yetosh can prepare and cast spells (up to 5th-

level) from either spellcasting classes using the slots from the other spellcasting classes. Spells prepared or cast in this way take up a slot one level higher than they originally occupied. This ability cannot be used to cast a spell at a lower level if that spell exists on both spell lists.

Tentacle (Ex) A reality warped creature's body writhes with tentacles. As part of an attack action, it can make a slam attack at its highest base attack bonus. Damage is based on the size of the creature. One a hit, the tentacle can attempt a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

level) from either spellcasting classes using the slots from the other spellcasting classes. Spells prepared or cast in this way take up a slot one level higher than they originally occupied. This ability cannot be used to cast a spell at a lower level if that spell exists on both spell lists.

Spell Synthesis (Su [standard; 1/day]) Yetosh can cast one wizard spell and one cleric spell, using one action. Both spells must have the same casting time and he can make any decisions concerning the spells independently. A foe targeted by both spells takes a -2 penalty on saves made those spells. Yetosh receives a +2 bonus on caster level checks made to overcome spell resistance with these spells.

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 14th; concentration +19 [+23 casting defensively or grappling]; spell penetration +23; Augment Summoning; arcane bond [ring]; combined spells (5th-level); spell synthesis; summoner's charm [+2 rounds])

7th—*prismatic spray* (DC 22), *summon monster VII*

6th—*acid fog*, *planar binding* (DC 21), *summon monster VI*

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 20), *lesser planar binding* (DC 20), *summon monster V*, *teleport*

4th—*black tentacles* (2; DC 19), *dimension door*, *enervation* (DC 19), *summon monster IV*

3rd—*gaseous form*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *sleet storm*, *stinking cloud* (DC 18), *summon monster III*

2nd—*acid arrow* (2), *summon monster II* (2), *summon swarm*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 16), *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *summon monster I*

0—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 15)

Combat Gear *bead of force*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (3), *wand of black tentacles* (20 charges), *wand of inflict serious wounds* (30 charges)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 13

SQ alien physiology, aura of evil (overwhelming)

Feats Alignment Channel, Augment Summoning^B, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Dodge, Greater Spell Penetration, Scribe Scroll^B, Selective Channelling, Spell Penetration

Skills as above plus Appraise +11, Heal +10, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (engineering) +17, Knowledge (geography) +16, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (planes) +25, Knowledge (religion) +25, Linguistics +25, Spellcraft +25

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon

Gear as above plus *headband of mental prowess* +2 (Int and Wis)

Spellbook (enchantment and illusion) as above plus GM's choice

PETROK UREN

Once a champion of good, Petrok Uren is now an exarch of evil and a prime example of how vanity, jealousy and greed can corrupt even the most virtuous.

Born the second son of a wealthy noble family, Petrok could simply never accept the hand that fate had dealt him. As he was not the first in line to inherit his father's estates, the young nobleman was earmarked for a career in the priesthood.

Today, with a death warrant hanging over him, Petrok Uren remains a fugitive. His actions have left him somewhat unhinged and he now lives in a crumbling tower house on a lonely moor where few would ever care to look. The self-styled lord of this little manor, Petrok has recruited a score of goblin followers whom he treats as his personal retinue. He can often be found standing on the battlements as the rain lashes down or lightning crackles in the sky above. His followers live in fear of this brooding madman and the winged terror he worships.

Background: Petrok lived a life of luxury at the Uren estate (becoming an accomplished horseman and learning the etiquette and manners befitting a member of the nobility) until the day of his 13th birthday when his father, who died soon

after, sent him away to become a priest.

At first, Petrok blossomed under the strict discipline and the regimented life of an acolyte. However, he soon came to bitterly resent his brothers and sisters. For he, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, now had to endure the same austere conditions as those from poorer backgrounds and study with those whom he considered to be intellectually inferior to him.

All the while, his elder brother Gaspar enjoyed a life of utter comfort and contentment. Petrok grew to despise his teachers who sensed the growing anger in the young clergyman and passed him over for advancement on several occasions. Petrok sought solace in the church's great library and became fascinated by the 'hidden texts' – scrolls and tomes rumoured to be locked away from the acolytes. One night, Petrok broke into a vault containing some of the most dangerous and blasphemous writings known to his church. It was there he discovered an eldritch heavy mace engraved with a figure with the winged body of a man, the head of a lion, taloned feet and a scorpion's tail. Soon realising the origins of the grim weapon, Petrok became obsessed with the teachings of Pazuzu and quickly gave himself over to the demon's service.

PETROK UREN

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

Bearded and long-haired this swarthy, muscular warrior has an intense, brooding presence.

Male human antipaladin 6

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +5

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -7; **Acrobatics** -8 (-12 jumping), **Ride** +1, **Stealth** -4

AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 18

(-1 Dex, +9 armour [+1 *half-plate*], +3 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Immune disease; **Weakness** smite evil

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Petrok deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

hp 55 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +9

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Petrok radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee +1 *heavy mace* +11/+6 (1d8+4) or

Melee Touch touch of corruption +9 (3d6 plus fatigued or staggered for 6 rounds [DC 15 negates condition])

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +5 (1d4+3/19-20)

Atk Options fiendish boon (weapon) 1/day, smite good 2/day (+2 attack, +6 damage, +2 AC)

Fiendish Boon (Sp) Petrok can enhance his weapon for 6 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by +1 or by

adding the *flaming*, *keen* or *vicious* weapon properties.

Special Actions Dazzling Display (+8), touch of corruption 5/day (channel negative energy [3d6 damage; DC 15 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Petrok can also touch an undead creature to restore 3d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st—*cause fear* (DC 13), *protection from good*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

At-Will—*detect good*

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of disguise self* (2)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15

SQ aura of evil (strong), cruelty (fatigued or staggered), plague bringer, unholy resilience

Feats Dazzling Display, Deceitful, Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)^B

Skills as above plus Bluff +9, Disguise +12, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (religion) +5

Languages Common

Gear as above plus unholy symbol, spell component pouch, masterwork disguise kit, 20 gp, 20 sp, family signet ring (worth 200 gp)

If unprepared for battle, Petrok has the following statistics:

Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; **Acrobatics** -2, **Ride** +7, **Stealth** +2

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 18

(-1 Dex, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt])

A month or so later, as a show of fealty to Pazuzu, Petrok murdered the church elders with his fell weapon as they dined one evening and made good his escape into a raging blizzard. He arrived back at the Uren estate a few days later where he was welcomed home with open arms by his brother who was as yet unaware of Petrok's terrible sin. He repaid that affection by later strangling his slumbering sibling. Having looted his family demesne, he set the ancestral home ablaze and once again fled.

Personality: Petrok is a contradiction. At times he can appear to be an insightful and even benevolent leader as he slips into the role he wished that he could have had in his former life. But the goblins who serve him know only too well that their liege is only ever seconds away from exploding into a deadly rage that spells death to those within striking distance.

Petrok is now driven by the mad quest to recreate the Uren dynasty in the isolated, windswept ruin he now calls home – with the aid of his goblin servants and his otherworldly master.

Mannerisms: Petrok considers himself to be a true representative of Pazuzu and, as such, addresses strangers with haughty arrogance. He often refers to himself in the third person – which is somewhat confusing for his goblin servants – and has begun composing songs to honour his deity which he forces his followers to learn. Suffice to say, music was never Petrok Uren's strong-point.

Distinguishing features: At six foot three inches tall and with piercing blue eyes, long jet black hair, and a neatly-trimmed goatee beard, Petrok cuts an imposing figure. Irrespective of his surroundings, he is always immaculately turned out; he can't pass a mirror without admiring himself.

Signature Weapon: Petrok yet wields the heavy mace he used to slay his teachers and elders. The mace's head is strangely elongated and slightly reflective while its haft is engraved with a figure with the winged body of a man, the head of a lion, taloned feet and a scorpion's tail.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Petrok Uren is nothing if not ambitious. He plans to restore the remote, crumbling ruins he now inhabits with the help of his growing goblin army and to establish a new dynasty in the Uren name. The PCs could encounter some of his minions as they attempt – ineptly – to steal various pieces of antique furniture and art objects for their master from outlying villages and noble's estates. Alternatively, Petrok could unleash his army against a borderland village or small town with the aim extending his rule over the unfortunates dwelling there.

Petrok's goblin army numbers roughly 200 warriors (CE goblins warrior 2) led by a small cadre of rabid berserks (CE male goblins barbarians 3). Living in the cellars below Petrok's ruined home, and led by the goblin shaman Knopek-Tah (CE male goblin adept 8), the goblins are vociferous in their veneration of Pazuzu. Along with the warriors, almost 400 females and young

cram themselves into the tunnels and nightly work restoring the ruins to their former glory.

While Petrok obsessively works on restoring the manor to a state fit for a nobleman of his station, Knopek-Tah is scouring the lands looking for artefacts of power and texts relating to his demonic lord. A party could come into possession of such an item or stumble across Petrok's hideout – leading to a showdown with the renegade and his fanatical goblins followers.

Alternatively, the PCs could be hired by one of Petrok's misguided surviving relatives to save the antipaladin from the dark path he has chosen. The distant cousin (Kello Uren [NG female human aristocrat 3]), is hopelessly romantic and believes an impassioned plea will shake Petrok from his dark beliefs. She is sorely mistaken. If the PCs capture Petrok, his savage denial of her affection sends Kello into a deep depression from which

madness is her final escape.



REXAL UREXIN

The scourge of the seas, Rexal is an unrelentingly vicious pirate captain who spends his ill-gotten gains in orgies of booze-fuelled gambling and whoring as quickly as he seizes them.

In recent years, Rexal's reputation for butchery and daring has grown and this vicious pirate captain now commands three vessels operating from a hidden cove. His small fleet is a constant threat to merchant shipping; he has even led his pirates in daring raids against several coastal towns and sacked the estates of four minor nobles.

Some pirates make monies from ransoming prisoners – but Rexal considers this a sign of weakness. Not a man, woman or child is left alive when Rexal's cut-throats board a vessel. The minotaur's pursuit of plunder is boundless because he has a supreme knack for quickly squandering any wealth he acquires on booze, whores and at the gambling tables.

Background: Sailor, brawler and mercenary for hire, Rexal is a warrior-born. As at home on a ship as he is on dry land, the minotaur is a colossal, intimidating figure – large even by the standards of his own race. As a low-born youth, Rexal was destined for a life of back-breaking graft but abandoned his kin

REXAL UREXIN

CR 13 (XP 25,600)

Male advanced minotaur barbarian 8

CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24, Sense Motive +3

Speed 50 ft., base speed 40 ft.

ACP -1; **Acrobatics** +18 (+26 jumping), **Climb** +25, **Stealth** +3, **Swim** +19

AC 28, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 28 (natural cunning); **CMD** 38; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge, +2 vs. traps (-1 size, +3 Dex, +8 armour [+2 *mithral breastplate*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +7 natural)

Immune *maze*

Fort +17, **Ref** +10 (+12 vs. traps), **Will** +10

hp 191 (14 HD); **DR** -/1

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +24(+26 bull rush)

Melee +2 *greataxe* (reach 10 ft.) +25/+20/+15 (3d6+15/19-20 x3) and gore (reach 10 ft.) +17 (1d6+4)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +16 (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage [+4 gore, +12 *greataxe*, powerful charge]), powerful charge (gore +24, 2d6+13 damage), rage (31 rounds)

Powerful Charge (Ex) When Rexal makes a charge, he deals extra damage with his gore attack.

Combat Gear 10 bolts, *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 28, Dex 16, Con 24, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 10

SQ fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, natural cunning, rage powers (powerful blow +2, quick reflexes, renewed

at a young age to join the crew of a merchant ship.

A fast-learner, extremely strong and surprisingly agile, he excelled at the art of seamanship and rose quickly to become the first mate of *The Squall*. When pirates captured his ship, Rexal threw his lot in with them. This was the moment the young warrior had been waiting for. No more a mere sailor, he was free to battle, plunder and grow rich.

For seven years, Rexal cut a bloody swathe through the oceans as second mate on the pirate vessel *The Scourge*. During that time, he became known as the most savage pirate under the command of captain 'Gentleman' Jandiz. Always first into the fray, Rexal revelled in the chaos of battle – being happiest when surrounded by enemies. His favoured weapon is the *greataxe*, the blade of which he licks clean after combat. Having amassed a small personal fortune, Rexal slipped into Jandiz's cabin one night, trussed his doomed captain to the mast and subjected him to two days of horrific, savage torture before staking his claim to *The Scourge*.

Personality: Rexal is a beast, plain and simple. He has no redeeming features. He is uncouth, smelly and driven by the pursuit of personal gratification. He has no concept of planning

vigour 2d8+7, unexpected strike), trap sense (+2), uncanny dodge

Natural Cunning (Ex) Rexal possess innate cunning and logical ability that gives him immunity to *maze* spells and prevents him from becoming lost or flat-footed.

Feats Extra Rage, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (*greataxe*), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (*greataxe*)

Skills as above plus Linguistics +1, Profession (sailor) +9, Survival +12

Languages Common, Giant

Gear as above plus *boots of striding and springing*, 12 gp

When raging, Rexal has the following modified statistics:

ACP -1; **Climb** +27, **Swim** +21

AC 26, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 26 (natural cunning); **CMD** 40; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge, +2 vs. traps (-1 size, -2 class, +3 Dex, +8 armour [+2 *mithral breastplate*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +7 natural)

Fort +19, **Will** +12

hp 219

CMB +26(+28 bull rush)

Melee +2 *greataxe* (reach 10 ft.) +27/+22/+17 (3d6+18/19-20 x3) and gore (reach 10 ft.) +19 (1d6+5)

Atk Options powerful charge (gore +26, 2d6+16 damage), rage (31 rounds; powerful blow +2, quick reflexes, unexpected strike)

Special Actions renewed vigour (2d8+7)

Abilities Str 32, Con 28

for the future – living only for the next kill, pay-day or tavern. He has a drinking problem – although he doesn't understand it – and is even more dangerous and unpredictable when drunk.

Possessed of a violent temper, Rexal is anything but a gracious loser and rarely leaves a den of ill-repute without having started (and ended) a brawl.

Mannerisms: A boastful individual who likes to shock people, Rexal is not averse to biting the heads off small animals, drinking incredible amounts of ale without taking a breath or demonstrating his immense strength – such as lifting full barrels over his head and then throwing them at incredulous onlookers. Rexal has a saying, taken from the motto of his favourite brewery, which he is fond of repeating when in melee. "Life is short" he roars, before laughing maniacally as he hurls himself into the slaughter.

Distinguishing Features: Rexal's body odour could fell an ox.

The only time he spends on his own appearance is devoted to sharpening his weapons. His broad upper-body is a mesh-work of old scars – most of which are on his front – which is testament to the fact that the minotaur has a flagrant disregard for his personal safety and is quite content to soak up blows, safe in the knowledge that his remarkable strength and constitution will ultimately prevail.

REXAL'S CREW

Over the last seven years, Rexal has gathered a fearsome band of hard-bitten pirates under his banner.

Notable followers include:

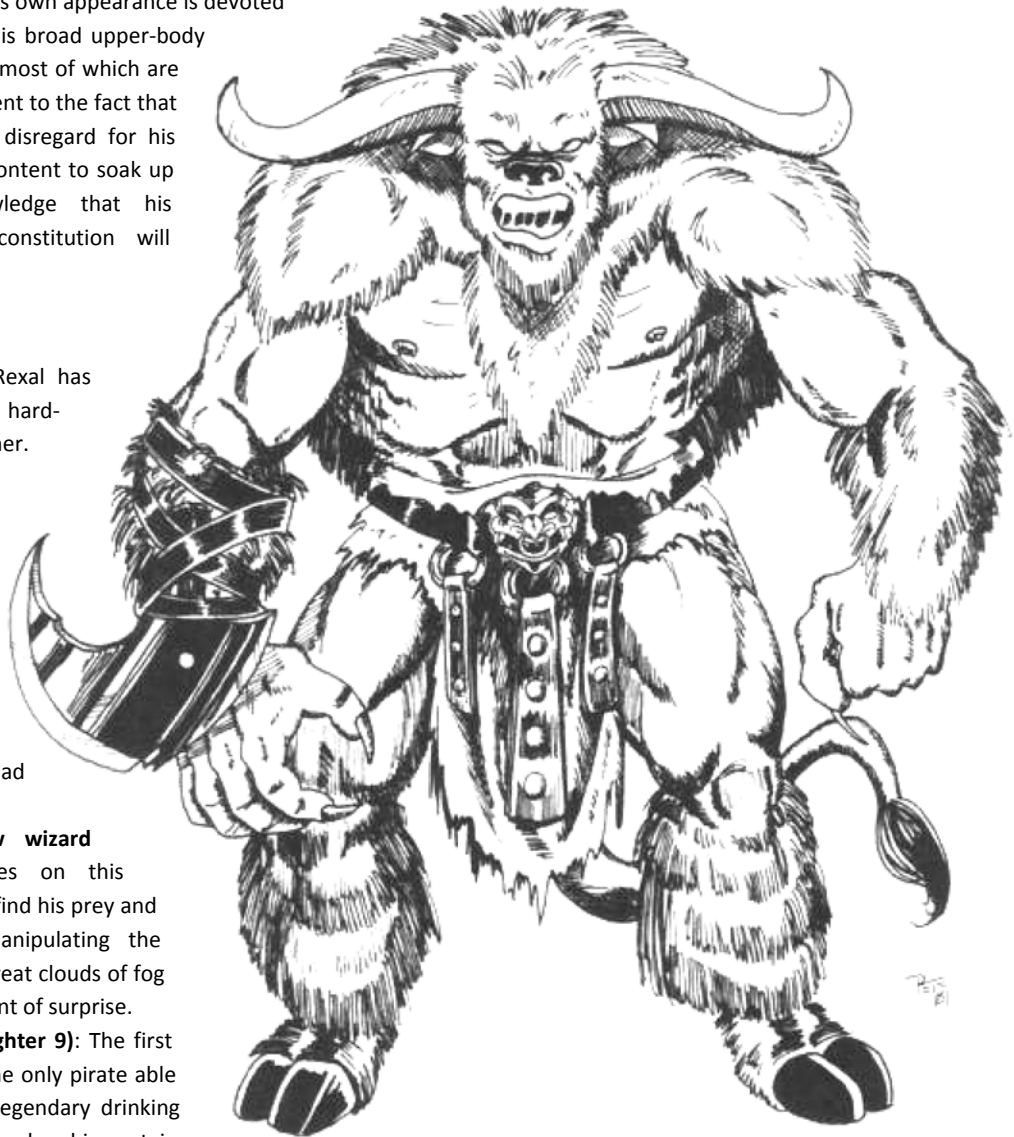
- **Alley the Sneak (NE male human bard 4/rogue 6):** A consummate spy and ladies man, Alley moves from port to port garnering information on the rich pickings to be had from merchant ships.
- **The Eye (CE male dwarf wizard [diviner] 11):** Rexal relies on this powerful dark elf diviner to find his prey and to aid his attacks by manipulating the elements and summoning great clouds of fog to give his vessels the element of surprise.
- **Tusker (CE male half-orc fighter 9):** The first mate on *The Scourge* and the only pirate able to keep up during Rexal's legendary drinking sessions, Tusker is as depraved as his captain.

While a capable pirate and driven by his desire to possess his own crew, he is not suicidal and therefore harbours no desire to challenge Rexal for *The Scourge*.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

PCs could encounter Rexal during one of his wrecking sprees in a tavern or whorehouse and attempt to capture, knock-out or kill the brute. If they succeed, Alley the Sneak rallies Rexal's crews and the party could be in for a very tough fight.

Alternatively, the PCs may be aboard a vessel attacked by *The Scourge* or one of Rexal's other ships. As the minotaur captain's villainy escalates, the authorities may, of course, see fit to equip a vessel carrying a band of experienced adventurers for the specific purpose of bringing Rexal's reign of terror to an end.



VALTO URONEN

A young stray, grieving for his foster father, who seeks solace in booze and brawling.

Background: Valto is the bastard son of a woman who was raped by orc bandits who then slew her husband and ate her baby. Unhinged and ostracised by her community, the poor woman died giving birth to her over-sized child. Superstitious villagers were about to drown the infant when Old Abbott (or Abbo as he was known) came to his rescue. He named the boy Valto and gave him the surname Uronen which means “stone-heart” in Orc. Already in his seventies, Abbo raised the orphan as his own, teaching him mastery of “the way” – the pursuit of physical and spiritual enlightenment.

Valto adored his foster father and it tore his soul to see the old man becoming increasingly frail. One morning, early in his fifteenth year, he woke to find Abbo had died in his sleep. Valto was so stunned that he just sat there all day – simply not knowing what to do. Eventually he gathered his wits and built Abbo a huge funeral pyre to light his soul’s path to heaven. In the months since, Valto has degenerated into a drunken nuisance. Gravitating increasingly towards his birth village, he has taken to heavy drinking in the village’s only tavern – The Angry Cow – to mask the pain of his loss.

Personality: Valto is not good with people because he has never lived among them. He feels particularly awkward in the presence of women and attempts to overcome this by being over-bearing and aggressive. Valto’s evil nature is rooted in his inability to reconcile his loss and the fact that his life is directionless. He cannot handle his liquor and his short temper often leads to sudden explosions of violence.



Mannerisms: Valto’s personal hygiene is awful; his stench is the thing people remember most about him. His manners are non-existent. When drunk he is prone to loud, tuneless singing.

Distinguishing Features: Valto has an imposing figure – fully six foot six inches tall and powerfully-built.

Hooks: Valto is normally found drowning his sorrows in The Angry Cow, where he turns almost any encounter into a brawl. However, his soul is not beyond saving and his character provides interesting roleplaying opportunities.

VALTO URONEN

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male half-orc monk 2/fighter (brawler) 3

LE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6, Sense Motive +6
Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +9, **Escape Artist** +7

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 20 (+21 vs. bull rush, drag, and reposition, +22 vs. grappling)
(+2 Dex, +2 Wis)

Fort +7 (+8 vs. fear), **Ref** +6 (evasion), **Will** +5

hp 38 (6 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Valto can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of his next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, he falls unconscious and begins to die.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8 (+9 bull rush, drag, and reposition, +10 grappling)

Melee unarmed strike (Power Attack [-2/+4], flurry of blows [+9/+9]) +10 (1d6+7)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Crane Style, Crane Wing, Improved Grapple, Stunning Fist (2/day, DC 13)

Crane Style (feat) Valto takes only a -2 penalty on attack rolls for fighting defensively. While using this style and fighting defensively or using the total defence action, he gains an additional +1 dodge bonus to his AC (for a total of -2 attack, +4 AC when fighting defensively).

Crane Wing (feat) Once per round while using Crane Style, with at least one hand free and fighting defensively or using total defence, Valto can deflect one melee weapon attack that would normally hit him. He expends no action to deflect the attack, but he must be aware of it and not flat-footed. A deflected attack deals no damage.

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin, potion of bear’s endurance, potion of bull’s strength, potion of cat’s grace, potion of divine favour* (+3; CL 9), *potion of owl’s wisdom*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ bravery (+1), close control (brawler ability), close combatant

Feats Combat Reflexes, Crane Wing, Crane Style, Improved Grapple, Power Attack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +6

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above plus as GM determined

EBREL VOSPER

A chieftain's daughter, she has risen to become all-powerful among her tribe and is slowly converting them to the worship of her demonic patron.

Background: First-born of the chieftain of the small Golden Wings tribe, Ebrel was a cruel and vindictive child. Her small-mindedness and petty ways, coupled with her potential as a leader, eventually attracted the attention of the demon lord Pazuzu who took an interest in the wicked young woman. While out hunting, Ebrel stumbled upon the ruins of an ancient shrine and found herself strangely compelled to explore the crumbling building. Deep within the ruin's gloom, an aspect of Pazuzu possessed young Ebrel – merging itself with her existing well of hatred and bitterness. The creature that emerged wore Ebrel's devilish grin but was now infinitely more dangerous and depraved. Within weeks, she poisoned her younger brother, smothered her father in his sleep and became ruler of her tribe.

EBREL VOSPER

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Female human cleric 5

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +4, Sense Motive +12

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping)

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 13

(-1 Dex, +7 armour [+1 *breastplate*], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +8

hp 36 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk flail +4 (1d8+1)

Atk Options, destructive smite (7/day; +2 damage), touch of evil (7/day; +4 melee touch, sickened [2 rounds])

Special Actions channel negative energy 4/day (DC 13, 3d6; Channel Smite, Selective Turning [1]),

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +9, Destruction, Evil; spontaneous casting [*inflict spells*])

3rd—*prayer, protection from energy, rage*^D

2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, hold person* (DC 16), *shatter*^D (DC 16)

1st—*bleed, cure light wounds, magic weapon, protection from good, true strike*^D

0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, guidance, light*

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace, scroll of cure moderate wounds, scroll of silence*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13

Feats Channel Smite, Selective Turning, Toughness^B, Martial Weapon Proficiency (flail)

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (planes) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +10

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus silver holy symbol, spell component pouch, 36 gp, 57 sp

The Golden Wings were so named because they claimed a region wherein a young gold dragon was sometimes seen. Ebrel decided that the dragon's existence was an affront to her winged lord and began searching for its lair. Eventually, she located the dragon's cave and, after a brutal struggle in which four of her warriors died, overcame the proud creature. Ebrel herself struck the mortal wound before drinking deep of the dragon's blood in order to "consume her enemy's strength." She decreed from that moment, the tribe to be The Dark Wings and took the dragon's severed head as a mark of her authority. Ebrel's subjects live in fear of her; a handful who spoke against her have mysteriously vanished and none now dare challenge her. Ebrel rules the tribe with an iron fist through a score of devoted warriors. All have sworn allegiance to Pazuzu and she now slowly corrupts the remaining folk, soul by precious soul.

Personality: Very little of Ebrel's own personality remains – except the cruelty which shaped her early years. She is now driven solely by the desire to expand her demonic lord's domain.

Mannerisms: Ebrel is extremely haughty and condescending. She considers herself superior to all others and treats them with contempt. She has begun to refer to herself in the third person as the aspect of Pazuzu asserts its control over her.

Distinguishing Features: Ebrel is devastatingly beautiful. She wears the severed head of the nameless gold dragon as a mark of her authority.

Hooks: PCs may discover Ebrel's handiwork when they stumble upon a small homestead burned out and ransacked by The Dark Wings. Tell-tale signs on the corpses and a trail leading into the hills point towards Ebrel's tribe as the culprits. Alternatively, a warband ambushes the PCs.



STEREN WEARNE

Incredibly beautiful and elegant, this half-elf witnessed her parents' suicides and has a warped view of the world seeing nothing but darkness, death and despair.

Steren Wearne longed to be a bard, but not because she admired the tales she heard from passing poets of brave and victorious adventurers. Steren was often left disappointed with the way these odes normally turned out to have a happy ending.

From an early age she believed life was cruel and love was a trick. In her mind, happy endings were a fallacy. Steren longed to be a bard who told the bleak truth of the world through stories and music. And the truth for Steren was that the world was a very dark place. There was no hope, no chance of redemption or of being saved by a benevolent higher power.

Steren's disappointment turned into simmering resentment and she found herself drawn deeper and deeper into dark stories of elder gods and ferocious demons. If no-one could see the world for the dark, ugly and cruel place it was then she resolved to be the one to put them right. She longed for the day

that great songs would be sung of the dark triumphing over the light. For Steren, the darkness always won in the end.

With the focus of a zealot she began cataloguing what she called "true history." Her version of history showed that there was no all-conquering light, no ultimate goodness and no salvation. It was a slippery path to follow and the half-elf quickly became obsessed with texts relating to the demon Lamashtu.

For years now she has sought the company of warlocks, wizards and necromancers – anyone who practises the darker arts – seeking comfort in chaos and darkness. Steren is a follower of Lamashtu but, in truth, her views of the world and its history shock even her fellow worshippers.

Background: Steren's mother, Maerwen, was an elf of great beauty who fell in love with the human woodsman, Bjarne. Ignoring the advice of both families the couple married and had one daughter, Steren. The family made a life in the forest, among the elves and thus as Steren grew she watched her father suffer the complications of age and her mother remain timelessly beautiful. However, the couple remained firmly

STEREN WEARNE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Beautiful and slender, this half-elf woman dresses in black, tight-fitting clothes that accent her figure.

Female half-elf bard 4/antipaladin 4

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +10, Ride +6, Stealth +11

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 22; Dodge (+2 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +2 shield [+1 buckler], +1 deflection [ring of deflection +1], +1 dodge)

Immune disease, *sleep*; **Weakness** smite evil

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Steren deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects

hp 52 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +8

Aura of Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Steren radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee +1 bastard sword +9/+4 (1d10+2/19-20) or

Melee Touch touch of corruption +8 (2d6 plus shaken for 4 rounds [DC 15 negates condition])

Atk Options smite good 2/day (+3 attack, +4 damage, +3 AC)

Special Actions bardic performance (19 rounds; countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 15], inspire courage [+1], inspire competence [+2]), touch of corruption 7/day (channel negative energy [2d6 damage; DC 15 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Steren can also touch an

undead creature to restore 2d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)

1st—*bane* (DC 14)

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd (2/day)—*cat's grace*, *invisibility*

1st (4/day)—*cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *undetected alignment*

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *lullaby* (DC 13), *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

At-Will—*detect good*

Abilities Str 13, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17

SQ aura of evil (moderate), bardic knowledge (+2), bardic performance (act), cruelty (shaken), plague bringer

Feats Dodge, Extra Performance, Extra Lay on Hands, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perform [act])^B

Skills as above plus Bluff +17, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +17, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perform (act) +17, Sleight of Hand +6

Languages Abyssal, Common, Elven

Gear as above plus disguise kit, spell component pouch, 10 gp, 15 gp, 23 sp

If unprepared for battle, Steren has the following statistics:

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 22; Dodge

(+2 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +1 deflection [ring of deflection +1], +1 dodge)

devoted to each other. As Bjarne approached his 50th year he developed a debilitating illness that left him utterly reliant on his wife. He saw then that his life would end sooner than he'd hoped, leaving his love behind. The couple decided they did not want death to separate them. On the last day of summer, when Steren was ten-years-old, Bjarne and Maerwen took their own lives. Bjarne stabbed his wife through the heart as they embraced. He then fell on the weapon stained with the blood of his soulmate. Steren found a scribbled note through which her parents apologised for their weakness. Steren was placed with her mother's parents after the deaths but left the forest for good just a few years later - irretrievably scarred.

Personality: Steren has a chameleon-like personality – adapting it to suit her mood and the situation at hand. A talented performer she treats her life as a role – swapping it to suit her needs. When she deigns to be, she can be witty, charming and occasionally, if it serves her interests, servile. Steren has been playing her varying roles for so long now it is difficult to remember her natural self. However, her one constant weakness is her temper. She is quick to anger and often lashes out without thinking.

Mannerisms: Steren is constantly at work composing a new ballad or story. She carries a heavy notebook of her work, the cover crafted from the dyed skin of a human cleric. Seeking perfection, she only adds completed stories to the book, which she carries underneath her cloak and close to her heart. The only element lacking perfection is a blood-stained cloth that Steren uses as a bookmark. She marks her place in the journal with the same strip of blood-stained cloth she used to clean the blade which took her parents' lives.

Distinguishing Features: In contrast to her belief that life is ugly and chaotic, Steren is a great beauty. She takes enormous pride in her appearance. The beautiful half-elf dresses in black, tight-fitting clothes cut from the finest cloth to accentuate her slender figure. She wears a circlet headdress made of tiny black half-moons.

Signature Weapon: Steren's bastard sword is a long, finely balanced weapon that is strangely thin for such a weapon. It has no pommel, but symbols sacred to Lamashtu decorate its hilt. She keeps her sword in a sheath of ancient worn leather decorated with two faded and dirty white feathers (which she asserts were torn from the bloodied, broken body of a fallen planetar).

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Steren can be encountered in any reasonable-sized town, plying her trade in taverns and inns.

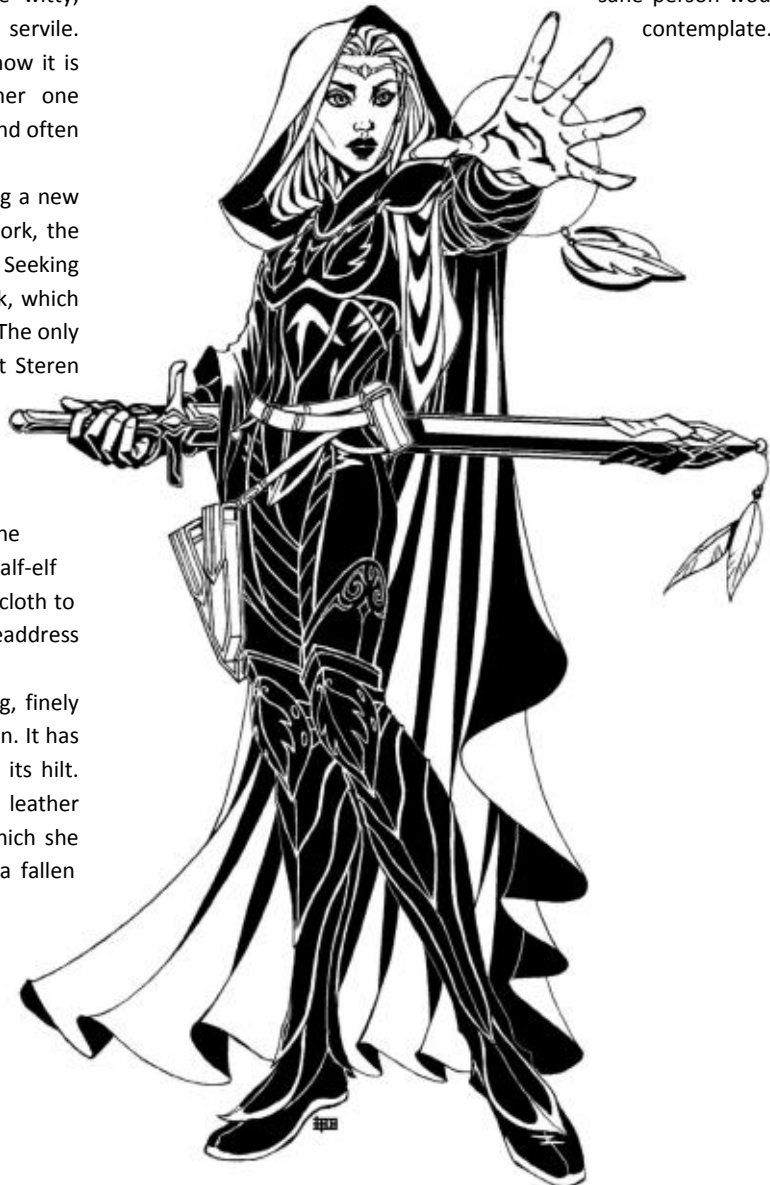
The PCs may hear one of her dark tales about a lost artefact of ill-omen and determine to recover it,

intent on ridding the world of a great evil. Alternatively, she may pay them to track down a lost bardic work or to uncover the truth of an old legend.

Steren could even join the party – ostensibly to record their heroics – but with the ultimate aim of chronicling its demise (and surreptitiously doing her best to hasten the PCs' fall) so that she may record their suffering in her journal.

Finally, the PCs could encounter Steren as she gives one of her dour recitals. Her performances attract a strange crowd of deranged heretics, would-be suicides and gullible fools who both unnerve regular folk and spend little coin. The establishment's regular customers no doubt object to the miserable tone of Steren's performance and a vicious, deadly brawl may ensue. Many of those gathering to hear her performance genuinely do not care if they live or die. Thus, in the brawl they take risks no

sane person would contemplate.



CALAUNFEL WYRXIN

Condemned to death for a crime he didn't commit, this bitter creature is hell-bent on wreaking vengeance on the living.

Most mummies are specifically created to guard burial places. In contrast, Calaunfel Wyrxin exists because his spirit raged against those who murdered and entombed him amid ritual and superstition. Created by the murderous, but ultimately misdirected vengeance, of terrified peasants Calaunfel Wyrxin is obsessed with vengeance against all those who doomed him to unimaginable torments.

Background: In life, Calaunfel was a sorcerer of limited power whose devotion to dragons condemned him to an unspeakable end. At the age of 12 he was cast out of his village – his father accusing the boy of being possessed. Although ultimately wrong, his father wasn't far from the truth as within Calaunfel strange powers were stirring – the result of a union

CALAUNFEL WYRXIN CR 17 (XP 102,400)

Male human mummy fighter 2/sorcerer (draconic [copper])
2/dragon disciple 8

LE Medium undead

Init +7; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16, Sense Motive +2

Speed 20 ft.; wings

Wings (Su) Calaunfel can grow dragon wings (fly 60 ft., average manoeuvrability) as a standard action.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +3 (-1 jumping), Climb +17, Fly +17, Stealth +14

AC 32, touch 18, flat-footed 28; **CMD** 41

(+3 Dex, +4 deflection [*ring of deflection* +4], +1 dodge, +14 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** acid 10; **Weakness** vulnerable to fire

Fort +19, **Ref** +8, **Will** +17

hp 311 (20 HD); **DR** —/5

Space 5 ft. (aura of despair 30 ft.); **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +27 (+29 grapple)

Aura of Despair (Su) Creatures within 30 ft. of Calaunfel that see him must make a DC 23 Will save or be paralysed by fear for 1d4 rounds. A creature cannot be affected by his despair aura for another 24 hours. This is a paralysis and a mind-affecting fear affect.

Melee slam +30 (1d8+21 plus mummy rot [*save* Fort DC 23; *onset* 1 minute; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha; *cure* —])

Mummy Rot (Su) Mummy rot is both a curse and disease and can only be cured if the curse is first removed. Only then can the disease be magically removed; a creature cannot recover from mummy rot naturally over time. Anyone

between a copper dragon and one of the boy's long-dead ancestors. Alone and friendless, it was the innate strength of his draconic predecessors that enabled Calaunfel to survive the first few harsh years in the wilderness. Over the years, his draconic ancestry began to manifest itself and eventually he became virtually self-sufficient, living a reclusive existence in a cave in the foothills a few miles from a small town. The walls of the cave he daubed with paintings of fierce, acid-spewing monsters which had once ruled the skies. His body covered in tattoos and his eyes blazing with strange devotion to his draconic forebears, he was shunned for his strange ways and lived the life of a hermit.

Calaunfel's only real contact with the outside world was when he would occasionally visit the town for supplies. After one such visit, during which Calaunfel had unwisely become embroiled in an altercation with a trader, tragedy struck the town. A renegade green dragon (Eirraul Anthar) attacked the

casting a conjuration (healing) spell on the afflicted creature must make a DC 20 caster level check or the spell is wasted (and has no effect). A character dying from mummy rot requires a *resurrection* or *true resurrection* to return to life.

Atk Options Blind Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Grapple, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack (-6 attack, +12 damage, +18 with slam), claws (12/day, magic; dragon bite)

Claws (Ex) Whenever Calaunfel manifests his claw power (2 claws +27 attack, 1d4+13) he also gains a bite attack (+27 attack, 1d6+19 plus 1d6 acid).

Special Actions breath weapon (2/day), dragon form (2/day; *form of the dragon I*)

Breath Weapon (Su) 60 ft. line; 10d6 acid; DC 24 Reflex halves.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +16 [+20 casting defensively or grappling])

3rd (6/day)—*displacement*, fly, *protection from energy*

2nd (8/day)—*eagle's splendour*, *mirror image*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*

1st (9/day)—*enlarge person*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*

0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 19), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of extend*, *mask of the skull*

Abilities Str 36, Dex 16, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 28

SQ blood of dragons, bravery (+1)

Feats Blind-Fight^B, Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Eschew Materials^B, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Skill Focus (Perception), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (religion) +11, Linguistics +1, Skill Focus (Fly)^B, Spellcraft +13

Languages Common, Draconic

Gear as above plus *belt of physical might* +4, *headband of alluring charisma* +6, *amulet of mighty fists* +2, *bag of holding* (II [containing burial vestments and goods worth 1,500 gp])

town, levelling many of its buildings, destroying livestock and killing almost sixty people.

In truth, it was a random attack and nothing to do with Calaunfel. However, overwhelmed with grief and seeking someone or something to blame for their terrible loss, the townsfolk sought out Calaunfel. They found him sleeping in his cave – seemingly a shrine to the very beasts which had wreaked destruction on their town. Calaunfel was beaten, tied up and then – under the instruction of a village elder schooled as a shaman – mummified. While he yet lived, the butchers cut Calaunfel open and removed his major organs. His body was swathed in linen and buried in a shallow grave in his cave. The townsfolk toiled through the next night to seal his cave with boulders and heavy stones. That was two centuries ago and the town – wracked by plague – is no more.

Six months ago, a lone traveller seeking refuge from a winter storm managed to squeeze through a gap in the stones and enter Calaunfel's cavern. He discovered a scroll case containing the magical seal which prevented Calaunfel's spirit from re-animating his body. Unable to read the ancient parchment, the tired, cold and desperate traveller burned both the parchment and the scroll case as he attempted to make a fire. This act freed Calaunfel from his age-old imprisonment and the dragon disciple rose from the dead – the traveller becoming his first victim. Calaunfel is now consumed with the single goal of tracking down descendants of those responsible for his foul murder. Sallying forth from his cave, the mummy is growing ever bolder in his attacks on the living.

Personality: Calaunfel is quite mad; the mummifying process saw to that. He is utterly driven by the desire to inflict pain and suffering on the living. It matters not that the town is no more. Any living human, he now considers his enemy. He also thirsts for vengeance against the dragon responsible for the attack that directly led to his capture and torturous death.

Mannerisms: When encountered in mummy form, Calaunfel is a loathsome but pitiable figure – his guttural moans combining with weeping and wailing as he constantly relives his last moments of life. He enjoys the shock and awe which his transformation into dragon form inflicts on observers.

Distinguishing Features: Unlike other mummies, Calaunfel has taken to daubing the linen he wears with strange symbols as well as images of claws, teeth, wings and acid. Thus his tattered bandages are a riot of garish colour. His eyes – tinged with madness and hatred – blaze forth from the tangled mass of burial linen swathing his face.

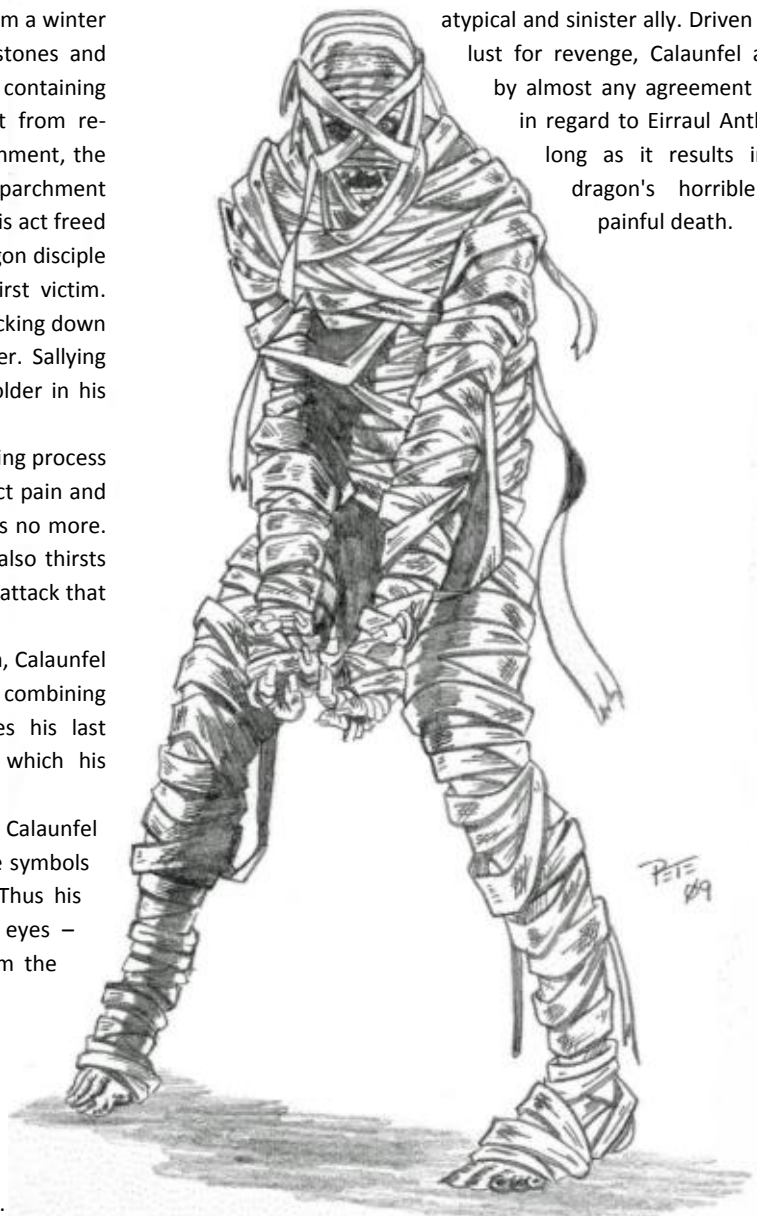
ADVENTURE SEEDS

Calaunfel has no great plan for revenge – he simply seeks out the living. However, he knows when he is over-matched and chooses his battles carefully. Three miles to the west of his cave is a small village.

Several families living there are direct descendants of the townsfolk who murdered Calaunfel. The PCs may arrive in Caldair seeking a place to rest on the night that Calaunfel launches his first assault. Calaunfel also often returns to the scene of his death – the crumbling ruins of the town – there to rail against the injustice of his death and to crush and destroy the very fabric of the place in which his tormenters lived. PCs exploring the ruins or sheltering there during a storm encounter the insane mummy as he embarks on another orgy of destruction.

Alternatively, the party may know the lone traveller who unwittingly freed Calaunfel or be hired to try to find the missing man – leading them to explore the foothills which are now the domain of this powerful undead creature.

Finally, PCs seeking out the ancient green dragon Eirraul Anthar may find that they have an atypical and sinister ally. Driven by his lust for revenge, Calaunfel abides by almost any agreement made in regard to Eirraul Anthar as long as it results in the dragon's horrible and painful death.



THARON ZASPAR

A stillborn, this mentally-unbalanced drow is a superb killer-for-hire and one of the most skilled of the Derenz-Akh Ussh – a society of drow assassins dedicated to the demoness Arachne.

Tharon Zaspar was pronounced dead when his mother birthed him. He was so small, unmoving and silent that the attending cleric believed him to be stillborn and ordered the construction of a sacrificial funeral pyre. Just as the baby was to be hurled into the flames for the glory of Arachne, he cried out and thus was spared. Literally translated, Tharon is Elven for “the silent one” or “the unnoticed”.

During his early decades, Tharon was a weak and sickly child who needed near constant treatments of medicines and herbs to

stave off illness. However, this exposure to philtres and poultices sparked an interest in poisons that lingers to this day.

Tharon is blessed with preternatural stealth and is able to slip in and out of places others find impossible to reach. His slight frame, uncanny agility and superbly-honed senses make him a deadly adversary.

Tharon is a follower of the demon Arachne – whom he credits for his unusual abilities. He dwells below the ruins of an old drow outpost overlooking one of the main approaches to his city. Long since abandoned after being severely damaged by a troglodyte host attempting to sack the city, it is the perfect hiding place for one such as him. Tharon makes his home in the very bowels of the ruin in a former chapel. A cunning network of

THARON ZASPAR

CR 13 (XP 25,600)

Slim and lithe, this elf's skin is jet black. Clad in voluminous black robes, he moves with preternatural stealth.

Male drow noble antipaladin 8/rogue 3/ shadowdancer 2
CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 150 ft.; Perception +18 (trapfinding), Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; Spring Attack, Wind Stance

ACP -1; Acrobatics +25 (+29 jumping), Stealth +25 (fast stealth, hide in plain sight)

Hide in Plain Sight (Su) As long as Tharon is within 10 ft. of an area of dim light, he can hide in the open without anything to hide behind.

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 27; **CMD** 30; Dodge, Mobility, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+5 Dex, +7 armour [+1 mithral breastplate], +3 shield [+1 heavy mithral], +1 deflection [ring of deflection +1], +1 dodge)

Immune disease, sleep; **Weakness** light blindness, smite evil

Light Blindness (Ex) if exposed to bright light (such as sunlight or daylight), Tharon is blinded for 1 round and dazed as long as he remains in the area of bright light.

Smite Evil (Su) A paladin using smite evil on Tharon deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.

Fort +11, **Ref** +13 (evasion; +14 vs. traps), **Will** +11; +2 vs. enchantments; **SR** 24

hp 92 (13 HD)

Space 5 ft. (aura of cowardice and despair 10 ft.); **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +13

Aura of Despair and Cowardice (Su) While conscious, Tharon radiates an aura of dread and despair that causes enemies within 10 ft. to take a -2 penalty on all saving throws or a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity within the aura.

Melee +2 heavy mace +15/+10 (1d8+4)

Melee Touch touch of corruption +13 (4d6 plus shaken for 8 rounds or staggered for 4 rounds [DC 16 negates condition])

Ranged mwk hand crossbow (range 30 ft.) +17 (1d4/19-20)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Vital Strike, fiendish boon

(weapon) 1/day, poison use, sneak attack +2d6, smite good 3/day (+2 attack, +8 damage, +2 AC)

Fiendish Boon (Sp) Tharon can enhance his weapon for 8 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by up to +2 or by spending one or more of these enhancement bonuses to add the *anarchic*, *flaming*, *flaming burst*, *keen*, *unholy vicious* or *wounding* weapon properties.

Special Actions touch of corruption 6/day (channel negative energy [4d6 damage; DC 16 halves])

Touch of Corruption (Su) see above; Tharon can also touch an undead creature to restore 4d6 hp or can spend 2 uses to channel negative energy.

Antipaladin Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +10)

2nd—*bull's strength*

1st—*disguise self* (2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +15)

At-Will—*dancing lights*, *deeper darkness*, *detect good*, *faerie fire*, *feather fall*, *levitate*

1/day—*dispel magic*, *divine favour*, *suggestion* (DC 15)

Combat Gear drow sleep poison (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of fly*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ aura of evil (strong), cruelty (shaken, staggered), plague bringer, rogue talent (fast stealth), trap sense, weapon familiarity, unholy resilience

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Vital Strike, Wind Stance

Skills as above plus Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perform (dance) +7

Languages Elven, Undercommon

Gear as above plus *boots of striding and springing*, *cloak of elvenkind*, 20 bolts, spell component pouch, unholy symbol, 30 gp, 5 pp

Unprepared for battle, Tharon has the following statistics:

AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 30; Dodge, Mobility, +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+5 Dex, +7 armour [+1 mithral breastplate], +1 deflection [ring of deflection +1], +1 dodge)

secret doors hides his store of looted artefacts and tools of his trade – innumerable weapons and thieves’ tools as well as a great store of phials, potions, ointments and poisons.

Tharon’s talents are increasingly in demand (and not just by his own folk; Arachne’s priesthood is seeking to increase their influence in the world above by offering the Derenz-Akh Ussh’s services for sale). He seeks to become the most feared of killers and as his reputation continues to grow; his name is now spoken only in whispers - even among his own kin.

Background: Drow society has little use for the weak and so it is testament to Tharon Zaspaspar’s unique talents that he survived in this harshest of environments. He was a withdrawn child who preferred his own company to that of others and his only play-things were his numerous pet spiders whom he would maim and kill in all manner of cruel ways.

Having been spared from the fire, seemingly by Arachne herself, Tharon was chosen to join the Derenz-Akh Ussh or “The Quiet Ones”. An elite cabal of silent killers under the control and direction of Arachne’s priestesses, the Derenz-Akh Ussh slay any who anger Arachne.

Personality: Tharon is driven not by personal gain or even the worship of Arachne. Rather, he revels in inflicting pain and suffering and delights in dreaming up new ways of ending life. He does not consider himself to be cruel – rather he sees himself as an artist whose medium is death and whose palette is the living.

With an insatiable appetite for cruelty, Tharon takes great gratification from terrifying his targets. Often he will penetrate his mark’s defences several times – perhaps killing loved ones or leaving other obvious signs of his presence – before eventually killing his target.

Mannerisms: Tharon has an obsessive personality which manifests itself in his behaviour patterns. He is fastidious in everything he does. He is always scrupulously clean, his chambers are meticulously tidy and every job he undertakes is planned down to the last detail.

He never exhibits emotion and being in his presence makes for a most unsettling experience.

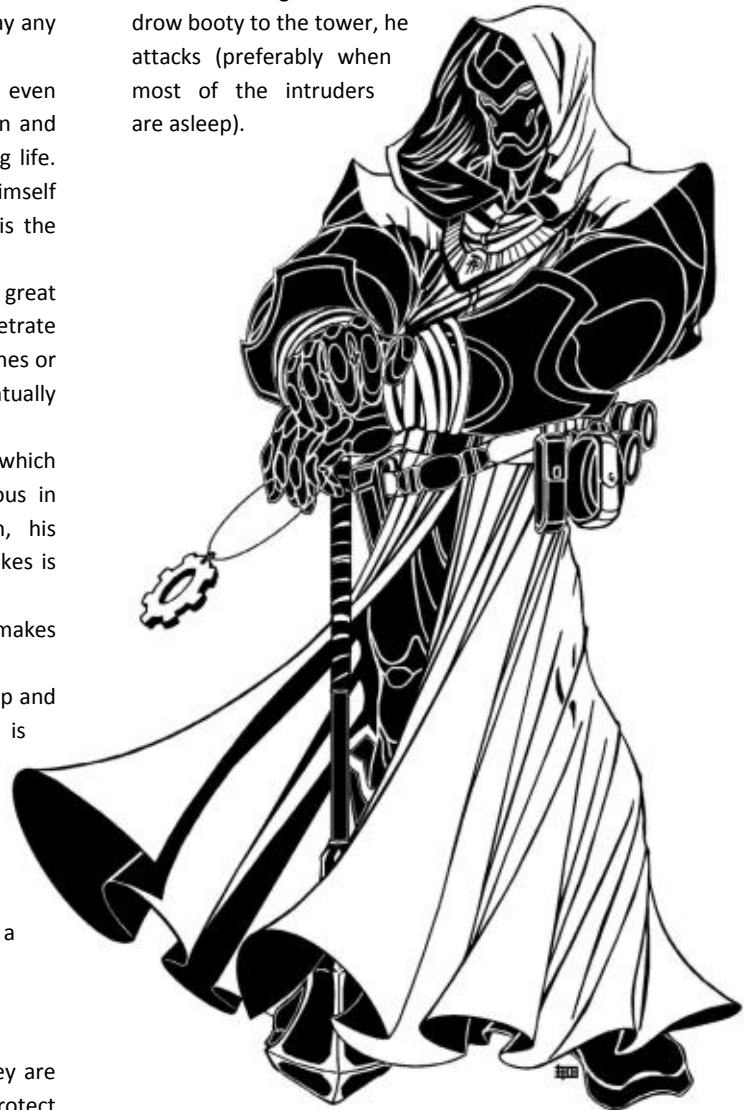
Distinguishing Features: Tharon speaks with a slight lisp and has the look of one who is ‘dead behind the eyes’. It is impossible to gauge what he is thinking. He always dresses in voluminous black robes.

Signature Weapon: The long haft of Tharon’s heavy mace is of featureless black iron wrapped in the scorched and flayed skin of sacrifices given screaming to Arachne. The weapon’s head is similarly massive and emits a faint moaning sound when swung.

someone at risk of assassination. Most such unfortunates pose some kind of threat to the drow and/or the demon Arachne. Targets could include powerful adventurers, influential priests of good alignment, paladins and others opposing Arachne’s schemes.

Alternatively, one of the PCs may be unfortunate enough to be marked for death by an enemy. Having Tharon Zaspaspar on their trail could make for a frightening sub-plot to an ongoing adventure or campaign. If he cannot directly strike at his target, he simply sets about massacring those coming into contact with his target. Soon, normal folk shun the PCs for fear of retribution and death and those in power banish the PCs until Tharon’s depredations are concluded.

In a campaign set in the drows’ homeland, the PCs may discover the antipaladin’s ruined lair, even using it as a base or operations. Tharon keeps watch on, but does not attack, those in the ruins above as long as they do not discover his hidden lair. If the PCs bring back items of drow booty to the tower, he attacks (preferably when most of the intruders are asleep).



ADVENTURE SEEDS

The PCs are most likely to encounter Tharon Zaspaspar if they are called to investigate a high-profile murder or to protect

NELIUS ZENTAR

The dark cleric, Nelius Zentar seeks to enlighten others through pain and agony.

With a warped and twisted outlook on life, this once gentle soul is addicted to giving and receiving pain.

Background: Born into a minor noble family, Nelius was destined for a good life but that dream died when the peasants

NELIUS ZENTAR

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

Male human cleric 7

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +4, Sense Motive +4

Speed 20 ft., **ACP** -3; Acrobatics -4 (-8 jumping)

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 14; (+2 vs. disarm or trip)
(+7 armour [+1 *breastplate*], -1 Dex)

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +9

hp 63 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5 (+7 disarm or trip)

Melee +1 *spiked chain* +6 (2d4+1)

Ranged mwk dagger (range 10 ft.) +5 (1d4/19-20)

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise (-2 attack, +2 dodge), Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, destructive smite, touch of darkness

Destructive Smite (Su [swift; 7/day]) Nelius can grant himself a +3 morale bonus to damage on a single melee attack.

Touch of Darkness (Sp [standard; 7/day]) As a melee touch attack (+5), Nelius causes a creature's vision to be fraught with shadows and darkness. The creature touched treats all other creatures as if they had concealment (20% miss chance) for 3 rounds.

Special Actions channel negative energy (4/day; 4d6; DC 14)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11 [+15 grapple or casting defensively]; Darkness, Destruction; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells])

4th—*poison* (DC 18), *shadow conjuration*^D (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *deeper darkness*^D, *dispel magic*, *protection from energy*

2nd—*darkness*, *hold person* (2; DC 16), *shatter*^D (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16)

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cause fear* (DC 15), *protection from good* (DC 15), *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*, *true strike*^D

0—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *mending*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cat's grace*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (14 charges)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 12

SQ aura of evil (moderate)

Feats Blind-Fight^B, Combat Casting^B, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Toughness

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +7, Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +11, Profession (surgeon) +14, Spellcraft +5

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus healer's kit (2), silver unholy symbol, 40 gp

rose in bloody rebellion. Nelius's family was caught up in the confrontation and one night he was dragged from his bed along with his sister and mother and loaded onto a slave cart by bandits taking advantage of the confusion. When the bandits reached a city trading in slaves, Nelius watched in horror as his sister was sold to a rich merchant. Nelius tried to fight and was almost beaten to death on the spot. Later, as he recovered, bones broken, his body bruised, he noticed a thin man sitting in the corner of the slave pen. Despite the man's many scars, he sat like a king, an expression of strange joy on the twisted, deformed features of his face. The man followed a dark god who believed that pain was a gift, one to not only be doled out but received as well. Nelius, desperate to escape his own pain, eagerly absorbed the dark god's teachings.

Now, Nelius leads a small cult of worshippers in an urban area. He seeks out the weak who wish to be strong, teaching them to find strength in their pain and how to inflict pain on others so they may share the joy. By day, he poses as a gifted surgeon. While most are put off by his disfigurements (mostly self-induced) no one can doubt his skill with the surgical knife.

Personality: Nelius is genuinely caring and sympathetic to others, especially to the weak and poor. He honestly believes the torture he inflicts on others helps them to become stronger. He is addicted to pain and inflicting pain as if it were a drug.

Mannerisms: Surprisingly soft spoken, Nelius often takes people in with his seemingly kind temperament. Yet, when abusing himself or his victims, he becomes a wild beast and won't stop until he is spent and satiated.

Distinguishing Features: Countless scars and burn marks trace Nelius's skin while his right eye stares blankly.

Hooks: Rumours abound among the downtrodden of a new way religion that teaches you to escape your pain though many of the adherents end up dead, their bodies showing terrible wounds.



BANDIT OF THE RAMPANT HORROR

The twisted spriggan Knights of the Rampant Horror, astride their fearsome krenshar steeds, prowl beneath the tangled branches of a forest haunted with creeping mists. These howling marauders travel the wood's claustrophobic roadways, lurking until they can extract tribute from travellers on lonely, creaking bridges or capture passing prey for a crippling ransom.

A dark circle of eight twisted knights swears a fealty-pact of blood and charred bones to the Grand Master of their loathsome Order, the pitiless Baron Tallega Raundrev. The Baron exudes a palpable aura of menace, and his unblinking, looking-glass eyes send the weak-willed into paroxysms of terror. From his stronghold of Granite Crown, the Baron seethes with petty, arrogant ambition and when aroused to anger is all too eager to call his vicious bulette steed, Chasm, into battle.

The rasping whispers of Varisthu, the Wailing Friar, impel Baron Raundrev towards an even darker destiny. The robed vargouille oracle seeks the vile *scabrous grail*, snaking writhing lies into the spriggan's thoughts and evoking the Order's false honour toward its ruinous recovery. Until then, the fiend is content to slake its thirst with the innocent souls of those condemned to the cacophonous depths of the Howling Monastery.

*Amid the choking gloom of a mist-cloaked wood,
Live a cadre of knights who've forsaken all that's good,
Riding fierce krenshar steeds they quest for hollow glory,
But there's a more sinister destiny to their shameful story,*

*These pitiless bandits live for battle and treasure,
Tainting the forest for their dark lord's pleasure,
Astride an awesome beast he surveys his lands,
False justice dispensed by the hammer in his hands,*

*But what evil pollutes his hilltop stronghold?
What now holds sway over honour and gold?
Who whispers lies in the mad Baron's ears?
Who corrupts with claims and fuels his fears?*

*For change is upon this spriggans' domain,
The future is bleak and it's etched with pain...*

When the gnomish peoples fled the Realm of the Fey millennia ago, some saw their new home in the mortal world as a perilous death-trap, to be survived at all costs. These ruthless gnomes, over the generations, developed into the dangerous, joyless spriggans.

But the proto-spriggans did not leave their native plane empty-handed. One exiled gnome lord clutched tightly to the *scabrous grail*, a powerful relic bathed in the congealed life-blood of a beheaded jabberwock. The *grail* remained a symbol of rulership within the spriggan diaspora for centuries until their triumphant enemies cast down the incumbent king and dispersed his treasures and subjects to the four corners of the world.

Existing in isolated pockets while warring against the outside world and each other, the local wood's spriggans sporadically ambushed travellers and raid nearby villages. They long ago allied with the forest's krenshar prides, using these intelligent beasts as hunting companions and reluctant mounts in their intermittent attacks.

In the last five years, however, a new terror, Tallega Raundrev, unified the disparate spriggan groups under a single banner. Tallega, a spriggan of menacing demeanour and reputation, overcame the other dark spriggan lords of the wood, forcing their humbled allegiance or painfully torturing those that rejected his overtures. As his prestige and influence grew, eight terrible spriggan knights joined his service, pledging their eagerness to murder in his name.

Under Tallega's direction, the riders formed the Knightly Order of the Rampant Horror, a monastic group dedicated to the domination of their enemies, the ascension of their lord and the reclamation of the *scabrous grail*.

The questing knights drew the attention of the vargouille oracle Varisthu, who seeks the *scabrous grail* to claim for itself. The fiend disguised itself as a mysterious friar robed in sackcloth and appeared in Tallega's makeshift war camp. Varisthu led the spriggan lord to the site of Granite Crown and convinced him of his destiny to rule, feeding Tallega's growing megalomania.

Inspired by the fiend's twisted words, Tallega immediately proclaimed himself Baron over the wood and ordered a stronghold built at the site. Varisthu and his spawn, whose cavernous lair of the Howling Monastery neighbours Granite Crown, serve as insidious spiritual advisors to the Order, extolling their mantra of hate and suffering.

Since the construction of his stronghold, the Baron received two others into his court. The first is the fey-touched harpy sorceress Sussamarra, who Tallega has taken as his mistress. The second is the ribald ettin troubadour Canerous and Vercherix, who entertain the court with their remarkable vocal prowess. Trouble is brewing within the camp, as Sussamarra and

Vercherix are smitten with one another, and their increasingly regular secret rendezvous are, at the very least, becoming apparent to the suspicious Canerous.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY

The Order structures itself feudally under Baron Tallega's despotic rule. His orders hold absolute sway within the wood, on pain of death by inventive torture. He punishes particularly hated enemies or traitors by nailing their arms to a tree trunk at the elbows, and leaving them for forest predators to devour or to die of starvation.

The Order's knights rule their own demesnes within the forest, leading a retinue of between twelve and thirty spriggan sergeants, yeomen and servants and a pride of eight to ten krenshar. Varisthu and the other vargouille friars are treated with equal merit (and fear) as the landed knights by their spriggan flock.

The Order loosely follows a debauched code of chivalry, where the weak serve the strong, and whatever scant mercy granted is determined by the price paid. The Order takes prisoners, ransoming those wealthy enough to afford the crippling payments, enslaving the strong and subjecting the weak to protracted torments for their entertainment.

Prisoners captured for ransom are locked in cages suspended over the krenshar dens. The lucky ones are occasionally fed and, less frequently, eventually released. The Baron takes prompt payment as a sign the victim's family can afford a much higher price.

Other prisoners are less fortunate, the Order slowly working

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Bandits of the Rampant Horror's design enables a GM to easily insert the featured bandits into a home campaign.

The Order can live in almost any wilderness area bordering civilised lands, and can easily be integrated as a threat to the PC's home town. Of course, any NPCs the PCs cherish are ripe targets for abduction and ransom by the Order, drawing the characters into conflict with the spriggans and their heinous Baron.

A few details, such as the current location of the *scabrous grail*, remain deliberately vague to allow the GM to customise things to better fit his own campaign.

Each of the band's members benefits from an extensive write-up. This enables the GM to either use the Order as written, or to employ individual NPCs as desired. Thus, for example, Tallega Raundrev could be used as the champion of the local king's tourney, while Varisthu could serve as the villain at the core of a tomb filled with lurking undead horrors.

them to death, their worn, stained clothes falling from their starving frames until they spend their last days labouring naked. On Baron Raundrev's whim, the Order hosts cruel trials by ordeal or one-sided tournaments featuring captured prisoners too impoverished to ransom and too weak to work.

COMBAT AND TACTICS

The Order's knights live for glorious single combat against a well-matched, worthy foe. The knights do not rank foes demonstrably more skilled as "worthy" and immediately order their retainers to attack on sight, preferably from ambush.

Spriggan knights often bar bridges, passes and other choke points within the forest as the means to provoke confrontation, demanding tribute, capturing the meek and challenging those that would raise arms against them. Despite their pretensions of chivalry and faux courtly manners, the Knights of the Rampant Horror fight dishonourably, using poison and ambush to crush their enemies.

The knights utilise their krenshar companions in two ways; as war mounts when the spriggans are Small, and hunting animals when enlarged. They fight as mounted infantry rather than true cavalry, dismounting before melee to take advantage

of their size alteration ability. While mounted, the knights utilise skirmishing tactics against slower enemies to take advantage of their speed and manoeuvrability.

In the rare cases where the Order of the Rampant Horror go to war en masse, the Knights fight as an elite block of heavy infantry supported by their vassals. Against a doomed village, Baron Raundrev rides Chasm beneath the earth to bypass enemy fortifications and open barred gates from within.

LAIRS

The Baron holds court in the Order's fortress of Granite Crown, a hilltop stronghold of native boulders and magically wrought timber punctuated by a ring of impressive granite tors. The Order lives in the squalid open-air bailey, which serves as a barracks, cookhouse and training field. Spriggan sentries keep watch atop the forty-foot high tors and raise the alarm if any creatures approach the castle.

Within, the Baron holds court under an enormous, elaborate silk-and-gold canopy situated on a raised mound. The Baron's fortified manor is the only permanent building inside the walls, the rest of the spriggans manage with tents of varying quality and ramshackle timber lean-tos.

The krenshar pride lairs in a covered den in the south-west of the castle yard but have free-reign over the bailey, roving in packs to dig through waste for rancid scraps of food.

Less than a mile to the north of Granite Crown sits the yawning limestone arch known as the Howling Monastery. The deep cavern leads to a rubble-filled cave system created by eons of water flows and punctuated with eerie stalactite and stalagmite displays. Varisthu and his vargouille spawn flutter grotesquely within the caves, abandoning their plague zombie bodies in the first cavern as a nobleman abandons a soiled cloak.

SCABROUS GRAIL

This shallow, tarnished silver bowl holds thick, marbled crusts of dried blood. The mass occasionally weeps viscous black blood.

Aura moderate (necromancy; DC 21 Knowledge [arcana])
Identify DC 26 Spellcraft

Lore (DC 20 Knowledge [nature]) This is the *scabrous grail*, a relic made with the lifeblood spilled from a decapitated jabberwock. The gnomish ancestors of the spriggan race brought the grail to the Material Plane during their exodus from the Realm of the Fey.

Lore (DC 20 Knowledge [nature]) The grail is a symbol of leadership within the spriggan community. Any spriggan bearing the *scabrous grail* gains primacy over his peers by perceived divine mandate.

Lore (DC 25 Knowledge [nature]) The thick blood collected in the bowl contains the corporeal essence of the slain jabberwock. Were the spirit of the slain jabberwock reunited with its mortal lifeblood, it is possible the two would combine to *reincarnate* the creature.

Abilities The *scabrous grail* emanates an aura of malignant virulence drawn from the antediluvian power of the Fey Realm. All afflictions (curses, diseases and poisons) within 60 feet of the *scabrous grail* gain a +4 enhancement bonus to their saving throw DC. This bonus also applies to the DC of a saving throw to resist any effect that creates a spawn. Any spawn created within the aura of the *scabrous grail* gains the advanced creature template.

Activation Use activated; **CL** 11th

Requirements: Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*, *contagion*, *create undead*, *poison*; **Cost** 23,000 gp; **Price** 56,000 gp

LORE

A character making a Knowledge (local) check may know some information about the Knights of the Rampant Horror. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 15: This is a Knight of the Rampant Horror, a spriggan warrior infamous for its banditry and fearsome krenshar steed.

DC 20: The Order of the Rampant Horror is ruled by the self-styled Baron Raundrev, a terrifying despot famous for his debauched atrocities. The Order's stronghold and monastery are visited by mysterious monks known as the Howling Friars.

DC 25: The Order seeks a relic known as the *scabrous grail*, a bowl encased in congealed jabberwock blood, brought from the Realm of the Fey during the spriggan's time of exile.

ENCOUNTERING THE RAMPANT HORROR

The Rampant Horror diligently patrol their woodland home. Use the sample listings below to run encounters featuring the Rampant Horror.

BARON ABROAD (EL 11; XP 12,800)

Opponents Baron Tallega Raundrev, Chasm, Knights of the Rampant Horror (2)

EL 10 (9,600 XP) Remove the Knights of the Rampant Horror; **EL 12 (19,200 XP)** Add three Knights of the Rampant Horror and one Spriggan Trouble-Shooter.

Morale The spriggans fight until Baron Tallega falls or flees; the survivors then flee.

Terrain forest; **Encounter Distance** 2d8 x 10 ft.

With a small retinue, Baron Tallega hunts the woods in search of sport. He mercilessly attacks any daring to trespass in his domain.

HOWLING PILGRIMAGE (EL 9; XP 6,400)

Opponents Decapitated Plague Zombies (3), Krenshar Steeds (3), Spriggan-at-Arms (1), Vargouille Friars (3)

EL 8 (4,800 XP) Remove two Decapitated Plague Zombies and two Vargouille Friars; add two Krenshar Steeds; **EL 10 (9,600 XP)** Add four Spriggan-at-Arms.

Morale If half the group are slain, the remainder flee. If the *scabrous grail* is involved, however, they fight to the death.

Terrain forest; **Encounter Distance** 6d8 x 10 ft.

A Spriggan-at-Arms exercising some of his lord's krenshar accompanies the vargouille friars as they scour the land for clues leading to the *scabrous grail*. The friars carry censers spewing hazy, cloying incense and spend their pilgrimage constantly shrieking.

HUNTERS (EL 9; XP 6,400)

Opponents Knight of the Rampant Horror (1), Krenshar Steeds (4), Spriggan-at-Arms (3)

EL 8 (4,800 XP) Remove two Spriggan-at-Arms; **EL 10 (9,600 XP)** Add one Spriggan Trouble-Shooter and two Spriggan-at-Arms.

Morale If the Knight of the Rampant Horror is slain, his surviving retainers flee.

Terrain forest; **Encounter Distance** 2d8 x 10 ft.

If the PCs provoke the Order of the Rampant Horror, this group responds by hunting them, attempting to ambush the PCs while they are unprepared or in the midst of a battle with another forest monster.

TERRAIN FEATURES

When designing an encounter featuring the Rampant Horror, pay attention to the area in which the battle takes place. Terrain features can make fights exciting and give advantages to clever combatants. Consider adding several of the following terrain features to any such fights you orchestrate.

Illumination: Enough light filters through the tree canopy to brightly illuminate trails and clearings. Under the trees, dim light (20% miss chance) cloaks the forest floor.

Woodland Sounds: Background noise increases the DC of sound-based Perception checks by 2 per 10 ft., not 1.

Trail: A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail winds its way through the trees. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

Game Trail: A narrow trail winds its way through the trees. Tracks and droppings of various animals cover the ground.

Light Undergrowth: Vines and roots cover many non-trail squares, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement, to enter such squares.

Heavy Undergrowth: Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas extremely difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement, to enter such a square. It is also impossible to run and charge through a square containing heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

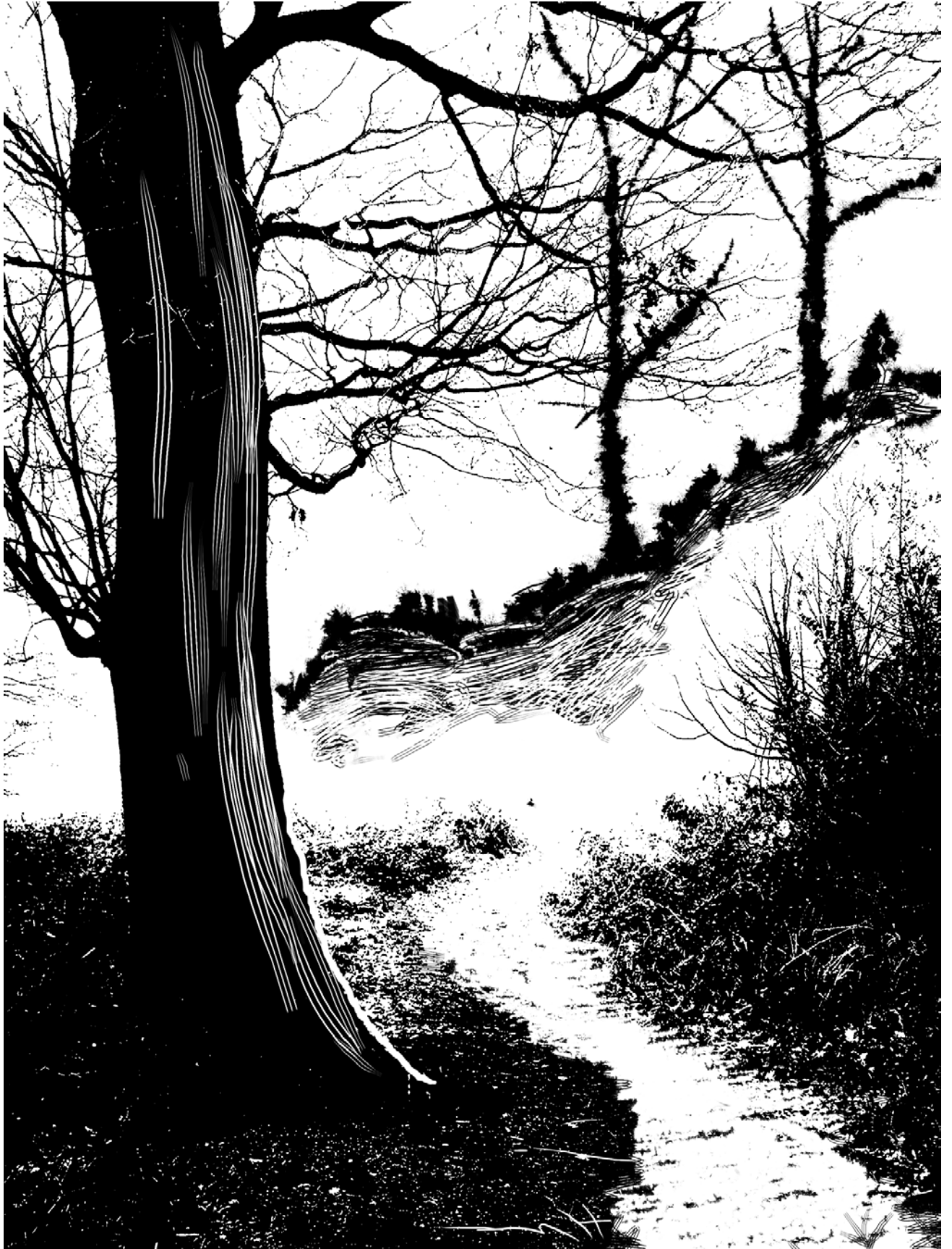
Normal Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

Massive Trees: Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

Fallen Tree: A fallen tree trunk provides cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing. Treat the fallen tree's canopy as heavy undergrowth.

Boggy Ground: Filled with mud or standing water about 1 ft. deep, it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing boggy ground. Boggy ground increases the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

Stream: Normally no more than 2 ft. deep, it costs 2 squares of movement to enter any square containing a stream. If the stream has raised banks, those in the stream have cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters on the banks gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against anyone in the stream.



KNIGHT OF THE RAMPANT HORROR

“As trespassers in my domain, your lives and possessions are forfeit. If you throw yourself on my mercy, you may be spared from a doom beyond your darkest nightmares.”

The warrior-elite of the Order are armed to the teeth and lack a shred of morality. Currently eight arrogant knights swear allegiance to Baron Raundrev:

- **Durnak Razorfeld:** Believing he is intellectually superior to his fellows, Durnak likes to read and avidly scours any books or scrolls falling into his possession. A failed wizard, Durnak became a knight after his lord fell in battle. The resultant squabble over his equipment saw several fatalities. Durnak survived to claim his lord’s armour and join the ranks of the horror knights. Very aware of his humble origins, Durnak lashes out at anyone denigrating his rise.
- **Enorah, Scourge of Reason:** The most savage of the knights in battle, Enorah’s temperament is more suited to that of a barbarian. Enorah marks each kill by tattooing a red dot onto his bald head. He already has 47.
- **Gornith the Displeaser:** Dubbed “the displeaser” by his fellows for losing a half-dozen retainers in a catastrophic ambush,

KNIGHT OF THE RAMPANT HORROR CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This armoured knight is less than four feet tall and sits balefully atop a snarling earless panther-like beast.

Spriggan fighter 2

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10, Sense Motive +0

Speed 15 ft., base speed 20 ft.

ACP -6; **Acrobatics** -1 (-7 jumping), **Climb** -3, **Ride** +8, **Stealth** +12

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 20

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +6 armour [breastplate])

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

hp 49 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5

Melee mwk heavy flail +8 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +11 (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Power Attack (-2 attack, +6 damage with heavy flail), Vital Strike, sneak attack +2d6

Special Actions size alteration

Size Alteration (Su) At will as a standard action, a spriggan can change his size between Small and Large.

Spell-like abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4)

At will—*flare* (DC 10), *scare* (DC 12), *shatter* (DC 12)

Combat Gear crossbow bolts (50), Large scorpion venom (2)

Abilities Str 13, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 9

SQ bravery (+1), spriggan magic, spriggan skills

Feats Iron Will, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Gornith has angered Baron Raundrev. He is desperate to win back his lord’s favour. His warriors mutter behind his back that he is doomed and several speak of seeking service with other knights. If Gornith falls in battle, no one comes to his aid.

- **Lady Kirsha Painwright:** A depraved spriggan whose bestial urges unsettle even her debased comrades’ sensibilities Lady Kirsha plots to become the Baron’s consort. She hates the harpy sorceress, Sussamarra, and has begun to suspect the harpy of loving another.
- **Larratta the Blade Widow:** So named for her penchant of blackening her skin with ashes and soot, Larratta is an amorous, debauched individual. She has enjoyed affairs with many of her fellow knights and even shared Raundrev’s bed for a short time. The sneakiest of the knights, Larratta excels at setting ambushes.
- **Loro of the Murk:** Loro dwells in a dreary and boggy low-lying portion of the woods. His equipment and retainers are often mud-stained, something which his fellows delight in commenting on to the perpetually brooding knight. Loro has an explosive temper and such comments often lead to a brawl. He dreams of claiming a better fief and if any of his fellow

Skills as above plus Disable Device +1, Sleight of Hand +1

Languages Common, Gnome

Gear as above plus 15 gp

A Large-sized Knight of the Rampant Horror has the following altered statistics:

KNIGHT OF THE RAMPANT HORROR (LARGE SIZE)

CE Large humanoid (gnome)

Init +4

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -6; **Acrobatics** -2 (-6 jumping), **Climb** +3, **Ride** +7, **Stealth** +3

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 27

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 armour [breastplate])

Fort +12, **Ref** +5

hp 67

Space 10 ft.; **CMB** +13

Melee mwk heavy flail (reach 10 ft.) +12 (2d8+10/19-20)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +8 (2d8/19-20)

Special Actions size alteration

Size Alteration (Su) Weapons, armour and other objects on the spriggan’s person grow proportionally when he changes size (objects revert to normal size 1 round after a spriggan releases them). When a spriggan becomes Large, his speed increases to 30 feet, he gains +12 Strength, -2 Dexterity, and +6 Constitution, and he takes a -2 size penalty to his AC. While Large, a spriggan cannot use his sneak attack or racial spell-like abilities.

Abilities Str 25, Dex 19, Con 22

Skills as above plus Disable Device +0, Sleight of Hand +0

knights falls, he acts swiftly – even retreating from battle – to claim the slain knight’s lands and surviving servants.

- **The Loathsome Menfer:** Beyond hideous, Menfer was badly injured by a green dragon’s acid breath. He hides his melted face behind a large helm (which he rarely removes). Driven into deep depression by his horrific injuries, Menfer has fallen deeply under Varishtu’s influence. He believes that the *scabrous grail* has the power to heal him and diligently searches for it. He risks everything to recover it.
- **Valessemon:** Baron Raundrev’s current favourite, this puissant warrior dreams of supplanting his liege, but is terrified of Chasm. Thus he does nothing, but watch and wait. Obsessed with status and fame, Valessemon claims the most ornate heraldic devices of all the knights. In battle, he loudly challenges enemy warriors to single combat, but his retainers know to swiftly intervene at his signal.

KRENSHAR STEED

CR 2 (XP 600)

This earless, panther-like beast snarls as the skin of its face twitches before peeling back to reveal the bones and flesh beneath.

Advanced krenshar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

N Medium magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +7, Sense Motive +3

Speed 40 ft.

ACP -1; **Stealth** +11

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 18 (+22 vs. trip)
(+4 Dex, +4 armour [mwk chain barding], +5 natural)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

hp 17 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

Melee bite +4 (1d6+3) and
2 claws +4 (1d4+2)

Special Actions skullface (DC 14)

Skullface (Su) As a standard action, a krenshar can pull the skin back from its face, revealing the musculature and bony structures of its skull. This counts as using Intimidate to demoralize an opponent, and is an extraordinary ability. The krenshar can emit a loud screech while peeling back its skin, causing potent fear in a single creature within 100 feet that can see the krenshar. The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Will save or become frightened (if the target has 6 or fewer Hit Dice) or shaken (if the target has more than 6 Hit Dice) for 1d4 rounds. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same krenshar’s skullface ability for 24 hours. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Abilities Str 15, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 17

Feats Armour Proficiency (light)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +5 (+9 to demoralise)

Languages Sylvan (can’t speak)

Gear military saddle

Each knight commands a significant retinue of spriggans-at-arms and nominally holds a demesne within the forest which falls under their protection. The form of this “protection” is usually regular pillaging raids, extortion and abduction.

The Knights of the Rampant Horror display colourful, wholly manufactured heraldry, often charged with terrors of the fey realm. Otherwise, the knights wear distinct armour styles and eclectic decorations from horned bascinets to faux bat-like wings attached to their mount’s saddle.

COMBAT & TACTICS

The Knights of the Rampant Horror fight without honour or conscience. To them, might is right; any tactic – no matter how devious or underhand – is considered fair game.

Before Combat: The Knights of the Rampant Horror usually travel as Small creatures astride their krenshar mounts. When expecting a significant challenge, they apply poison to two crossbow bolts.

During Combat: The knights begin combat using Vital Strike and Mounted Archery with their heavy crossbows to shoot and move. If cornered, or the enemy displays superior ranged combat ability, the spriggans change size and engage in melee, making liberal use of Power Attack and Vital Strike. While their riders attack, the krenshar mounts use their skullface ability to demoralise their enemies.

Morale: On the open road, the knights flee if reduced to less than 16 hp. Within Granite Crown, they fight to the death.



SPRIGGAN-AT-ARMS

These lightly-armed, stealthy scouts or yeomen foot-sergeants support their knightly lords in battle. Generally these loathsome creatures wear dark, earthy coloured clothing to better hide themselves among the boughs of their woodland home.

Each spriggan wear small heraldic ailettes about their shoulders to show their loyalty to their liege-lord.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

As well as striking from ambush, some spriggan-at-arms creep into the woods in search of easy prey without their liege's permission. Such individuals only attack small groups of individuals or try to sneak into a badly guarded campsite in search of portable loot. If the spriggan is bold enough to attack, it first assumes Large size before emerging. At first, it masquerades as a giant and demands payment to let the PCs pass. If they refuse, it attacks.

Alternatively, a spriggan-at-arms could have fallen out of favour with his liege. Such unfortunate individuals either die a gruesome death or flee. The PCs could encounter a fleeing spriggan and if they treat it justly (or at the least don't kill it out of hand), it sees in them a chance for revenge. It gleefully spins tales of atrocities beyond counting (which is only a small exaggeration) in the hopes of tempting the PCs into a daring raid

on Granite Crown. While the PCs serve its purpose, the spriggan does not lie to them (much), but also does not help them in combat.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Spriggans-at-arms fight savagely in the hopes of improving their own status. The bravest, most skilled warriors in theory get first choice of a fallen enemy's gear but in practise a spriggan slaying an enemy often stops fighting to loot the still warm corpse in case an opportunistic ally loots the corpse before it can return.

Before Combat: Spriggans-at-arms prefer to travel as Small creatures, increasing the chances of ambushing their enemies.

During Combat: The spriggans-at-arms strike from ambush with a flurry of crossbow bolts. They use size alteration to take Large form before entering melee. Emerging from their hiding places they flank enemies where possible to inflict sneak attack damage.

Morale: Spriggans-at-arms flee or surrender if reduced to less than 5 hp. A fleeing spriggan assumes Small size as quickly as possible so that it may better hide from pursuing enemies.

SPRIGGAN-AT-ARMS

CR 3 (XP 800)

This gaunt, large-eared humanoid lurks quietly, breathing slow rasps of fetid breath.

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

Speed 20 ft.

ACP 0; Climb +1, Stealth +15

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 15

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +2 armour [leather])

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

hp 22 (4 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +1

Melee mwk morningstar +5 (1d6-1)

Ranged light crossbow (range 110 ft.) +8 (1d6/19-20)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, sneak attack +2d6

Special Actions size alteration

Size Alteration (Su) At will as a standard action, a spriggan can change his size between Small and Large.

Spell-like abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4)

At will—*flare* (DC 10), *scare* (DC 12), *shatter* (DC 12)

Combat Gear bolts (10)

Abilities Str 9, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ spriggan magic, spriggan skills

Feats Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills as above plus Disable Device +11, Sleight of Hand +11

Languages Common, Gnome

A Large-sized Spriggan-At-Arms has the following altered statistics:

SPRIGGAN-AT-ARMS (LARGE SIZE)

CE Large humanoid (gnome)

Init +3

Speed 30 ft.

Climb +7, Stealth +6

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 22

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather])

Fort +8, **Ref** +4

hp 34 (4 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **CMB** +9

Melee mwk morningstar (reach 10 ft.) +9 (2d6+5)

Ranged light crossbow (range 110 ft.) +5 (2d6/19-20)

Size Alteration (Su) Weapons, armour and other objects on the Spriggan-at-Arm's person grow proportionally when he changes size (objects revert to normal size 1 round after a Spriggan-at-Arms releases them). When a Spriggan-at-Arms becomes Large, his speed increases to 30 feet, he gains +12 Strength, -2 Dexterity, and +6 Constitution, and he takes a -2 size penalty to his AC. While Large, it cannot use his sneak attack or racial spell-like abilities.

Abilities Str 21, Dex 17, Con 18

Skills as above plus Disable Device +10, Sleight of Hand +10

SPRIGGAN TROUBLE-SHOOTER

A cadre of four spriggan wizards enjoy the sponsorship of the Baron in exchange for their magical protection and (sometimes) loyal advice. The four are deadly rivals for the baron's favour – constantly trying to outdo one another to be the most servile sycophant. The quartet of deadly rivals comprises:

- **Felisimon:** The brother of Valessemon, Felisimon serves his Horror Knight sibling faithfully. They love each other as only brothers can do and although they constantly argue, they take extraordinary risks to aid the other.
- **Narhasi Whittlespine:** Even more cowardly than his fellows, Narhasi flees as soon as he suffers an injury. Renowned for his cowardice, Narhasi is miserable and desperately wants to find a safer, quieter place to live. If it seems the battle is lost, he promptly surrenders offering faithful service in exchange for safe passage from the woods.
- **Prestigiacom:** A small, skinny spriggan, Prestigiacom takes child-like glee in the pain and suffering his magic causes. In

SPRIGGAN TROUBLE-SHOOTER CR 5 (XP 1,600)
This wiry spriggan wears bright green clothing and ritualistic daubs of purple dye on its exposed skin.

Spriggan wizard (diviner) 3
CE Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +11; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

Speed 20 ft.
ACP 0; Climb +0, Stealth +20

AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 17
(+1 size, +6 Dex, +4 armour [*mage armour*])

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5
hp 48 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +1
Melee mwk quarterstaff +4 (1d4-2)
Atk Options sneak attack +2d6
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4 [+8 casting defensively or grappling])

At will—*flare* (DC 10), *scare* (DC 12), *shatter* (DC 12)
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +5 [+9 casting defensively or grappling])

2nd—*invisibility*, *mirror image*, *see invisibility*
1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *colour spray* (DC 15), *mage armour*, *true strike*

0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*
Special Actions diviner's fortune (6/day, +1), size alteration
Size Alteration (Su) At will as a standard action, a spriggan can change his size between Small and Large.

Combat Gear *wand of acid arrow* (10 charges)

Abilities Str 7, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 9
SQ arcane bond (quarterstaff), forewarned (+1), size alteration, spriggan magic, spriggan skills

Feats Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (illusion), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (illusion)

battle, he claps his hands and shrieks with excitement when his spells strike home.

- **The Great Varesmo:** Beset by epic delusions of grandeur, Varesmo believes he is the reincarnated soul of a great spriggan wizard of legend. In truth, he is simply spectacularly lucky, but his delusion is beginning to irritate his fellows.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Spriggan Trouble-Shooters stay out of melee wherever possible.

Before Combat: If a Trouble-Shooter feels combat is imminent, he casts *invisibility*, *mage armour*, *mirror image* and *see invisibility*.

During Combat: The Trouble-Shooter usually begins combat with a sneak attack *acid arrow* from his wand. If a group of enemies are close to the Trouble-Shooter, he attempts to stun them with *colour spray* or blast them with *burning hands*.

Morale: Trouble-shooters turn invisible and flee if reduced to less than 20 hp, returning with reinforcements if possible.

Skills as above plus Disable Device +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +13
Languages Aklo, Common, Gnome, Infernal, Sylvan

Spellbook (necromancy, transmutation) as spells prepared plus 2nd—*acid arrow*; 1st—*comprehend languages*, *shield*; 0—all

A Large-sized Spriggan Trouble-Shooter has the following altered statistics:

SPRIGGAN TROUBLE-SHOOTER (LARGE SIZE)

CE Large humanoid (gnome)
Init +10; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13
Speed 30 ft.
ACP 0; Climb +6, Stealth +11

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 24
(-1 size, +5 Dex, +4 armour [*mage armour*])

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5
hp 69 (7 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9
Melee mwk quarterstaff (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d8+6)

Special Actions size alteration
Size Alteration (Su) Weapons, armour and other objects on the Spriggan Trouble-Shooter's person grow proportionally when he changes size (objects revert to normal size 1 round after a Spriggan Trouble-Shooter releases them). When a Spriggan Trouble-Shooter becomes Large, his speed increases to 30 feet, he gains +12 Strength, -2 Dexterity, and +6 Constitution, and he takes a -2 size penalty to his AC. While Large, a spriggan cannot use his sneak attack or racial spell-like abilities.

Abilities Str 18, Dex 20, Con 21
Skills as above plus Disable Device +7, Sleight of Hand +7

PERSONA: BARON TALLEGA RAUNDREV

The self-styled Baron Tallega Raundrev reigns over the Order of the Rampant Horror as its undisputed Grand Master. The cantankerous bulette, Chasm, serves as Baron Raundrev's mount, an armoured behemoth large enough to carry the enlarged spriggan lord into battle.

Background: Tallega's father exiled the young spriggan, already a creature of violence and malice, into the expanses of the plains expecting the cursed child to die without food or water. In a stroke of unholy luck, Tallega uncovered a tiny, shining gemstone, a *clear spindle ioun stone*, in the burnt-out remains of a settler's homestead. The *ioun stone* kept him nourished for weeks as he struggled to survive, until the ground rumbled beneath his weary feet.

The bulette Chasm burst from the earth, and roared in triumph over the boy. But Tallega stared down the rapacious beast, and tamed it with his *ioun stone*, sating the monster's ever-present hunger. During his adolescent years, Tallega rode Chasm, inflicted suffering and dreamed of revenge against those who cast him out.

Decades later Tallega, now a fully-grown spriggan, pried the magical hammer *Inexorable Torment* from the dead hands of a crusader providing protection for holy pilgrims. While Chasm devoured the screaming parishioners, Tallega turned the weapon over slowly in his hands, sensing the time was right for his return. When Tallega returned to his home, his father was not the first to die, but he did suffer long under the intemperate ministrations of his son. The rest of his history is that of blood, torture and violence.

Personality: The Baron is a vicious, corrupt ruler and lover of crass blood sports. He is prone to violent rages and unpredictable bursts of mania. Tallega is a prideful and jealous lord, revelling in the power he commands and resentful of that which he does not hold.

His reputation is such that a room immediately quietens on his entry, and Tallega adores cloying, stammered flattery inspired by fear.

Baron Raundrev, however, is dangerously insecure, and constantly seeks legitimacy for his rule. He dreams of marrying a gnomish princess or winning a king's tournament to shore up his spurious claim of nobility. But above all he yearns to recover the *scabrous grail* to secure his claim as the king of all spriggans.

Mannerisms: The Baron's demeanour is of barely restrained fury, even when laughing uproariously or showing affection to his mistress, Sussamarra. A façade of reason and nobility rests thinly over Tallega's violent inclinations. He falls quietly grim for the interminable moments before exploding into a sweltering rage of epic proportions.

Distinguishing Features: Baron Raundrev's most striking feature is his mirrored, looking-glass eyes which inspire

inescapable dread in those gazing upon them. Tallega wears the finest armour and ermine-trimmed garb as is befits the absolute ruler of a petty fiefdom.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Tallega seizes any opportunity to legitimise his rulership. Of course, he doesn't see the need to act with honour or decorum on his quest and much prefers violence and kidnap to further his ends. If he hears of noble travellers passing close to or through his domain he seizes the opportunity to gain valuable captives hoping to parley their safe return into formal recognition of his claim. The PCs could be hired either to escort negotiators to the Baron's lair or to mount a rescue.

Alternatively, Tallega could appear at a gnomish hold in which the PCs are resting and demand the chieftain's eldest daughter as his bride. Outrage and violence in equal proportions ensues.

Finally, Tallega could take a fancy to an attractive female PC and launch a raid to capture her. Unsurprisingly, Sussamarra does not take kindly to this and tries to accidentally eliminate the object of his lust.

CHASM

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This tawny armour-plated creature bears tiger-like brown stripes across its body. It wears a scarlet and azure caparison, covered with the repeating heraldry of the Rampant Horror.

Male bulette

N Huge magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +11, Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft.

ACP -1; Acrobatics +8 (+16 jumping)

AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 28 (32 vs. trip)

(-2 size, +2 Dex, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt barding], +12 natural)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

hp 84 (8 HD)

Space 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +16

Melee bite (reach 10 ft.) +13 (2d8+9/19-20) and 2 claws +12 (reach 10 ft.) (2d6+6)

Atk Options leap, savage bite

Leap (Ex) When Chasm charges and makes a DC 20 Acrobatics check to jump in the air and land by his enemies he can make four claw attacks against foes in reach, but he cannot use its bite attack.

Abilities Str 23, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6

Feats Armour Proficiency (Light), Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills as above

Gear *clear spindle ioun stone*

COMBAT & TACTICS

A vicious combatant, Baron Tallega delights in terrifying his opponents.

Before Combat: In melee, Baron Raundrev prefers his Large form and PCs encounter him thusly.

During Combat: Baron Raundrev first uses Dazzling Display (and his frightening ability) to demoralise foes. He then charges, attacking with *Inexorable Torment* (which triggers Enforcer and his frightening ability). This normally causes his foe to become frightened and flee. The Baron, atop Chasm, then gleefully rides

BARON TALLEGA RAUNDREV CR 9 (XP 6,400)

This mighty warrior gazes on the world through mirrored eyes the colour of quicksilver. He exudes a terrifying menace, as though his whispering footfalls are the approaching promise of sorrow.

Male spriggan fighter 2/rogue (thug) 4

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

Speed 15 ft., base speed 20 ft.

ACP -7; Acrobatics +0 (-4 jumping), Climb +0, Ride +9, Stealth +6

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 20; uncanny dodge (+1 size, +2 Dex, +9 armour [mwk full plate], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Fort +11, **Ref** +8 (evasion), **Will** +6 (+7 vs. fear)

hp 69(10 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +8

Melee *Inexorable Torment* (+1 *merciful warhammer*) +12/+7 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 non-lethal plus Enforcer/x3)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +12 (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options Dazzling Display (frightening), Enforcer, Shatter Defences, sneak attack +4d6 (brutal beating, offensive defence)

Brutal Beating (Ex) Whenever Tallega deals sneak attack damage, he can forgo 1d6 points of sneak attack damage to make the target sickened for 1 round. This ability does not stack with itself—only the most recent duration applies.

Enforcer (Ex) If Tallega deals nonlethal damage he can make an Intimidate check to demoralize his target as a free action. A successful check renders the target shaken for a number of rounds equal to the damage dealt. If the attack was a critical hit, the target is frightened for a round and then shaken as for a normal hit.

Frightening (Ex) Whenever Tallega demoralizes a foe, the duration of the shaken condition is increased by 1 round. If the target is shaken for 4 or more rounds, Tallega can instead make his foe frightened for 1 round.

Offensive Defence (Ex) When the Baron hits a creature with a melee sneak attack, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC per sneak attack die rolled for one round.

Special Actions size alteration

Size Alteration (Su) At will as a standard action, Baron Tallega can change his size between Small and Large.

Spell-like abilities (CL 4th; concentration +7)

At will—*flare* (DC 13), *scare* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 15)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

down fleeing cowards, continuously frightening them until they surrender, or die in Chasm's rending jaws.

The Baron flanks enemies to facilitate sneak attacks (and his brutal beating and offensive defence abilities) or uses Shatter Defences when this is not possible.

Morale: Craven blaggard that he is, Baron Raundrev flees if reduced to less than 20 hp. If an enemy is immune to fear, Baron Raundrev becomes unsettled by this display of inexplicable courage and flees if reduced to 50 hp. If the Baron is still atop Chasm when his morale breaks, he orders the bulette underground to escape.

Abilities Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ bravery (+1), frightening, rogue talents (offensive defence, strong impression), spriggan magic, spriggan skills

Feats Dazzling Display, Enforcer, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Shatter Defences, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (warhammer)

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device -2, Handle Animal +18, Intimidate +25, Sleight of Hand -2

Languages Common, Gnome

Gear as above plus *circlet of persuasion*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 200 gp

Enlarged, Baron Tallega Raundrev has the following altered statistics:

BARON TALLEGA RAUNDREV (LARGE SIZE)

CE Large humanoid (gnome)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -7; Acrobatics -1 (-5 jumping), Climb +6, Ride +8, Stealth -3

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 27; uncanny dodge (-1 size, +1 Dex, +9 armour [mwk full plate], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

Fort +14, **Ref** +8 (evasion)

hp 99(10 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.; **CMB** +16

Melee *Inexorable Torment* (+1 *merciful warhammer*) +16/+11 (2d6+10 plus 1d6 [non-lethal plus Enforcer]/x3)

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +9 (2d8/19-20)

Atk Options Dazzling Display (frightening), Enforcer, Shatter Defences, sneak attack +2d6 (brutal beating, offensive defence)

Special Actions size alteration

Size Alteration (Su) Weapons, armour, and other objects on his person grow proportionally when he changes size (objects revert to normal size 1 round after he releases them). When Baron Tallega becomes Large, his speed increases to 30 feet, he gains +12 Strength, -2 Dexterity, and +6 Constitution, and he takes a -2 size penalty to his AC. While Large, Tallega cannot use his racial sneak attack or spell-like abilities.

Abilities Str 25, Dex 15, Con 20

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device -4, Handle Animal +18, Intimidate +25, Sleight of Hand -4

PERSONA: CANEROUS AND VERCHERIX

The ribald ettin troubadour Canerous and Vercherix contrasts colourfully with the drab, humourless spriggans of the Order. The two share one monstrous body and, for the Baron's pleasure, perform flawless duets, misnamed one-man band performances, juggling displays with live prisoners and incredibly inappropriate dance routines.

Background: Canerous and Vercherix's parents abandoned them once they could walk. Neither have any memories of their parents and, to this day Vercherix stridently (and somewhat maddeningly) insists that Canerous must have been adopted.

The ettin filled its childhood days singing snippets of fey and human songs overheard while hunting. Over time, Canerous and Vercherix became renowned within the forest, and often filled their belly with payment received from entertained patrons, and sparing those that could teach them a new trick, tale or titbit of lore.

Tiring of aimless wandering, the ettin soon sought a permanent patron, finding one in Baron Raundrev who appreciated the ettin's bloody performances and sick humour.

Personality: Canerous and Vercherix are coarse, bawdy and light-hearted, seeing life as nothing more than a game to be played and enjoyed. They are fond of jokes, which unfortunately tend towards merciless cruelty, crude songs and low-brow physical humour. The ettin is gregarious and extroverted, making friends easily and enjoying being the centre of attention.

The two heads are the closest of rivals, bitterly jealous of any advantage or praise the other receives. They spend their days coming up with petty competitions to prove superiority over the other. Their latest battle is a life-and-death moustache-growing competition, which is achieving little, save to make them both look ridiculous.

The ettin loves as easily as he laughs, and Canerous is smitten with Sussamara, despite (or perhaps because of) the Baron's claim to her. Vercherix on the other hand, finds the harpy sorceress a "flighty, insufferable cow," and tells her as much at every opportunity. This strained relationship leads the two love birds into a series of improbable escapades, remarkable disguises and absurd lies to keep Vercherix ignorant of their relationship. Predominantly Sussamarra uses *deep slumber* to take advantage of the ettin's dual minded quality to send Vercherix to sleep during their trysts, and *reduce person* to deal with their physical incompatibilities.

Mannerisms: Canerous and Vercherix control the opposite side of their body to which their head is located. This, combined with their propensity to emphasise their speech with expansive hand gestures, can be disconcerting (and dangerous for inattentive, low-flying birds).

While both heads understand the Common tongue, Canerous knows Elven, Giant, Gnome and Infernal, which he

enjoys showing off to anyone who will listen, feigning an exaggerated accent appropriate to the language. Vercherix, although too lazy to learn the languages himself, becomes irritated if Canerous does not translate for him. Vercherix, of course, intentionally mistranslates the discussion for his "brother", mostly to make Canerous look foolish.

Canerous and Vercherix start a performance with their favourite song, which soulfully expresses the singer's fondness for bestiality and lists, in classic rhyming couplets, animals and sexual deviancies to be combined. When celebrating, Canerous and Vercherix instigate their own drinking competition, in which the ettin decapitates two prisoners and races to exsanguinate the bodies by sucking feverishly on the creatures' necks.

Vercherix is marginally the better singer of the two, and possesses a mighty falsetto. Canerous enjoys playing his thigh-bone flute, but misses his set of bagpipes that Vercherix smashed and threw into a swamp at the end of a particularly protracted practice session.

Distinguishing Features: The ettin stands over ten feet tall, each fanged head topped with a shaggy mane of inky-black hair. Of the heads, Canerous is on the left and Vercherix the right. The ettin walks with a light-stepping gait that quickly turns into a jig when the creature is pleased.

The giant wears a bright scarlet tunic decorated with gold thread over his armour. Vercherix always wears a spectacular hat of the latest fashion. The longsword Canerous wields has seen better days, and is covered in rust. Vercherix controls the creature's makeshift shield, which is actually a small rowboat the ettin liberated from an unfortunate dwarven ferryman.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Before Combat Canerous and Vercherix cast *expeditious retreat* and *heroism* if they feel combat is imminent.

During Combat Vercherix begins combat by using inspire courage while Canerous casts *glitterdust*. In subsequent rounds, Canerous attacks with his sword, using Arcane Strike and Power Attack (and Cleave when targets are adjacent.)

Morale Canerous and Vercherix flee if reduced to less than half their hit points, using their *potion of invisibility* to facilitate their escape. If fighting with allies, the ettin continues to inspire courage with its duet ability while the invisibility lasts or until it is attacked again.

DESIGNER'S NOTE: DUET

Most ettins have the superior two-weapon fighting special ability, but Canerous and Vercherix are less warlike than their kin. Instead, they possess the unique duet ability which enables them to make good use of their bardic abilities.

SONGS, RYHMES AND DITTIES

Canerous and Vercherix know many different songs, rhymes and ditties. Here is one such — an ancient gnomish dirge which dates back to the flight from the Fey Realm.

CANEROUS AND VERCHERIX CR 8 (XP 4,800)

This two-headed giant wears the clothing of a travelling troubadour. The creature is singing a jaunty, pleasant duet.

Male variant ettin bard 4

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +17, Sense Motive +7

Speed 40 ft.

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 29

(-1 size, +1 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +2 shield [large wooden], +8 natural)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9 (+13 vs. sonic and language-dependent; dual minded)

Dual Minded (Ex) Mind-affecting effects targeting Canerous and Vercherix only influence one head at a time. However, each head is considered to have 7 HD when determining the effects of the attack

hp 77 (14 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +18 (+20 overrun)

Melee longsword (reach 10 ft.) +16/+11 (2d6+7/17-20)

Ranged sling (range 50 ft.) +10 (1d6+7)

Atk Options Arcane Strike (+1), Cleave, Improved Overrun, Power Attack (-3 attack; +6 damage)

Special Actions bardic performance (14 rounds/day; duet; countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 15], inspire courage [+1], inspire competence [+2])

Duet (Su) Due to their additional head, Canerous and Vercherix can begin and maintain a bardic performance as a free action, even if the other head is casting a spell. If both heads concentrate on activating or maintaining a bardic performance, saving throw DCs against the performance and the benefits from inspire courage and inspire competence increase by 1.

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd (2/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 15), *heroism*

1st (4/day)—*alarm*, *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *ventriloquism*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *light*, *lullaby* (DC 13), *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, sling bullets (10)

Abilities Str 25, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 16

SQ bardic knowledge, versatile performance, well-versed

Feats Arcane Strike, Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack

Skills as above plus Knowledge (local) +8, Linguistics +6, Perform (sing) +11, Perform (wind) +11

Languages Common, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblin, Infernal

Gear masterwork flute, spell component pouch

JACARANDA KNIGHTS

*It seems so long ago now since we rode into the town.
Young men heard the call and flocked to knights with great
renown.*

*The girls and the children proudly cheered us all along.
We knew that day it was going to be a feast of speech and song.*

*When we landed at the gate, we'd spent eight weeks at sea
and stepped through to the New World were our camp turned
out to be.*

*They treated us well there so I really can't complain
but the sky was grey, the weather bleak and it always seemed to
rain.*

(chorus)

*And the Jacaranda Knights just couldn't ride today.
There's far too many of them dead or broken in the fray.
The cold Prime Material is watered with their blood.
There's a strange new crop of cairn stones growing in this foreign
mud.*

*When we advanced to battle the weather had turned fine.
It wasn't long before a call to reinforce the line.
Then a spell screamed around us we were rained with fire and
mud.*

I turned to see my squire sitting in a pool of his own blood.

*He stared as the blood poured from his legless thigh.
I carried him to the warpriest futilely praying nearby.
His blood had soaked my armour but he never breathed a sigh
and I had no idea then, that he was going to die.*

Chorus

*I hear the king is grateful for all the knights who've died
and sending jacaranda blooms to the graves in which they lie.
I fear the cause is right but it's not clear any more
why so many of my bond brothers should die in this last war.*

Chorus

*We hope with all our hearts that time will ease the pain.
I've never once to see his face or to hear his voice again.
But I've seen so much death now since the day on which he died
that I'll never be that Jacaranda Knight that once I was inside.*

Chorus

PERSONA: SUSSAMARRA

Sussamarra, the petite fey-touched harpy, holds Baron Raundrev's attention, and acts as his current decadent mistress. She enjoys the gifts the Baron showers on her, wallowing in the indulgence provided to her at the expense of her lover's subjects and victims.

Background: Like most harpies, Sussamarra's mother used her powerful captivating song to draw in unwitting victims to devour. Unfortunately, her enchantment drew the amorous attention of a quickling wanderer prowling the forest. After an unsatisfyingly brisk union, Sussamarra's mother fell pregnant and soon gave birth to the tiny harpy child.

Sussamarra grew up quickly, like everything she did, thanks to her father's influence. After one too many adolescent arguments against her mother, Sussamarra acrimoniously left the nest and flew into the wide world. Her fey-spawned powers soon developed under the stress of her exile, turning the hunted harpy girl into a powerful predator in her own right.

Sussamarra, even as a powerful sorceress, found life in the forest hard, mainly due to her monstrously-sized sense of entitlement. When she heard that a strong and powerful spriggan had carved out a realm within the forest, she

immediately wormed her way into his heart.

Personality: Sussamarra has the swift wings of a hummingbird, and the capricious attention span to match. The harpy is a flighty, spoiled prima-donna. Her first inclination is to lie at every opportunity, and cover up those lies with further untruths. She takes even the lightest jest or criticism as a deadly insult, turning into a baleful, shrieking harridan.

She is honestly attracted to Baron Raundrev; the sinister aphrodisiac of political power, ill-restrained violence and the harpy's hypergamous leanings all make for heady cocktail. She enjoys the intermittent pampering the Baron bestows, but after several ugly altercations has learnt to absent herself during his frequent rages.

When Canerous and Vercherix entered Granite Crown, however, she was soon lost in Canerous' dreamy, piggy eyes and the elegant curve of his saliva-drenched tusks. Her lack of self-control caused her to immediately seduce Canerous, a willing victim, despite the terrible danger if they were discovered.

Mannerisms: The harpy sorceress enjoys singing, especially her captivating song, and sings softly to herself when she thinks she is alone. This love of song is shared by Canerous and

SUSSAMARRA

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

This fragile creature appears to be a four-foot tall humanoid possessing the blindingly fast wings of a hummingbird.

Female young harpy sorcerer (fey)8

CE Small monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +2

Speed 40 ft., fly 110 ft. (average); woodland stride

Woodland Stride (Ex) Sussamarra can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects her.

ACP 0; Fly +16

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 23; Dodge; **Miss Chance** 20% if moved, 50% if double move or withdraw; Lightning Stance, Wind Stance

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

Fort +6, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

hp 66 (15 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +8

Melee 2 talons +10 (1d4-2)

Atk Options laughing touch (9/day)

Special Actions captivating song (DC 23)

Captivating Song (Su) Sussamarra's song has the power to infect the minds of those that hear it, calling them to her side. When she sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 23 Will saving throw or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to Sussamarra's song for 24 hours. A victim under the effects of the captivating song moves toward Sussamarra using the most direct means

available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of Sussamarra simply stands and offers no resistance to her attacks. This effect continues for as long as she sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +15; bloodline arcana)

4th (4/day)—*confusion* (DC 24)

3rd (7/day)—*deep slumber* (DC 23), *haste, slow* (DC 20)

2nd (8/day)—*eagle's splendour*, *hideous laughter* (DC 22), *mirror image*, *touch of idiocy* (DC 22)

1st (8/day)—*disguise self* (DC 17), *entangle* (DC 18), *expeditious retreat*, *protection from good*, *reduce person* (DC 18), *shield*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Combat Gear *potion of remove blindness*, *wand of scorching ray* (14 charges)

Abilities Str 6, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 23

SQ woodland stride

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes^B, Lightning Stance, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (transmutation), Wind Stance

Skills as above plus Bluff +17, Perform (sing) +17

Languages Common

Gear as above plus an elaborate open-air coach worth 4,000 gp

Vercherix, and they form a talented trio who spontaneously burst into song; perceptive observers may note a single knowing look passing between her and Canerous.

Sussamarra takes indolent rides through the woods in a luxurious coach drawn by krenshar when the Baron is lost in his tedious rages. The coach once belonged to a wealthy countess captured by the Order and thrice ransomed before being released, and passed to Sussamarra as an expensive gift from her paramour. Those encountering the coach are drawn in by the delightful song emanating from within, never to return.

Sussamarra is constantly preening, fussing with her hair and feathers. This fastidiousness does not extend to her room within the manor, which is a morass of human remains, soft debris piled into a makeshift nest and a heap of worthless, colourful baubles that have captured her attention.

Distinguishing Features:

Sussamarra is barely four feet tall and appears as a mixture of waifish fey and swift hummingbird. She is incredibly fast, a boon from her quickling father, moving in a blur across the skies. She has long brown hair, speckled brown-and white feathers and grey eyes like honed steel.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Finally Sussamarra's duplicity is revealed and Baron Raundrev seeks his bloody revenge. Sussamarra flees pursued by Baron Raundrev riding Chasm and Canerous and Vercherix who argue incessantly between themselves as to whether they should kill her or aid her escape. All these folk arrive in the PCs' camp shortly after one another. Sussamarra begs the PCs for aid, while Baron Raundrev seeks to kill her. When the ettin arrives things get truly confusing as he tries to interpose himself between the warring lovers while still arguing with himself about what he should do.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Before Combat Sussamarra casts *eagle's splendour*, *haste*, *mirror image*, *protection from good* and *shield*.

During Combat Sussamarra casts *confusion* on her enemies in the first round of combat, followed by *deep slumber* or *slow* on any creatures that remain unaffected. She targets lumbering melee types with *hideous laughter* and spellcasters with *touch of idiocy*. She constantly moves during combat taking advantage of Wind Stance to avoid missile attacks.

Morale Sussamarra has little stomach for fighting and flees if reduced to less than 30 hp, using her Lightning Stance and her speed to evade pursuit.

WOODLAND JAUNT (EL 10; XP 9,600)

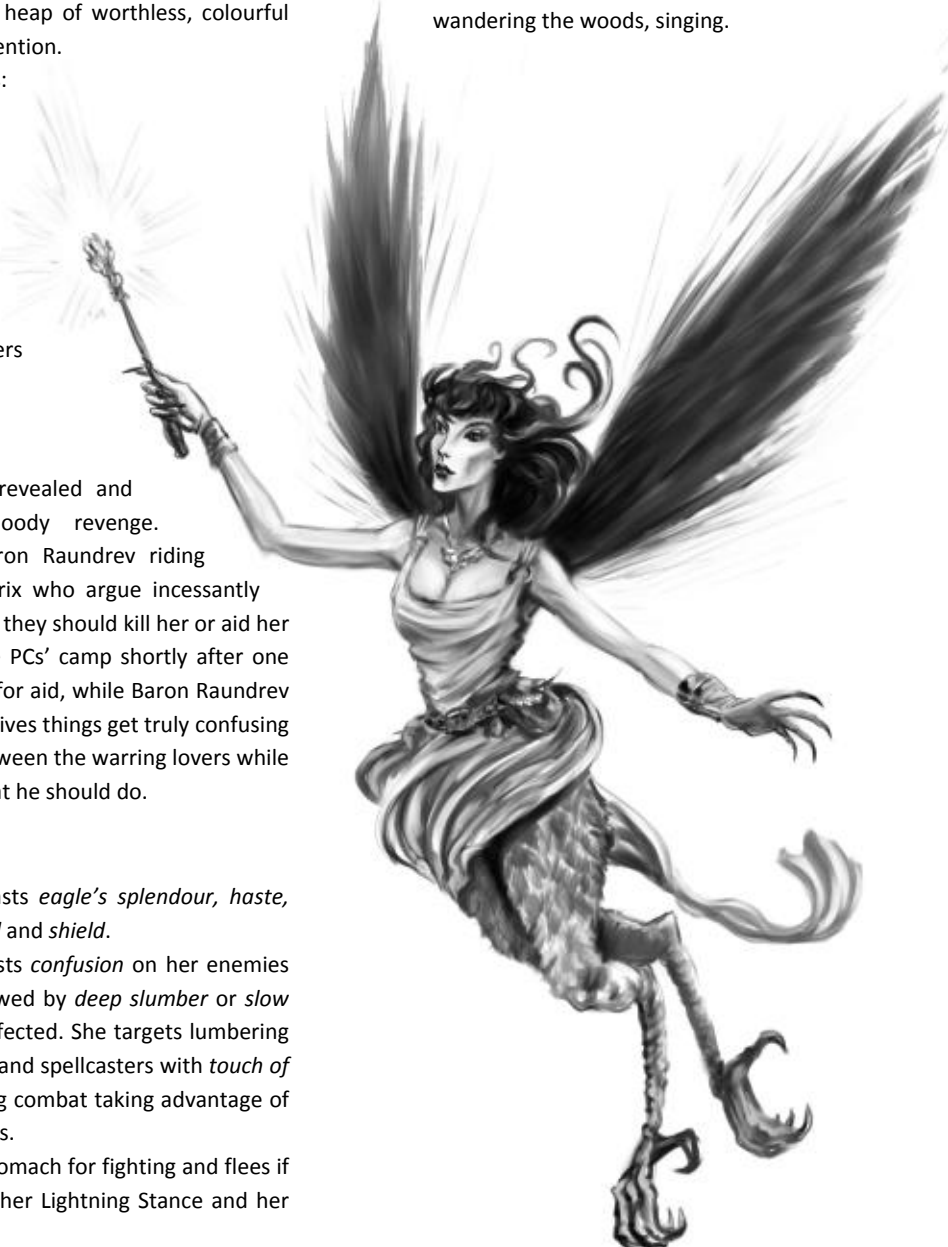
Opponents Sussamarra, Krenshar Steeds (4)

EL 9 (6,400 XP) Remove krenshar Steeds; **EL 11 (12,800 XP)** Add Canerous and Vercherix; remove the Krenshar Steeds

Morale Sussamarra flees if reduced to half her hit points. If Canerous and Vercherix are present, the harpy and the ettin fight to the death to protect the other.

Terrain forest; **Encounter Distance** 2d8 x 10 ft.

Sussamarra enjoys her tranquil trips into the woods in her open-topped carriage drawn by four krenshar. Occasionally Canerous joins her for a secret rendezvous. If no krenshar are present, the PCs encounter Sussamarra (and possibly her lover) wandering the woods, singing.



PERSONA: VARISTHU

Steeped in knowledge of the *scabrous grail* and of noble lineages Varisthu serves as an enigmatic spiritual advisor to Baron Raundrev while concealing its true, sinister nature

Background: Varisthu arose in the chaotic, climatic moments following the struggle between an ancient gnomish hero and the jabberwock whose clotted blood adorns the *scabrous grail*. The gasping, severed head of the vanquished beast lived for nearly an hour after separation from its serpentine body and when its soul finally departed to the Abyss, it reformed, after roiling in the ocean of damned souls for ten thousand years, as the vagouille Varisthu.

Varisthu does not remember its origins, and only received vague visions linking its destiny to the *scabrous grail* once a foolish mortal called it to the Material Plane. It now toils unceasingly for clues to the *grail's* whereabouts. When Varisthu discovered the Knights of the Rampant Horror and their quest for the relic, it set out to ally itself with the spriggans and claim the item for itself. If Varisthu and the *scabrous grail* are ever reunited, Varisthu's blighted soul and the still-living blood containing the jabberwock's corporeal essence merge, reincarnating the legendary beast and unleashing an epoch of terror and ruin across the world.

Personality: Varisthu is a contemplative fiend, troubled by

the visions it received since returning the Material Plane. The images are disturbingly close to mortal dreams – nightmares the vargouille had not experienced since its “birth”. Varisthu broods on this weakness, unsure of the cause and frightened by the implications. Stressed by its waking dreams, Varisthu occasionally falls into uncontrollable paroxysms of shrieking. Varisthu returns to the Howling Monastery whenever the compulsion to shriek threatens to overwhelm his control. Its spawn have inherited this curse, and the dark, echoing caverns project their wails for miles around.

When dealing with the Order, Varisthu assumes the persona of a confident, wise holy man. It dispenses spiritual advice, reinforcing the spriggan's determination to recover the object of its obsession – the *scabrous grail*.

Varisthu is a sociopathic, and has no qualms using lies and murder to achieve its dark ends. Varisthu is cunning rather than brilliant, and its lies are impulsive, rather than extensively considered – a flaw the PCs can use to unravel his web of deceit.

Mannerisms: Varisthu speaks in a rasping, sibilant whisper, which slowly builds in volume as a conversation progresses. If the parley continues too long, it cannot hold back his screaming and unleashes a devastating shriek.

Varisthu's plague zombie body remains immobile while it

VARISTHU

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

Burning scarlet eyes shine from under this robed friar's voluminous hood. A susurrus of rasping whispers leak from the hood, slowly and imperceptibly rising in volume.

Male advanced vargouille oracle (bones) 6

NE Small outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15, Sense Motive +3

Speed fly 30 ft. (good)

ACP 0; Fly +22, Stealth +14

AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 21

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armour [*armour of bones*], +5 natural)

Immune sicken

Fort +9 (+13 vs. disease), **Ref** +9, **Will** +9

hp 85 (96 with *false life*) (9 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +7

Melee bite +11 (1d4+1 plus poison [DC 15 Fortitude {1 save}; frequency once; damage caused by bite can only be healed with magic [DC 20 caster level check succeeds])

Atk Options kiss

Kiss (Su) With a melee touch attack (that provokes attacks of opportunity), Varisthu kisses a helpless target (DC 19 Fortitude save or begin transforming into a vargouille). Over 1d6 hours all the victim's hair falls out. 1d6 hours later, its ears grow leathery wings, tentacles sprout on its chin and scalp and its teeth become long fangs. During the next 1d6 hours, the victim suffers 1 Intelligence and 1 Charisma drain

per hour (minimum of 3). The victim's head breaks free from its body 1d6 hours later, completing the transformation. Sunlight or a 3rd-level or higher light spell pauses the transformation but stopping it requires *remove disease*. This is a disease effect.

Special Actions Command Undead (7/day; DC 17), shriek

Shriek (Su) Those within 60 ft. (except other vargouilles) who hear Varisthu's shriek and who can see him are paralysed for 2d4 rounds (17 Fortitude save negates), or until he attacks them, goes out of range or leaves their sight. A creature resisting the shriek cannot be affected by Varisthu's shriek for 24 hours.

Oracle Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +10)

3rd (4/day)—*animate dead*^M, *contagion* (DC 18)

2nd (6/day)—*augury*, *false life*^M, *hold person* (DC 16)

1st (7/day)—*cause fear*^M (DC 16), *comprehend languages*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 16), *protection from good*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *spark*, *virtue*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 19, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 18

SQ oracle's curse (wasting), revelations (*armour of bones* [6 hours], undead servitude)

Feats Ability Focus (shriek), Command Undead^B, Deceitful, Eschew Materials, Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Disguise +14, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (nobility) +10

Languages Common, Infernal

talks, and often the friar's head appears at an unnatural angle to the rest of the body. Despite Varisthu's careful control over the body, the plague zombie lurches slowly, and occasionally instinctively reaches out violently if living creatures press too close, seeking to kill. Varisthu quickly stifles these outbursts, but not before the animated body twitches alarmingly.

Distinguishing Features: Varisthu conceals its true nature beneath a plain hooded friar's smock. Its true form is that of a winged reptilian head covered in writhing tentacles. Varisthu's cracked skin weeps sickeningly and its flesh is sloughed away in places, revealing the bleached skull underneath. Its eyes are fiery red, and nearby creatures feel a palpable heat emanating from them. The vargouille's shriek is a multi-toned wail, mirroring the burble of its jabberwock predecessor.

VARGOUILLE FRIAR

CR 3 (XP 800)

The low rasping mutterings of this large humanoid figure, robed as a monastic friar, escalates to a cacophonous shriek.

Advanced vargouille

NE Small outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Speed fly 30 ft. (good)

ACP 0; Fly +15, Stealth +16

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 17

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

hp 25 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4

Melee bite +7 (1d4+3 plus poison [DC 14 Fortitude {1 save}; frequency once; damage caused by bite can only be healed with magic [DC 20 caster level check succeeds]])

Atk Options kiss

Kiss (Su) With a melee touch attack (that provokes attacks of opportunity), the vargouille kisses a helpless target (DC 18 Fortitude save or begin transforming into a vargouille). Over 1d6 hours all the victim's hair falls out. 1d6 hours later, its ears grow leathery wings, tentacles sprout on its chin and scalp and its teeth become long fangs. During the next 1d6 hours, the victim suffers 1 Intelligence and 1 Charisma drain per hour (minimum of 3). The victim's head breaks free from its body 1d6 hours later, completing the transformation. Sunlight or a 3rd-level or higher light spell pauses the transformation but stopping it requires *remove disease*. This is a disease effect.

Special Actions shriek

Shriek (Su) Those within 60 ft. (except other vargouilles) who hear the shriek and can see the vargouille must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be paralysed for 2d4 rounds, or until the vargouille attacks them, goes out of range or leaves their sight. A creature that makes the saving throw cannot be affected by the same vargouille's shriek for 24 hours.

Abilities Str 14, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 9, Wis 16, Cha 12

Feats Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Disguise +7, Intimidate +6, Linguistics +0

Languages Gnome, Infernal

COMBAT & TACTICS

Before Combat: Varisthu casts *false life*, *protection from good* and activates *armour of bones* if it expects combat.

During Combat: Varisthu uses shriek to paralyse groups of enemies while its plague zombie lurches forward. It casts *hold person* on mobile enemies, before using its kiss. If enemies are unaffected, Varisthu casts *contagion* to inflict blinding sickness. It casts *animate dead* on a slain enemy, ordering the newly created zombie to attack its former comrades.

Morale: Varisthu flees if reduced to less than 25 hp. However, if the opportunity to secure the *scabrous grail* presents itself, Varisthu fights to the death to recover the relic.

VARGOUILLE FRIAR

Three victims of Varisthu's kiss lurk in the adjacent cave system of the Howling Monastery, serving as the spriggans' unholy spiritual advisers and preying on the Order's victims.

The fiends perch atop decapitated, animated corpses, wearing voluminous, sackcloth robes. Varisthu, using Command Undead, cedes control of the plague zombies to their vargouille riders. The friars rasping, pained voices disturb the spriggans who leave them alone except in times of great need.

DECAPITATED PLAGUE ZOMBIE

CR 2 (XP 600)

Spriggan plague zombie

NE Large undead

Init +2; **Senses** blind, deaf; Perception +0

Speed 30 ft.

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 22

(+2 Dex, -1 size, +3 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

hp 27 (5 HD); death burst

Death Burst (Ex) When a plague zombie is destroyed, it explodes in a burst of decay exposing adjacent creatures to zombie rot (DC 12 Fortitude {2 consecutive saves}; *onset* 1d4 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d2 Con [damage cannot be healed while infected]; slain target rises as a plague zombie in 2d6 hours).

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +10

Melee slam +8 (1d8+9 plus zombie rot [DC 12 Fortitude {2 consecutive saves}; *onset* 1d4 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d2 Con [damage cannot be healed while infected]; if target dies it rises as a plague zombie in 2d6 hours])

Abilities Str 23, Dex 15, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ headless, staggered

Feats Toughness^B

Headless The zombie is blind and deaf. An attached vargouille commands it with its tentacles.

RUMOURS & WOODLAND DRESSING

Although as a GM you could just spring the Knights of the Rampant Horror on the PCs, it's much more fun to slowly insert them into the campaign. Perhaps, the PCs hear rumours of them or discover obvious signs of their presence as they unwittingly travel through Baron Raundrev's woodland realm. The tables below present such information; either roll randomly or choose appropriate rumours or events.

RUMOURS

D12 RUMOUR

- 1 Strange, violent gnomes – that can grow in size – lurk in the deeper reaches of the nearby woodland. (True).

 - 2 The gnomes ride strange feral beasts as a knight rides his warhorse. (True).

 - 3 The gnomes fight for the affections of a beautiful maiden trapped in a cave. (False).

 - 4 A single warrior holds sway over the gnomes. He is a ferocious warrior and terrible enemy. (True).

 - 5 Strange burrows have been discovered in some parts of the woods; what makes them is unknown, but they are large enough for a grown man to traverse. (True).

 - 6 In the dead of night, strange screeching echoes over the woods; those hearing them are often driven mad with terror. (Partly true).

 - 7 Many of the gnomes are heavily armed and armoured and often waylay travellers on the many isolated tracks running through the woods. (True).

 - 8 Ancient legends tell of a powerful magical item lost somewhere in the woodlands. Some believe the gnomes search for it. (True).

 - 9 Hidden deep in the woods near a great rocky hill lies a deep cave system. Winds often gust out of the cave mouth giving it the name, The Howling Caves. (True).

 - 10 A strange ettin prowls the woods. Those who have seen it and lived – exclusively those it has not seen – report it dresses outlandishly and its two heads are often singing bawdy songs. (True).

 - 11 Not only gnomes, but other forest sprites live in the forest. They work with the gnomes to snare and entrap the unwary. (True).

 - 12 The woods are haunted by the ghosts of ages past; so many have died within that the trees themselves have gained a sort of half-life. When they come to life, they smash everyone they find in "their" territory. (False).
-

WOODLAND DRESSING

D12 RUMOUR

- 1 The PCs discover the tracks of a panther-like beast. A DC 16 Survival check enables the PCs to track them for a short distance. A DC 17 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals a krenshar made the tracks.

 - 2 The PCs stumble upon the corpse of a woodsman nailed to a tree. The corpse has been sited to overlook a trail. A look of terror is upon the man's decomposing face.

 - 3 An ornate, now weatherworn, banner attached to a spear thrust deeply into the trail blocks the PCs' progress. A mailed hand clutching a warhammer decorates the banner.

 - 4 A heap of recently turned earth easily 10 ft. across stands half-way up a hill. The tracks of some huge beast – now mostly obscured – litter the surrounding ground. This is the entrance to one of Chasm's burrows. However, it had long since collapsed in on itself.

 - 5 Churned mud, pieces of broken weapons and armour lying among the weeds mark the location of an old battle. Judging by the weeds growing about, a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the battle took place months ago.

 - 6 The corpse of a gnome is nailed to a tree. He has been horribly tortured; his guts have been wrapped around the tree's trunk. He clearly died in tremendous pain. A DC 11 Knowledge (local) check reveals this to be a spriggan.

 - 7 The PCs discover the smouldering remains of a campfire; earth is kicked over it and it is clear than someone has recently tried to hurriedly put it out.

 - 8 A faint mist covers the ground among the trees ahead. Sounds seems deadened within, but nothing assails the PCs.

 - 9 A sudden cracking of wood followed by a tremendous bang echoes through the wood. If the PCs investigate they discover a tree has fallen into a sinkhole. (This is the result of Chasm's burrowing beneath the woods).

 - 10 Suddenly, the birds in the nearby trees take flight.

 - 11 The PCs catch the snatches of a bawdy duet. If they investigate, they encounter Canerous and Vercherix.

 - 12 A light rain begins to fall; ahead the PCs can make out a thick stand of oak trees that might afford extra protection.
-

BRETHREN OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR

Four vampires in the thrall of the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* - an ancient, bloodstained object crafted in the dim prehistory of the world - work to shatter the barrier holding back Death's legions. Stalking streets and alleyways they prey on the hapless and unwary, spiriting them away to a nameless fortress to die screaming upon the bloodstained rock hewn from the very depths of Hell itself! *Brethren of the Crimson Altar* presents 16 stat blocks (ranging in CR from 2 - 15) as well as details of the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* a sentient magic item of great power and terrible purpose.

Brethren of the Crimson Altar is compatible with almost any GM's campaign and can be used in conjunction with *The Lonely Coast* (a free, 30-page extensively bookmarked campaign setting). Alternatively, a GM can use the individual vampires herein to terrorise his players.

*“Wreathed in flame and steeped in death,
Older still than sin's first breath,
Carved from the blackness of hell itself,
No friend of human, dwarf or elf,
Brooding, immortal; feeding on fear,
The Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr”*

BRETHREN OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR

The Brethren of the Crimson Altar are a quartet of vampires dedicated to serving the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr*, an ancient artefact of fell provenance. The number of Brethren fluctuates over time and depends upon the current members accepting a new member into their august, if depraved, company. Currently, the Brethren are:

- **Tregereth Faull:** LE female human vampire wizard (diviner) 5/loremaster 8; page 12
- **Daveth Goninan:** NE male half-orc vampire fighter 10; page 14
- **Margh Vosper:** LE male human vampire aristocrat 4/bard 9; page 16
- **Terl Yarg:** NE male doppelganger vampire rogue 5/shadowdancer 2; page 18

Each of the Brethren is a powerful adversary, but together they form a terrifying threat to all but the most powerful adventurers.

Although bound together by common cause, they are disparate individuals with their own goals and desires. The *Crimson Altar* has seduced the four vampires to its service with promises of great power and freedom to hunt, feed and act as they desire when Death's minions finally enter the world. In the meantime, Tregereth Faull ever hunts for lost, esoteric knowledge whilst Margh Vosper loves the limelight, spending many evenings performing for the great and good of the town. In contrast, Terl Yarg instinctively lurks in the shadows and delights in stealing secrets, jewellery, valuable trinkets and works of art. Of the four, Daveth Goninan is the most savage, delighting in wanton slaughter and is the most likely to drag the Brethren into a confrontation with vengeful adventurers or the local authorities.

The Brethren (except Daveth) dwell in and around a large town or city, hiding their true natures while advancing both their personal agendas and the schemes of the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr*. Rarely together in public, it is unlikely that any band of PCs would be unlucky enough to battle more than one at a time. In dealing with troublemakers they prefer subtlety and tact over attention-grabbing violence. Instead of attacking irritating adventurers, they prefer to send them off on wild goose chases or to frame them for crimes they did not commit.

As a last resort, they use intermediaries and disguises to hire dozens of thugs which they unleash against troublemakers. If the PCs suspect the presence of a vampire, they direct an enslaved vampire to lead the attack. The enslaved vampire (of course) has orders not to speak of its master's involvement and is established in its own lair so that its destruction does not occur under its master's own roof. In this way, the vampire seek to deflect the PCs' suspicions away from themselves and onto their dupes.

COMBAT & TACTICS

With the exception of Daveth, the Brethren rarely enter combat. Protected by hired thugs and favoured minions (who are unaware of their true nature) they lurk out of reach of all but the most puissant adventurers. None of the Brethren fight to the "death" (again, except Daveth), instead fleeing if the battle turns against them. In flight (as in battle) Tregereth, Margh and Terl do not use abilities that mark them as a vampire. Well aware that their greatest defence is their opponent's ignorance of their nature the vampires use every other means at their disposal to defeat their foes. Only when detection is impossible, victory is certain or when forced to assume *gaseous form* do they use their vampiric abilities.

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Brethren of the Crimson Altar's design enables a GM to easily insert the group into his home campaign. If the GM does not want to use the Brethren as a group, one or more members can appear as random encounters, the PCs' arch-nemesis and so on.

It is best to insert the Brethren into the campaign long before the PCs come into conflict with them. Perhaps the PCs are in need of a sage and contact Tregereth or Terl steals an item from them. Alternatively, the PCs could attend one of Margh's performances.

Before placing the Brethren in his campaign, a GM must determine how far the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr's* plans have advanced. Is the ancient high priest close to his goal of shattering the boundary that keeps Death's legions at bay or is this goal yet distant?

A GENERIC NOTE

In places, this document speaks of "the town", "the city" and so on, avoiding specifics. This is a deliberate design decision taken to give the GM as much "wiggle room" as possible when inserting these powerful NPCs into his campaign. The text assumes that the vampires dwell in the same general location as each other (a large town or city) but they could just as easily be living some distance apart. This makes it harder for them to hunt, however, and thus they'll probably come to the PCs' or the authorities' attention sooner or later.

Similarly, the *Crimson Altar* is hidden below a forlorn, ruined fortress. The fortress remains unnamed and can stand in any remote, out of the way locale. This locale does not need to be near the Brethrens' "home" town because the vampires can travel there using Tregereth's *teleport*. (She also has *greater teleport* in her spellbook.)

LAIRS

Each of the Brethren has their own home-lair. Vampire spawn and enslaved vampires protect their inner sanctums, while living servants (many of them unaware of the vampire's true natures) provide a façade of respectability.

Tregereth Faull: The diviner dwells in a stoutly-built, tall townhouse on an affluent street. Extensive cellars below her house (which she can access via a narrow shaft reaching to her private chambers) contain a vast amount of clothes – many excellent examples of styles long since gone out of fashion – and her coffin. A few liveried vampire spawn protect her coffin, while impeccably turned out servants run the main house.

Daveth Goninan: The only one of the Brethren to not dwell in town, Daveth guards the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* in its remote, crumbling fortress. Here he oversees the undead guardians of the places and hunts down the living captives his comrades bring him for sport. (In this way, they both control his bloodlust and keep him from taking actions that could draw unwelcome attention to the Brethren's actions).

Margh Vosper: Living death has been good to Margh; the rewards garnered by his frequent performances enable him to live in comparative luxury in a small estate surrounded by richly appointed gardens in the noble quarter. High walls protect his privacy while the shadowy depths of several thick stands of trees provide areas in which he can occasionally meet with those he must speak with during the day.

Terl Yarg: By day, Terl lurks in a rambling series of bricked up cellars that run deep below a ramshackle tenement building in the poorest part of town. Secretly the owner of the building above, he blocked off access to the cellars decades ago and has dwelt there alone ever since.

Secret passages provide access to the sewers enabling the master thief to reach anywhere in the immediate vicinity quickly. Narrow crawl-ways also lead to several places within the building including an apartment in which he ostensibly dwells in his guise as the building's owner.

HOOKS AND SCHEMES

The Brethren do not simply sit around waiting for things to happen. They are proactive and organised, destroying all threats to their existence. In particular, Tregereth Faull meets and interacts with many adventurers in her guise as a sage specialising in magic item identification and all manners of divinations. She never acts openly against adventurers but those strong in the causes of good and law often come to grief at the hands of her hired thugs or end their lives deep in the wilderness in search of a treasure that never was.

Little of import occurs in the town's dives without Terl Yarg hearing of it. In one of his many guises, and using his innate ability to read others' thoughts, few secrets are safe from the

lonely doppelganger. Superbly skilled at infiltration, Terl is able to steal items of import or plant them on those the Brethren wish to implicate in his crimes. (He often inflicts this treatment on rival thieves.)

Of course, the Brethren must hunt and do so by stalking those unlikely to be missed – travellers, itinerant tradesmen, outcasts and the like. Fugitives, sailors, mercenary guards and the like are all favourite targets as no one is going to miss those whose business involves frequent travel. They rarely target locals and never take anyone of true importance; in preference, they much prefer to hunt strangers and travellers.

The Brethren must also acquire sacrifices for the *Crimson Altar* and do so in a similar fashion to their hunting, transporting them to the altar using *teleport* and similar magic after crushing their will to resist.

If travellers wander too close to the altar's resting place, Daveth unleashes the fortress' guardians. The undead paralyse or otherwise subdue as many victims as possible before carrying them back to the fortress where they end their lives screaming upon the *Crimson Altar* itself.

LORE

Character with ranks in Knowledge (religion) can learn about the Brethren of the *Crimson Altar* with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 12: This is a vampire, a powerful undead creature.

DC 17: Vampires are able to summon bats and wolves to aid them in battle and have many defences including resistance to many weapons, cold and electricity.

DC 22: Vampires are very hard to kill as they regenerate damage dealt to them. Exposure to bright sunlight kills them as does immersion in running water or driving a wooden stake through a helpless vampire's heart.

Additionally, characters can learn about the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* with a Knowledge (history) or (religion) check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 25: The Brethren of the *Crimson Altar* are an ancient shadowy cabal of vampires that serve the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr*. Their number varies over the years, but all are powerful and twisted foes dedicated to Death.

DC 30: The *Crimson Altar* is an object of ancient origin. It has powerful abilities; countless lives have ended upon its hard, blood splattered surface, but its fell purpose remains unknown.

DC 35: Said to be have carved from the very bedrock of Hell, the *Crimson Altar* lies in a mile-deep cave below a forlorn, crumbling fortress of ancient origin. A maze of natural caverns and hordes of undead guardians protect the altar.

CRIMSON ALTAR OF KULAN-WYR

The *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* is an ancient, blood-soaked object of great power that has its origins in the dim days of pre-history when the first humans sacrificed their screaming kin to the fell powers of the outer dark. Carved from stone hewn from the very bedrock of Hell, a malign spirit of forbidden knowledge and terrible power permeates the altar.

An ancient, timeworn fortress squats above the hidden mile-deep caverns that hold the altar safe from the light of the world. Built and rebuilt by successive waves of worshippers, the fortress now lies all but empty populated only by the risen spirits and bodily remnants of those who have died screaming upon the altar far below.

The remnant of long-dead adherents, a cadre of skeletal monks protects the altar. They attack any living beings approaching the altar's dread presence, initially attempting to subdue attackers so that they can be sacrificed on that which they sought to destroy.

The screams of countless sacrifices permeate the very stones of the fortress, weakening the boundary between the world and what lies beyond. When enough sentient creatures have gone screaming to their doom upon its bloodstained surface, the veil will be torn asunder and the numberless dead will surge into the world to extend Death's malevolent shadow over yet another world.



KULAN-WYR GUARDIAN CR 6 (XP 2,400)

Ebon eyes of brutal malevolence glare at you from a polished skull as this skeleton moves swiftly toward you.

Human skeletal champion monk 11

LE Medium undead

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17, Sense Motive +3

Speed 60 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +17 (+40 jumping), Climb +15, Stealth +17, Swim +10

AC 24, touch 21, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 29; Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack

(+3 Dex, +3 Wis, +2 class, +3 armour [bracers of armour +3], +1 dodge, +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), cold
Fort +7, **Ref** +10 (improved evasion), **Will** +10 (channel resistance +4); +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects

hp 75 (11 HD); **DR** bludgeoning/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +15 (+17 disarm, trip)

Melee unarmed strike (magic, lawful) +14/+9 (1d10+5/19-20) or

Melee unarmed strike (magic, lawful) with flurry of blows +15/+15/+10/+10/+5 (1d10+5/19-20)

Atk Options Spring Attack, Stunning Fist 11/day (stunned, fatigued or sickened; DC 18), Vital Strike

Special Actions ki pool (9 points), slow fall 50 ft.

Ki Pool (Su) By spending 1 ki point, the Kulan-Wyr Guardian can make one additional attack at its highest attack bonus as part of a flurry of blows, increase its speed by 20 ft. for 1 round, gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC for 1 round, gain a +20 bonus on Acrobatic checks made to jump for 1 round or heal 11 hps.

Combat Gear javelin of lightning

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con --, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 10

SQ undead traits

Feats Deflect Arrows^B, Dodge^B, Extra Ki, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm^B, Improved Trip^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist^B, Toughness^B, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills as above

Languages Common

Gear as above plus *amulet of mighty fists* +1

CRIMSON ALTAR OF KULAN-WYR

Hewn from a shard of eldritch black rock of unguessable origin, something seems strangely alien about this sinister altar.

Aura strong (necromancy; DC 22 Knowledge [arcana]); **Identify** DC 35) Spellcraft

Lore (DC 15 Heal) So much blood has been spilt on this altar that it has permeated the rock.

Lore (DC 20 Knowledge [religion]) This is an ancient object dedicated to the death god.

Lore (DC 20 Knowledge [dungeoneering]) This altar is hewn from a wholly unnatural type of rock.

Senses 120 ft., blindsense, darkvision; Perception +5

Communication speech, telepathy

LE; Personality First and greatest of Death's high priests, none has ever stood higher in his councils than Kulan-Wyr. Of limitless cruelty and relentless cunning, Kulan-Wyr lived for centuries, unnaturally extending his life through countless sacrifices to his dark lord. When Death finally gathered his most faithful servant, eternal life of sorts was his reward. Now extant within the *Crimson Altar*, Kulan-Wyr plots and schemes endless to bring his lord's plan to final fruition.

Special Purpose The *Crimson Altar* exists to fulfil Death's plan; to shatter the boundary between his eternal realm and the world, allowing the numberless legions of the dead to add another world to their lord's domain. Every sentient being who dies screaming upon the altar weakens the boundary

between the living and the dead. When the veil is shattered, Kulan-Wyr will be reborn as his master's strongest and most favoured servant.

AC 4; **hp** 1,080; **hardness** 8; **break** DC 70

Special Power The *Crimson Altar* can cast *destruction* (DC 21 partial; CL 20) at will.

Animate Dead (Sp) The *Crimson Altar* can cast *animate dead* 3/day on any bones within the fane-cave.

Inflict Serious Wounds (Sp) The *Crimson Altar* can cast *inflict critical wounds* 3/day.

Abilities Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 18; Ego 25

Skills Knowledge (religion) +14

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal

Activation item utilises its powers; **CL** 20th

Requirements: cannot be made

THE FANE-CAVE (EL 13; XP 25,600)

The *Crimson Altar* stands within Death's fane-cave at the very nadir of the mile-deep cave system below the nameless keep. An *unhallow* effect – the result of the weakening boundary between the world and Death's realm – permeates the cave system.

An honour guard of eight Kulan-Wyr Guardians (page 8) attend the altar and attack any living creatures entering the cavern. The altar, of course, aids its own defence.



PERSONA: TREGERETH FAULL

TREGERETH FAULL CR 14 (XP 38,400)

Female human vampire wizard (diviner) 8/loremaster 5
LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +11 (forewarned); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., permanent *see invisibility*, scrying adept; Perception +12, Sense Motive +12

Forewarned (Su) Tregereth can always act in the surprise round even if she has not noticed a foe.

Scrying Adept (Su) Tregereth is always aware when being observed by magic as if warded by a permanent *detect scrying*.

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) Tregereth can assume *gaseous form* (AC 16, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Tregereth climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; Fly +3 (+6 as dire bat, +11 in *gaseous form*) Stealth +11

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 25; Dodge, Mobility (+3 Dex, +2 deflection [*ring of protection* +2], +1 dodge, +7 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +1])

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +12, **Ref** +13, **Will** +15 (channel resistance +4, *nondetection*)

hp 113 (13 HD); *gaseous form*; fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Tregereth assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Tregereth must reach her coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, she is helpless for one hour until she regains 1 hit point. Tregereth is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals her wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +9

Melee slam +9 (1d4+3 plus energy drain)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, blood drain, create spawn, energy drain

Blood Drain (Su) Tregereth can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If she establishes or maintains a pin, she drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Tregereth heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to her full normal hit points) each round she drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Tregereth can create a spawn when she slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Tregereth's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 20 Fortitude restores). Tregereth can use this ability once per round.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, diviner's fortune, dominate

Change Shape (Su) Tregereth can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Tregereth can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Diviner's Fortune (Su) 5/day as a standard action, Tregereth can touch any creature giving it a +4 insight bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Dominate (Su) Tregereth can crush a humanoid's will (DC 20 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +18 [+22 casting defensively or when in a grapple], spell penetration +15)

7th—*greater scrying* (DC 22), *limited wish*

6th—*analyze dweomer* (DC 21), *greater dispel magic*, *true seeing*

5th—*break enchantment*, *prying eyes*, *telepathic bond*, *telekinesis* (DC 20), *teleport*

4th—*bestow curse* (2; DC 19), *dimension door*, *locate creature*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 19), *scrying* (DC 19)

3rd—*arcane sight*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (2), *dispel magic*, *displacement*, ~~*nondetection*~~

2nd—*darkness* (2), *extended mage armour*, *whispering wind*

1st—*alarm* (2), *detect secret doors*, *disguise self*, *identify* (2), *shield*

0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *pearls of power* (1st, 2nd)

Scrolls *web*, *major image*, *stinking cloud*

Wands *haste* (10 chgs.), *lightning bolt* (25 chgs.), *protection from energy* (25 chgs.)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 16, Con —, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 18

SQ arcane bond (*ring of protection* +2), lore, scrying adept, secret (lore of true stamina, secret knowledge of avoidance, secrets of inner strength, shadowless)

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes^B, Craft Rod, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge^B, Extend Spell^B, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Mobility, Scribe Scroll^B, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Spell Penetration, Toughness^B

Skills as above plus Appraise +10, Bluff +12, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (engineering) +14, Knowledge (geography) +14, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (local) +21, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +13, Knowledge (planes) +22, Knowledge (religion) +21, Spellcraft +21

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Draconic, Goblin, Infernal, Undercommon, permanent *comprehend languages*, permanent *tongues*

Scrying Adept (Su) Tregereth treats individuals she scrys as one step more familiar. Very familiar subjects get a -10 penalty to their saves to avoid her scrying attempts.

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, expensive robes, jewellery worth 300 gp, 50 gp

Spellbook (enchantment, evocation) as above plus as determined by the GM

A truly ancient creature, steeped in the elder lore of the universe, Tregereth has been fascinated by the deeper secrets of the world from an early age. She is a skilled sage and purveyor of knowledge who maintains a modest business in town.

Background: A peasant woman with an active imagination and keen wit, Tregereth used her wit, cunning and exceptional looks to rise far above her birth station. Cold-hearted and pragmatic she only ever attached herself to those of value to her. Her last target was the hermit mage Kevern Tangye who dwelled in the Tower of Night, a fabled site dominating the skyline of a mighty city. Swiftly divining his vampiric nature, Tregereth continued her pursuit of the mage, who finally granted her request to bestow his dark gift upon her. Free to continue her pursuit of knowledge without the prospect of death, Tregereth abandoned her mentor at the moment of his defeat at the hands of the Company of the Burning Brand. Her exhaustive research eventually uncovered the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr* and over the intervening decades she has shared its secrets with her brethren. The altar has promised her access to a lost repository of knowledge and thus she enthusiastically supports its special purpose.

Personality: Inquisitive and thoughtful, base emotions rarely cloud Tregereth's judgement or actions. Obsessed with the search for knowledge, she is extremely single-minded. She is also wildly vain and enjoys her immortality. Injuries that could permanently mar her appearance terrify her.

Secretly she is in love Margh, although she has never confided this in anyone. She is ferocious in his defence and often uses her magic to watch his performances.

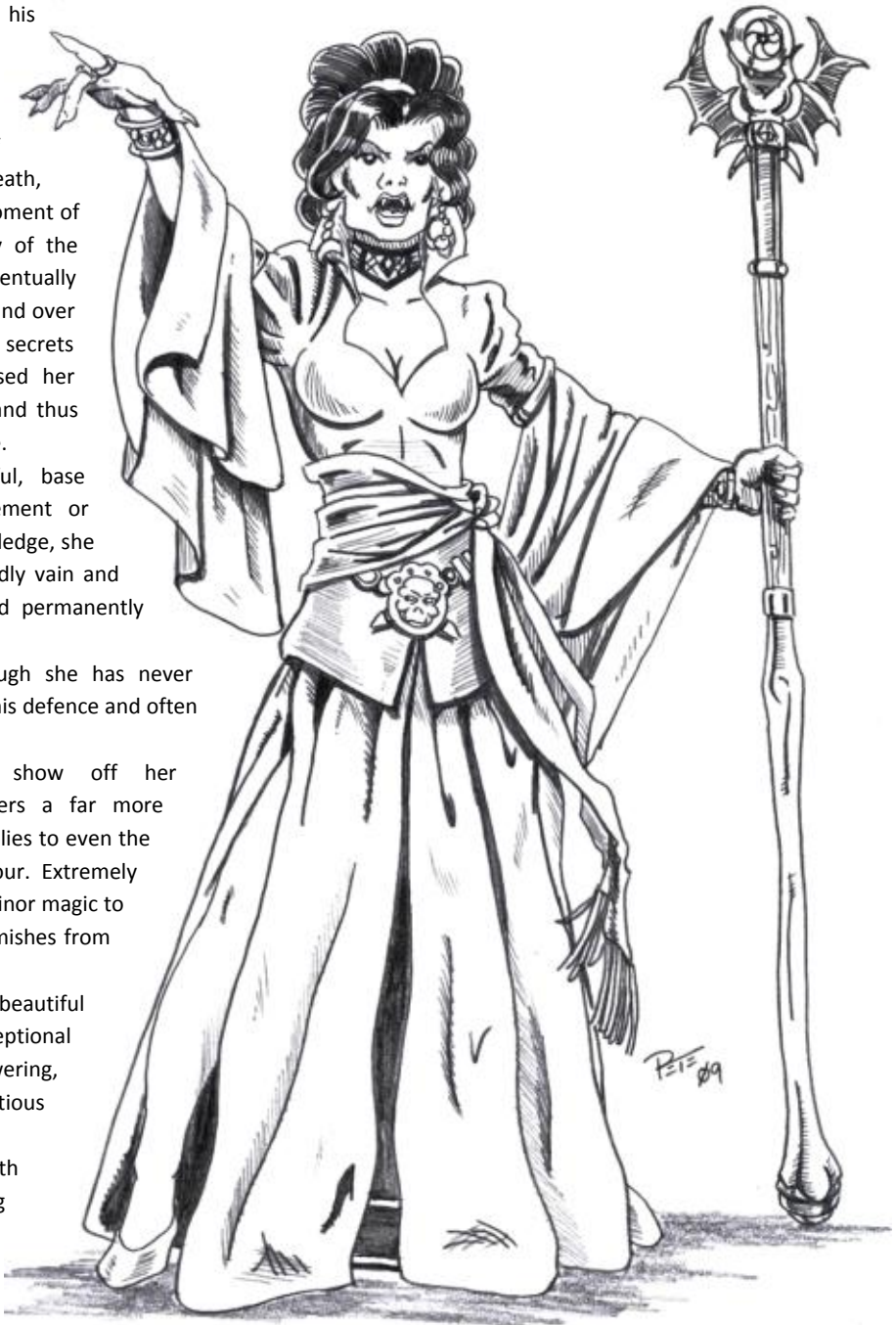
Mannerisms: Tregereth loves to show off her encyclopaedic knowledge and often offers a far more complex explanation than required. Her replies to even the simplest questions can last over a half-hour. Extremely vain, during conversations she often uses minor magic to remove tiny (and imagined) stains and blemishes from her clothes.

Distinguishing Features: Tregereth is beautiful and takes exquisite care over her exceptional appearance. In particular, she is fond of towering, ornate hairstyles and complicated, ostentatious jewellery.

Hooks: The PCs likely first meet Tregereth when they need a magical item identifying or a piece of ancient lore deciphering. She is happy to carry out such tasks, but is wary of groups containing obviously

good-aligned clerics and paladins. She never lies to such individuals for fear they will discern her duplicity. In the future, she could act as a buyer for ancient and obscure texts.

The PCs may also meet her shopping for expensive clothes and jewellery. A valued customer of several clothing emporiums she has accounts with the best dressmakers in the city. Alternatively, she could be encountered on the way home from a shopping trip. Accompanied by several shop assistants, she makes a tempting target for opportunistic muggers.



PERSONA: DAVETH GONINAN

DAVETH GONINAN CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Male half-orc vampire fighter 10

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11, Sense Motive +11

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) Daveth can assume *gaseous form* (AC 17, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Daveth climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +16, **Climb** +22, **Fly** +5 (+8 as dire bat, +13 in *gaseous form*), **Ride** +18, **Stealth** +19

AC 29, touch 17, flat-footed 23; **Combat Expertise** (+3), **Dodge**; **CMD** 34 (36 vs. disarm and trip); +1/+2 vs. disarm and sunder attempts with natural weapons/flails (+5 Dex, +6 armour [+2 *chain shirt*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4 (channel resistance +4); **bravery** +3

hp 89 (10 HD); *gaseous form*; fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Daveth assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Daveth must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Daveth is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +17 (+21 disarm and trip); +1 with slam, +2 with flails)

Melee +1 *spiked chain* +22/+17 (2d4+15/19-20) or

+1 *spiked chain* with Power Attack +19/+14 (2d4+24/19-20)

Melee slam +18/+13 (1d4+8 plus 2 negative levels)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Greater Disarm, Greater Trip, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Power Attack (-3 attack, +6 damage [+9 with spiked chain]), blood drain, create spawn, energy drain

Blood Drain (Su) Daveth can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Daveth heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Daveth can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Daveth's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 16 Fortitude restores). Daveth can use this ability once per round.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, dominate

Change Shape (Su) Daveth can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Daveth can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Daveth can crush a humanoid's will (DC 16 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Abilities Str 24, Dex 21, Con –, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ armour training +3, orc blood, shadowless, weapon training (flails +2, natural +1)

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Greater Disarm, Greater Trip, Greater Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Improved Critical (spiked chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Power Attack, Toughness^B, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialisation (spiked chain)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Profession (soldier) +6

Languages Common, Goblin, Infernal, Orc

Gear as above plus *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *boots of elvenkind*, golden earrings (worth 500 gp)

CAUCHEMAR NIGHTMARE CR 11 (XP 12,800)

This towering horse stands upon smoking hooves. Hellfire flashes in its eyes and heat radiates from its jet-black body.

NE Huge outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +22, Sense Motive +22

Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); Run

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +19 (+23 jumping), **Fly** +19, **Stealth** +11

AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 38 (42 vs. trip) (-2 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural)

Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

hp 147 (14 HD)

Space 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +26 (+28 overrun)

Melee bite (reach 10 ft.) +22 (2d6+10)

2 hooves (reach 10 ft.) +17 each (2d6+5 plus 1d6 fire)

Atk Options Cleave, Improved Overrun, Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage)

Special Actions smoke (DC 22)

Smoke (Su) In battle, the cauchemar nightmare exhales smoke that chokes and blinds foes, filling a 15-foot-cone each round as a free action. Anyone in the cone must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or become sickened until 1d6 minutes after leaving the area. This smoke acts as obscuring mist for concealment purposes and persists for 1 round.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th)

1/hour (self plus 1 rider only)—*ethereal jaunt*, *plane shift*

Abilities Str 31, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 12

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run

Skills as above plus Bluff +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (planes) +20

Languages Abyssal, Infernal

A ferocious warrior and terrible enemy, Daveth is a child of battle, revelling in the blood, slaughter and carnage of the battlefield. Merciless and without pity, dark legends cluster thickly about him.

Background: The favoured son of Feng Bloodbeard, a charismatic and successful orc war leader, Daveth rose quickly through his tribe's ranks. For his father he was a living symbol of the darkness that lurked within humanity's breast and for the tribe's rank and file he was the living embodiment of battle ferocity. His natural skill at arms enabled him to become a feared warlord and to lead his men on daring and savage raids.

Unfortunately, he eventually chose the wrong target, unleashing his band against an isolated keep hidden deep in the hills. Traoth Lathil, an ancient elven vampire, dwelt within. Easily despatching the attacking orcs, he transformed Daveth into a vampire and forced him to destroy his former tribe. Years past and eventually Traoth disappeared while exploring the astral plane. Leaderless, Daveth wandered the land until falling in with the Brethren of the Crimson Altar.

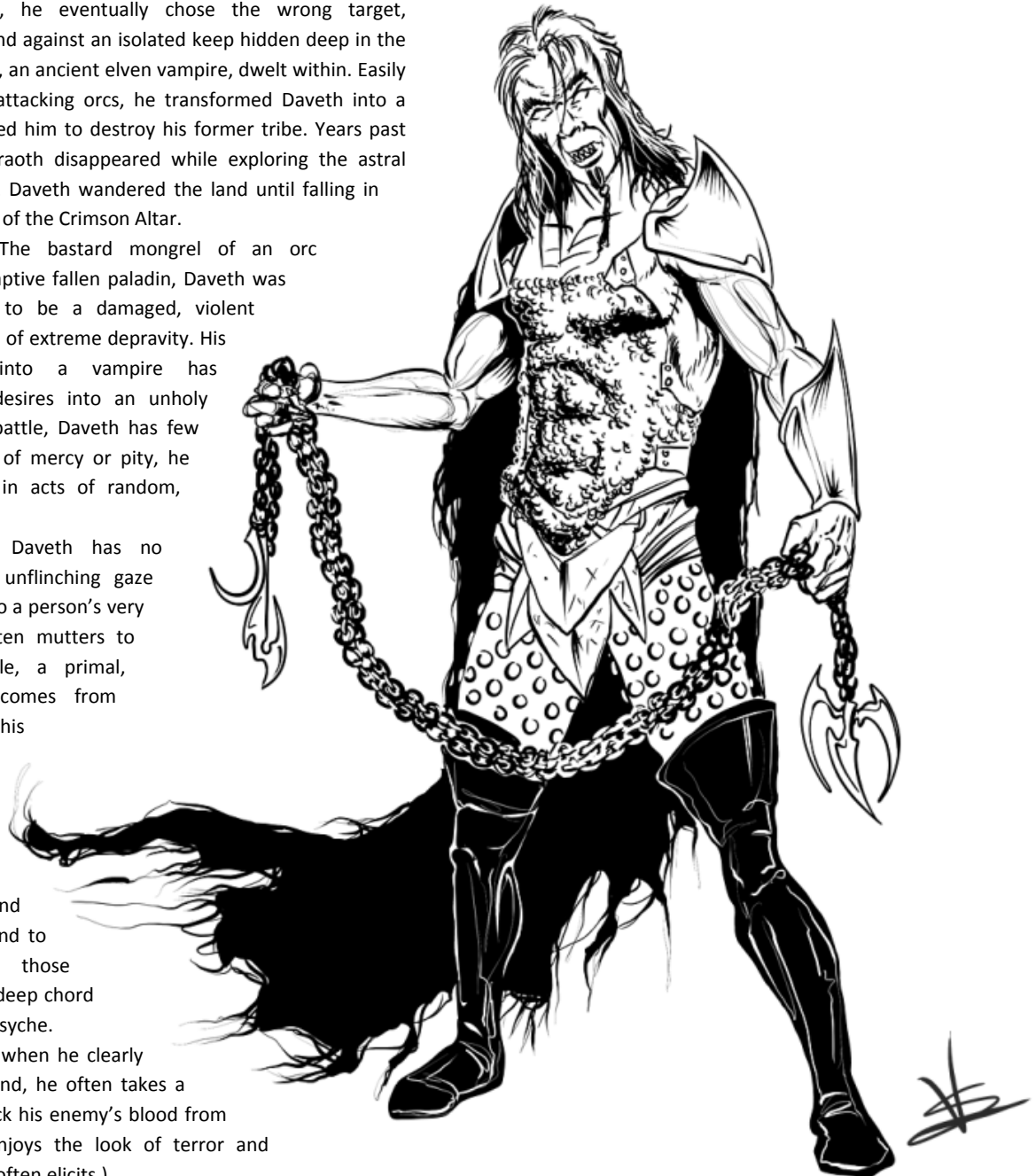
Personality: The bastard mongrel of an orc chieftain and a captive fallen paladin, Daveth was always destined to be a damaged, violent individual capable of extreme depravity. His transformation into a vampire has augmented his desires into an unholy lust. Outside of battle, Daveth has few interests. Devoid of mercy or pity, he enjoys engaging in acts of random, wanton cruelty.

Mannerisms: Daveth has no blink reflex; his unflinching gaze seems to bore into a person's very soul. He also often mutters to himself. In battle, a primal, atavistic growl comes from deep within his throat. After battle, he often lingers on the field to inspect the bloodied and broken corpses and to further mutilate those that touch some deep chord in his demented psyche.

During battle when he clearly has the upper hand, he often takes a move action to lick his enemy's blood from his chain. (He enjoys the look of terror and revulsion this act often elicits.)

Distinguishing Features: Although muscular, Daveth is very skinny, his stretched, taught skin giving him the looks of an emaciated, starved man.

Hooks: The PCs encounter Daveth on one of his occasional hunts as he attacks and overpowers a small band of travellers. If disturbed, he flees but not before battering several attackers with his spiked chain in punishment for interrupting his feast.



PERSONA: MARGH VOSPER

MARGH VOSPER CR 12 (XP 19,200)

Male human vampire aristocrat 4/bard 9

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +30, Sense Motive +30

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.); Step Up

Gaseous Form (Su) Margh can assume *gaseous form* (AC 15, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Margh climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; Fly +4 (+7 as dire bat, +12 in *gaseous form*), Ride +11, Stealth +28

AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 26; Dodge (+4 Dex, +5 armour [+2 *studded leather*], +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +11, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16 (Improved Iron Will, channel resistance +4); +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects

hp 136 (13 HD); *gaseous form*; fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Margh assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Margh must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Margh is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +11

Melee +2 *rapier* +15/+10 (1d6+4/18-20)

Melee slam +11 (1d4+2 plus energy drain)

Ranged mwk dagger (range 10 ft.) +14 (1d4+2/19-20)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, blood drain, create spawn, energy drain

Blood Drain (Su) Margh can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Margh heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Margh can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Margh's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 21 Fortitude restores). Margh can use this ability once per round.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, dominate
Change Shape (Su) Margh can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Margh can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Margh can crush a humanoid's will (DC 21 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Special Actions bardic performance 37 rounds (countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 19], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, *suggestion* [DC 19]), lore master 1/day

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +14)

3rd (4/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *glibness*, *see invisibility*

2nd (5/day)—*eagle's splendour*, *heroism*, *invisibility*, *tongues*

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *silent image* (DC 16), *undetected alignment*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *summon instrument*

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of silent spell*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con —, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 21

SQ bardic knowledge, shadowless, versatile performance (act, oratory, string)

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Extra Performance (2), Improved Initiative^B, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Skill Focus (Perform [act]), Step Up, Toughness^B, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +23, Diplomacy +27, Disguise +21, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Knowledge (geography) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perform (act) +21, Perform (oratory) +27, Perform (string) +23, Spellcraft +11

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, noble's outfit, masterwork violin, gold rings (4; each worth 200 gp)

FAVOURER DISGUISES

Margh often walks abroad in disguise. When he does so, he invariably assumes one of the following appearances:

- **Neophyte Bard:** Appearing as a young half-elf male, Margh assumes the persona of Kalaen, a hero-worshipping bard obsessed with the "Great Margh Vosper." He uses this persona to both drum up interest in his upcoming performances and to discover what people really think of him.
- **Drunken Minor Noble:** Assuming the guise of a drunken minor noble, Herald Kerst, Margh engages adventurer-types in idle conversation about their past exploits. Hinting that he might have a job for them, he learns as much as possible about their abilities so that he can gauge what level of threat they pose to the Brethren.

Insufferably vain, and with a near matchless hatred of those deriding his talents, Margh is a prominent (and popular) fixture of the town's nightlife. His performances are invariably well attended by the great and the good, which amuses him greatly.

Background: Margh was the indolent, dilettante fourth son of a minor nobleman with no focus in life until he fell in love with the star actress of a travelling troupe of minstrels and storytellers. Abandoning his family, he set out for life on the road intent on winning his beloved's affections. At first, barely tolerated by the minstrels he slowly improved his skills until he was a passable performer.

Sadly, fate then intervened in the guise of a wandering vampire that slaughtered much of the troupe including Margh's beloved. Incensed by this Margh attacked the vampire; his insane desire to kill the abomination amused the vampire and so it chose to create him as a spawn. Its victory was short-lived, however, as a nearby band of adventurers heard the battle and slew the beast. Margh awoke two days later in a communal grave. Digging his way out he disappeared into the slums where a trail of death and destruction heralded the arrival of a new predator. Forced to flee by vengeful adventurers and an unusually efficient city watch, Margh struck out for a nearby town where he reinvented himself. Given the luxury of eternal life, he has spent the last century honing his skills and developing his bardic prowess.

He first encountered Tregereth at a performance of his one-man drama. Attracted to her stunning beauty he was surprised and glad to discover the puissant diviner was already a vampire. The two have been occasional lovers for decades.

Personality: Margh projects the persona of a typical thespian. Highly-strung and emotional, he always makes a grand entrance and never leaves without theatrics and drama. This is all an act, of course, designed to enable him to hide in plain sight. In truth, Margh is a vicious, calculating monster capable of indescribable torments if the mood takes him, but he is also a needy man. Desperate for his skill and talent as a great actor and orator to be recognised, Margh is pathetically grateful for praise. He has a long memory, however, and often exacts a terrible revenge (sometimes months or years later) upon those that publicly deride or criticise his performance.

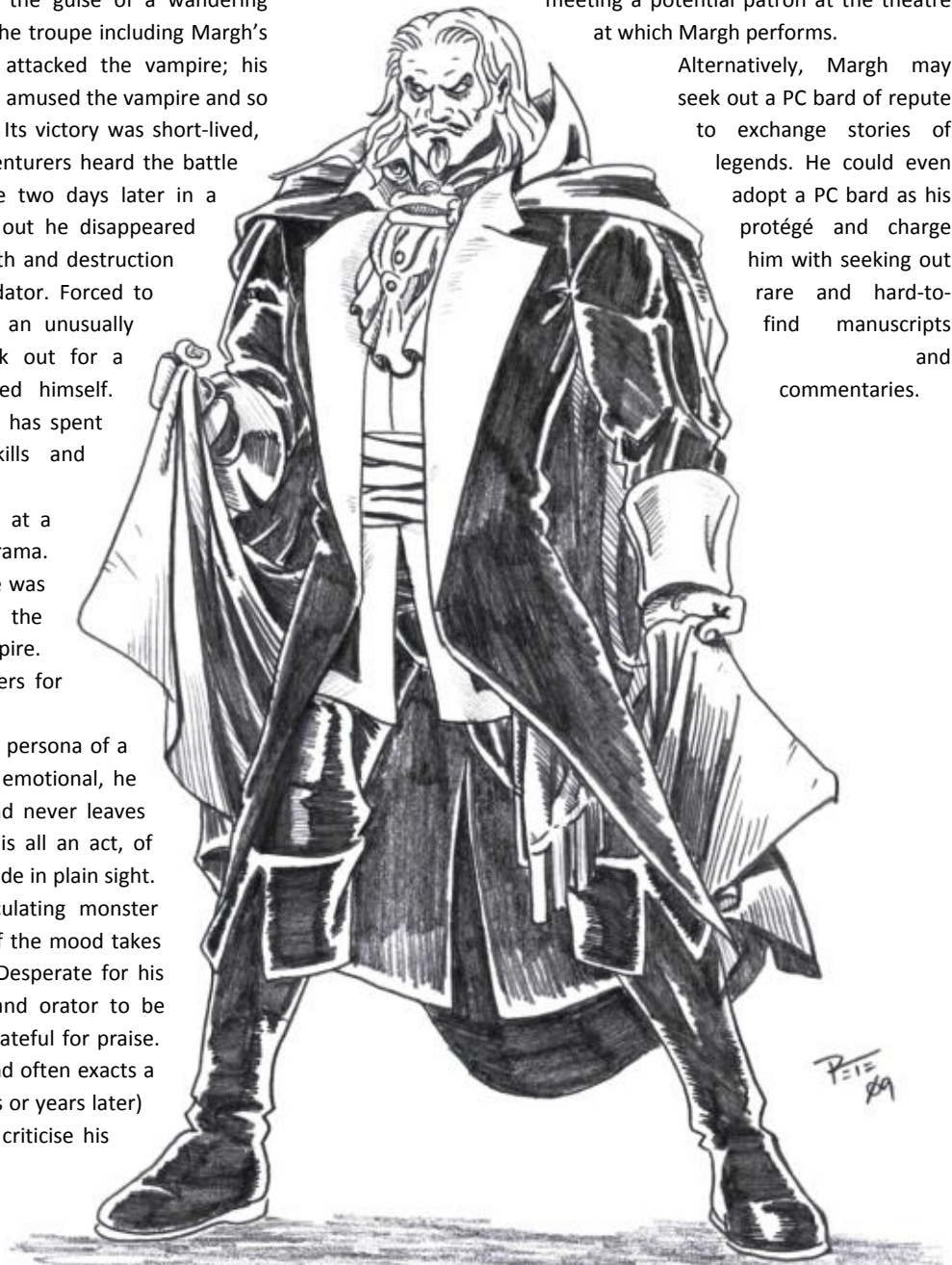
He avidly collects all kinds of theatrical memorabilia and has an extensive library of plays, songs and similar materials.

Mannerisms: In his persona as an emotional thespian, Margh is overly fond of expansive hand gestures and overtly emotional displays. When out of character, Margh has an intense, brooding presence that many find unsettling.

Distinguishing Features: Devastatingly handsome and possessing of incredible personal magnetism, Margh dominates most social situations in which he finds himself.

Hooks: The PCs might witness one of his frequent, but impromptu, performances in a highbrow tavern or may be meeting a potential patron at the theatre at which Margh performs.

Alternatively, Margh may seek out a PC bard of repute to exchange stories of legends. He could even adopt a PC bard as his protégé and charge him with seeking out rare and hard-to-find manuscripts and commentaries.



PERSONA: TERL YARG

TERL YARG CR 12 (XP 19,200)

Male doppelganger vampire rogue 5/shadowdancer 2

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +30 (trapfinding), Sense Motive +18

Speed 30 ft., Spring Attack, fast stealth, *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) Terl can assume *gaseous form* (AC 17, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Terl climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +22, Climb +14, Fly +5 (+8 as dire bat, +13 in *gaseous form*), Stealth +35 (fast stealth)

AC 28, touch 17, flat-footed 28; Dodge, Mobility, +1 vs. traps, improved uncanny dodge; **CMD** 31 (+5 Dex, +5 armour [+2 studded leather], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +10, **Ref** +16 (+17 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +7 (channel resistance +4)

hp 120 (11 HD); *gaseous form*; fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Terl assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Terl must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Terl is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +14

Melee slam +14/+9 (1d4+6 plus energy drain)

Melee 2 claws each +15 (1d8+6 plus energy drain)

Ranged +1 *distance hand crossbow* (range 60 ft.) +14 (1d4+1/19-20)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Spring Attack, blood drain, create spawn, energy drain, sneak attack +3d6

Blood Drain (Su) Terl can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Terl heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Terl can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Terl's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 20 Fortitude restores). Terl can use this ability once per round.

Special Actions change shape (*alter self*, perfect copy), children of the night, dominate, hide in plain sight, mimicry

Change Shape (Su) Terl can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*. Additionally, Terl can use alter shape to assume different forms. When doing so, he can assume the appearance of specific individuals.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Terl can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Terl can crush a humanoid's will (DC 20 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Hide in Plain Sight (Su) Terl can use Stealth even when observed. As long as he is within 10 ft. of a shadow (except his own) he can hide in the open.

Mimicry (Ex) Terl can use any spell trigger or spell completion item as if the spell was on his spell list. CL 4th.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th)

3/day—*ghost sound* (CL 5th, DC 13)

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 15)

Combat Gear blue whinnis (4; DC 14, *wand of silence* (10 charges), *wand of eagle's splendour* (15 charges), *wand of poison* (10 charges)

Abilities Str 22, Dex 21, Con —, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 21

SQ rogue talents (fast stealth, minor magic [*ghost sound*]), shadowless

Feats Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Mobility, Toughness^B, Skill Focus (Disguise), Skill Focus (Stealth), Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills as above plus Appraise +11, Bluff +27 (+31 using change shape), Diplomacy +20, Disable Device +15, Disguise +26 (+46 using change shape), Knowledge (local) +9, Perform (dance) +12, Sleight of Hand +15

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin, Infernal

Gear as above plus *cloak of elvenkind*, *boots of elvenkind*, masterwork thieves' tools, jewellery and trinkets (worth 1,000 gp)

FAVOURER DISGUISES

Terl often walks abroad in disguise. When he does so, he invariably assumes one of the following appearances:

- **Ovthur Thocral:** As this dwarf trap-disarming specialist, Terl is much in demand among the thieves and rogues of the city. Reputedly of supernatural skill he is widely believed to be able to bypass any trap. Nobles quake in their estates and pray nightly that he does not take a liking to their valuables.
- **Gawen Kersey:** As this middle-aged barkeep, Terl works in several unsavoury establishments in the poorest parts of town. He uses this cover to both seek out prey that won't be missed (beggars, lone travellers and so on) and to glean news of illicit wealth entering the city. Thickset with a paunch and pronounced limp, he is nevertheless still strong and respected as a hard (and unforgiving) bouncer.



Of all the Brethren, Terl is the least dedicated to the *Crimson Altar* and its malign destiny. A thief of superlative ability, he guards his identity carefully and only undertakes licentious activities in other forms.

Background: The youngest of the Brethren, Terl has only been a vampire for 50 years or so. Vampire doppelgangers are exceedingly rare – Terl has never met another. Created by Merat, a vampiric gargoyle, who laired in an abandoned manor house, Terl gained his freedom when the Brethren stormed the building in search of ancient texts said to lie hidden below.

Sensing kindred spirits, Terl gladly joined the Brethren (partly out of self-preservation and partly because of a deep sense of loneliness and a desire to belong to something greater than himself that had been growing slowly within his heart).

Since then, Terl has served as the eyes and ears of the Brethren. His various roles, superlative stealth and ability to get into and out of even the most heavily defended places makes him one of the best informed folk in the city.

Personality: Not afraid to get his hands dirty, Terl relishes hiding in plain sight as a labourer or other tradesman.

He enjoys gazing on the fruits of his exploits. His private chambers are a riot of colour and light. A magical chandelier casts everburning light into the chamber while stolen jewellery and works of art hang from the walls.

He rarely uses his blood drain and energy drain attacks “in public” preferring to keep his identity secret. He has also never created a spawn, partly because he can only do so with other monstrous humanoids and partly because he is not interested in creating “friends.”

For all his lust for gold and wealth, Terl is lonely. Reading the thoughts of so many others has made Terl realise what he is missing – friends, family and a real place in the world. People being genuinely friendly toward Terl could gain a powerful, if black-hearted, friend.

Mannerisms: Terl has no recurring physical mannerisms to give himself away. However, when he speaks he often refers to himself in the third person.

Distinguishing Features: As a doppelganger, Terl can assume any form his wishes and thus can create any distinguishing features he desires. He often assumes a form with an obvious, distinctive feature such as a wart-covered nose, deformed hand, horrible scar and so on. He has found that witnesses often fixate on such details.

Hooks: Terl is normally encountered in the seedier parts of town (and obviously only at night). The PCs will likely come across him in one of his favoured roles (see facing page), but if he is performing a mugging, robbery or minor theft he’ll probably appear as just another desperate, penniless thief.

The PCs could witness him (in one of his many guises) emerging onto the roof of a townhouse obviously laden down with loot. Terl also loves the thrill of the chase and sometimes deliberately gets spotted so that he can lead the watch on a merry chase through the narrow alleyways and lanes of his home. Unsurprisingly, he is never caught.

MINIONS OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR

BAT SWARM

CR 2 (XP 600)

A multitude of small, black, furry bats hurtle from the darkness.

N Diminutive animal (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15, Sense Motive +2

Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

ACP 0; Fly +12

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; **CMD** – (+4 size, +2 Dex)

Immune weapon damage, critical hits, flanking, any spell that targets a specific number of creatures (except mind-affecting effects); **Weakness** area of affect attacks or spells deal an extra 50% damage.

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

hp 13 (3 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** –

Melee swarm (reach 0 ft.) (1d6 plus distraction)

Atk Options distraction (DC 11), wounding

Distraction (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a swarm must make a DC 11 Fortitude saving throw or be nauseated (affected creatures are unable to take any action requiring attention; they may only take a single move action per round) for 1 round.

Wounding (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped with a DC 10 Heal check or the application of any cure spells or some other healing magic.

Abilities Str 3, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4

SQ swarm traits

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above



RAT SWARM

CR 2 (XP 600)

A squirming mass of tiny black rats scurries towards you.

N Tiny animal (swarm)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +6, Climb +1, Stealth +14, Swim +10

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** – (+2 size, +2 Dex)

Immune weapon damage, critical hits, flanking, any spell that targets a specific number of creatures (except mind-affecting effects); **Weakness** area of affect attacks or spells deal an extra 50% damage.

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

hp 16 (3 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** –

Melee swarm (reach 0 ft.) (1d6 plus disease)

Atk Options distraction (DC 12)

Distraction (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a swarm must make a DC 12 Fortitude saving throw or be nauseated (affected creatures are unable to take any action requiring attention; they may only take a single move action per round) for 1 round.

Abilities Str 2, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 2

SQ swarm traits

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above

WOLF

CR 1 (XP 400)

This powerful, gray-furred canine has fearsome jaws and piercing yellow eyes.

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

Speed 50 ft.

ACP 0; Stealth +6

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip) (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above plus Survival +1 (+5 using scent to track)

VAMPIRES IN BATTLE

Even though each vampire has its own distinctive combat style, they share several common traits. Use these notes with the NPC write-ups on pages 12 – 19.

CHANGE SHAPE

All vampires can take the form of a dire bat or wolf as if it had cast *beast shape II*.

- A vampire taking the form of a dire bat gains: fly 40 ft. (good), +4 size bonus to Strength, -2 penalty to Dexterity and a +1 natural armour bonus.
- A vampire assuming the form of a wolf gains: the trip special attack, scent, a +2 size bonus to Strength and a +2 natural armour bonus.

CREATE SPAWN

Vampires can create spawn of the same type (humanoid, monstrous humanoid and so on), from those it slays with its blood drain or energy drain attacks.

- The victim rises in 1d4 days.
- The new vampire is under the command of its creator until its master's destruction or until the vampire frees the enslaved spawn.
- A vampire can control spawn equal to twice its Hit Dice.
- A freed spawn can never be enslaved again.

VAMPIRE WEAKNESSES

All vampires share the following weaknesses:

- Vampires cannot tolerate the strong odour of garlic and will not enter an area laced with it.
- Vampires recoil from mirrors and strongly presented holy symbols. These things don't harm it, merely keeping it at bay. The vampire must stay at least 5 feet away from the mirror or holy symbol and cannot touch or make melee attacks against the creature holding the object. Holding a vampire at bay is a standard action. After 1 round, the vampire can overcome its revulsion with a DC 25 Will save and act normally. The vampire must repeat this check each round.
- Vampires cannot enter a private home or dwelling unless invited in by someone with the authority to do so.
- Reducing a vampire's hit points to 0 incapacitates it, but does not kill it. Instead, the vampire assumes *gaseous form* and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin home within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can normally travel up to 9 miles in 2 hours). Once at rest in its coffin, the vampire is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points a round.
- Exposing a vampire to direct sunlight staggers it on round one of exposure and destroys it utterly on the second consecutive round of exposure.
- Immersing a vampire in running water inflicts damage equal to one-third of its maximum hit points. A vampire reduced to 0 hit points in this fashion is destroyed.
- Driving a wooden stake through a helpless vampire's heart (a full-round action) instantly slays it. The vampire returns to life if the stake is removed, unless the head is also severed and anointed with holy water.



DEATH IN THE MIST (EL 12; XP 19,200)

This encounter takes place when the PCs stray too close to the nameless fortress below which lurks the *Crimson Altar of Kulan-Wyr*. Daveth Goninan unleashes a swarm of undead guardians to deal with the interlopers. This attack likely takes place during the night at the PCs' campsite.

The undead are merciless, but cunning, in their attack. The skeletal champions stop 100 ft. away, waiting in the mist for the vampire spawn to attack. Characters on watch can make a hearing-based Perception check (-10 penalty for distance) opposed by the skeletal champion's Stealth check to hear them approach.

When the vampire spawn materialise, read:

Suddenly, from the swirling mist, a pale skinned human materialises. He has long claw-like fingernails and two long fangs protruding from this mouth. He looks into your eyes and you feel your will begin to snap.

When the skeletal champions emerge from the mist, read:

Four skeletons clad in archaic breastplates and carrying long, well-balanced scythes run from the mist straight toward you.

The combat begins when the vampire spawn materialise and attempt to dominate any guards. Refer to Tactics for more information.

TACTICS

The undead have orders to incapacitate all attackers so that any survivors may be sacrificed on the *Crimson Altar of Kuran-Wyr*. While the skeletal champions follow these orders (not finishing off downed foes) the vampire spawn are starved of fresh blood and forget themselves once combat begins.

Vampire Spawn: The vampire spawns use the light mist as cover to approach the party in *gaseous form*. Initially they materialise and target any guards with *dominate*. If this works, they command their new slaves to silence and await the arrival of the skeletal champions.

Once battle begins, they wade into combat, infernal hunger in their eyes, focusing on dominated opponents first. They use their energy drain to weaken foes and if a vampire spawn knocks a foe unconscious (or otherwise incapacitates it) it uses its blood drain ability to sate its bloodlust and to heal its wounds (which likely kills its victim).

Skeletal Champions: Marching forth from the darkness and mist, the skeletal champions target obvious warrior types, cutting foes down with maniacal glee.

The skeletal champions use Power Attack, unless their opponent's prove difficult to hit, positioning themselves for

Cleave and Great Cleave whenever possible. They use Step Up to keep enemy spellcasters threatened.

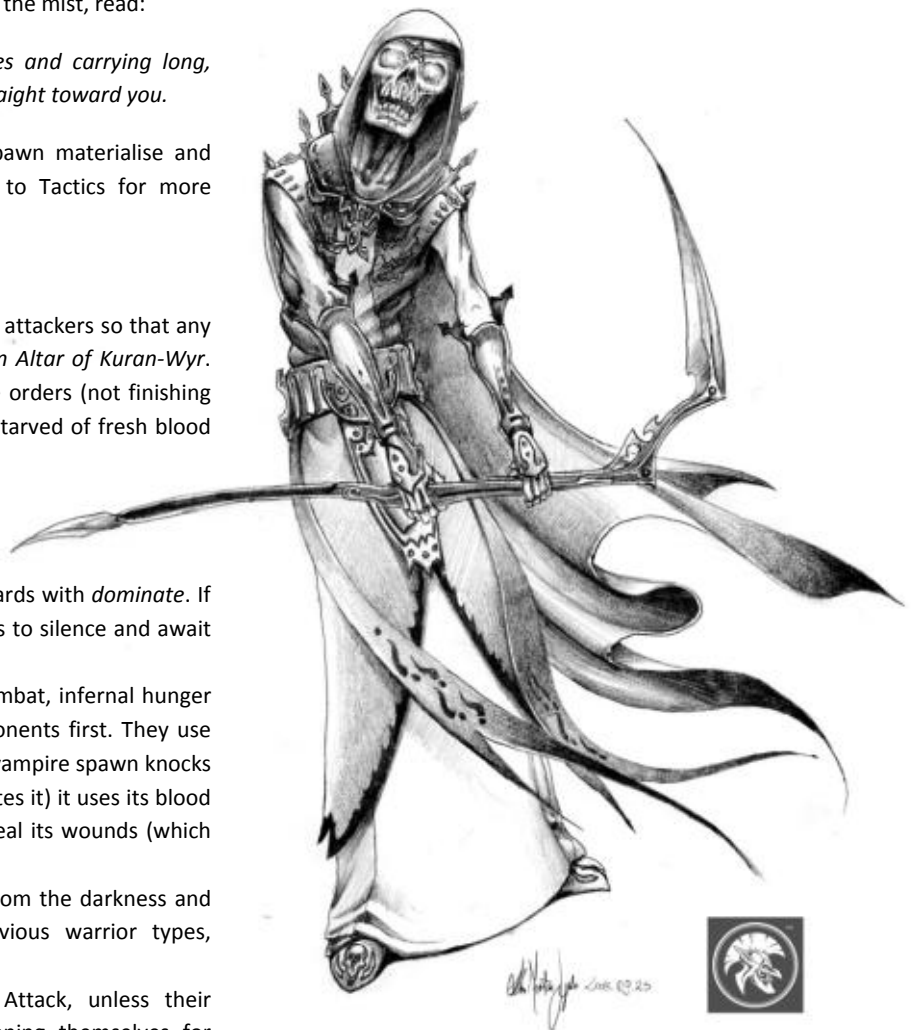
AREA FEATURES

As well as any GM-determined features, the PCs' campsite has the following features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Mist: A light mist shrouds the battlefield, obscuring all sight beyond 5 ft. Creatures more than 10 ft. away have concealment (20% miss chance). Creatures more than 100 ft. away have total concealment (50% miss chance) and cannot be located by sight.

Ethereal Watcher: PCs able to see into the ethereal plane automatically notice Daveth atop his nightmare steed observing the fight. If any PC enters the ethereal plane, Daveth immediately (and gleefully) attacks. Refer to the Ethereal Watcher entry and page 14 for more details.



ETHEREAL WATCHER (EL 13; XP 25,600)

If the PCs camp within nine miles of the fortress, Daveth accompanies his minions to battle. To observe the battle, he commands his steed to use its *ethereal jaunt* ability and then advances close to the campsite to determine the PCs' battle-might for himself.

Once the PCs have despatched his servants, but before they have a proper chance to rest and recover, Daveth appears without warning behind the most powerful divine spellcaster in the group and attacks.

Daveth fights from the back of his mount using Greater Disarm and Greater Trip to devastating effect. Combat Reflexes allows him six attack of opportunity every round and he uses these to stop spellcasting and to batter enemies attempting to close on him. He focuses his attacks on enemies with the ability to turn undead.

The nightmare concentrates its attacks on a single foe, using Cleave whenever possible. Daveth is immune to the sickening effect of its smoke ability (which it uses liberally). If Daveth is slain, or if it has less than 30 hp the nightmare *plane shifts* away.

KULAN-WYR CHAMPION (4) CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Dressed in an archaic breastplate this skeleton carries a large scythe.

Human skeletal champion warrior 12

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive +0

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; Step Up

ACP -3; **Acrobatics** -1 (-5 jumping), **Stealth** -1

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 29

(+2 Dex, +7 armour [+1 breastplate], +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), cold

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6 (channel resistance +4)

hp 104 (14 HD); **DR** bludgeoning/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +17

Melee mwk scythe +19/+14/+9 (2d4+6/19-20 x4) or

Melee 2 claws +17 each (1d4+4)

Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack (-4 attack, +8 damage [+12 with scythe])

Abilities Str 19, Dex 14, Con -, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ undead traits

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Power Attack, Step Up, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +11

Languages Common

Gear as above

Daveth's statistics (and those of his mount) appear on page 14.

GREATER VAMPIRE SPAWN (4) CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This emaciated creature's muscles bunch and writhe beneath its taut, pale flesh. Needle-sharp fangs fill its mouth and long, wicked fingernails caked with blood turn its hands into vicious weapons.

LE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Blind Fight; Perception +13, Sense Motive +10

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 10 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) A vampire spawn can assume *gaseous form* (AC 13, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire spawn climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; **Stealth** +18

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 19

(+3 Dex, +6 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** resurrection vulnerability, vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Resurrection Vulnerability (Su) A *raise dead* or similar spell destroys (Will negates) a vampire spawn. Using the spell this way does not require a material component.

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7 (channel resistance +2)

hp 34 (4 HD); fast healing 2; **DR** silver/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

Melee slam +6 (1d4+3 plus energy drain)

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gains 1 negative levels (DC 16 Fortitude restores). A vampire spawn can use this ability once per round.

Atk Options Blind Fight, blood drain

Blood Drain (Su) A vampire spawn can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If it establishes or maintains a pin, it drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). The spawn heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each round it drains blood.

Special Actions dominate

Dominate (Su) A vampire spawn can crush a humanoid's will (DC 16 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Abilities Str 16, Dex 16, Con -, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 19

SQ shadowless

Feats Blind Fight, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above plus Disguise +11, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +9

Languages Common

HIRED THUGS (EL 10; XP 12,800)

In this encounter, a small band of hired thugs attack the PCs. While they are not loyal to the Brethren – they don't really know who they are working for – the group do like gold and do their best to carry out their orders. Before battle begins, refer to the Scrying sidebar.

The thugs choose an empty street as the place to launch their ambush. When they attack, read:

Two hulking half-orcs, holding falchions menacingly, appear from the shadows. Across the street, a finely dressed elf holding a rapier advances confidently toward you. Behind him, an attractive female elf chuckles softly as she raises her hands.

Kalaen Korran and Lafithel Traivanna lead the thugs. The unpredictable, impulsive pair are lovers and ferociously loyal to one another. Lafithel is slightly unhinged while Kalaen embraces danger.

TACTICS

The thugs have worked together before and are used to fighting together.

Hired Thugs: Brutal, unsophisticated combatants, the half-orcs wade into battle trusting to their skills with their falchions to see them through. Before they enter battle, though, they hurl tanglefoot bags at the nearest opponents. They then engage any character entangled in the bag's contents. They fight on until their hit points drop below 20, at which time they flee.

Kalaen Korran: Intelligent and graceful in battle, Kalaen seeks out an opponent worthy of his blade. If possible, he flanks his enemy to gain the benefit of sneak attack and precise strike. Before battle he drinks his *elixir of tumbling*.

If defeat seems inevitable, he retreats, using his *dust of illusion* once out of sight to assume the appearance of a beggar.

Lafithel Traivanna: Lafithel prefer to stay out of combat using her spells from range to confuse and confound her foes.

Before battle, she protects herself with *mage armour* and *fly*. If the PCs seem particularly capable, she also uses her scrolls of *see invisibility* and *blink*.

She starts with *confusion* (preferable before her allies enter combat) and uses it repeatedly on those resisting its effects. She uses *deep slumber* in preference to *lightning bolt* (unless her

foes seem immune to *sleep*) targeting rogues and fighters as she knows they are the most weak-willed of her foes.

AREA FEATURES

As well as any GM-determined features, the ambush site (a street empty of witnesses) has the following features of note:

Illumination: Dim light emanating from a number of shuttered windows (creatures have concealment [20% miss chance] from opponents without darkvision).

Empty Barrels and Boxes: A few empty boxes and barrels stand against the walls of the houses overlooking the street. Characters can leap atop a barrel or box (DC 12 Acrobatics check) to gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks).

Onlookers: Once battle breaks out, several shuttered windows open and the occupants watch the battle in shock. None attempt to aid the combatants but several do call loudly for the watch.

HIRED THUGS (2)

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Hulking half-orcs clad in fine studded leather armour clutch large falchions and grin menacingly at you.

Male half-orc warrior 5/expert 4

NE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8, Sense Motive +3

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +10, Climb +12, Stealth +12, Swim +6

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 22

(+1 Dex, +5 armour [+2 studded leather])

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

hp 73 (9 HD); ferocity

Ferocity (Ex) Once per day, when a thug is brought below 0 hp, but not killed, he can fight on for one more round as if disabled before falling unconscious (unless healed to 1 or more hit points).

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +11

Melee +1 falchion +12/+7 (2d4+5/15-20)

Melee unarmed strike +11/+6 (1d3+3)

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +9/+4 (1d4+3/19-20)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of invisibility* (2), tanglefoot bag, thunderstone

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

Feats Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +10

Languages Common, Orc

Gear as above plus 2 daggers, belt pouch, traveller's outfit, 17 gp, 24 sp

SCRYING

Before battle begins, Tregereth Faull attempts to scry the party. If she has met the PCs she uses *greater scrying* (DC 22 Will negates) against an obvious fighter or rogue so that she can observe the battle. If she has not met any of the PCs, she instead scrys a Hired Thug.

CAPTURE

If the PCs capture one of their attackers, they can attempt to uncover the attack's motivation. A DC 18 Intimidate check against any of the PCs' attackers earns the information below. Any PC offering to let the thugs go unharmed gains a +4 bonus to the check.

If successful, the PCs learn that a one-armed dwarf (Terl in disguise) hired the thugs to "settle a score" with "his old enemies." They were well paid for their efforts, but have already spent their considerable advance in an orgy of booze and self-indulgence.

KALAEEN KORRAN CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Lithe and slim, this elven warrior wears a mithral chain shirt and wields a worn, but honed rapier.

Male elf fighter 5/rogue 2/duelist 1
CN Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13 (trapfinding), Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +15, Climb +11, Ride +6, Stealth +15, Swim +7

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 23; Dodge, Mobility, canny defence

(+5 Dex, +5 armour [+1 mithral shirt], +1 dodge)

Immune sleep

Fort +6, **Ref** +10 (evasion), **Will** +2; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear

hp 63 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9

Melee +1 rapier +14/+9 (1d6+6/18-20)

Ranged mwk dagger (range 10 ft.) +13 (1d4+3/19-20)

Atk Options bleeding attack, precise strike, sneak attack +1d6

Bleeding Attack (Ex) When Kalaen hits a target with a sneak attack the target also suffers 1 point of bleed damage. Bleed damage from this ability does not stack with itself and occurs at the start of the target's turn. The bleeding can be stopped with a DC 15 Heal check or by the application of any effect that heals hit point damage.

Precise Strike (Ex) Kalaen adds +1 to his damage roll when using his rapier or dagger. This ability only works against living creatures with a discernable anatomy and he can only be wielding one weapon to deal the extra damage.

Combat Gear *dust of illusion, elixir of tumbling, potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ armour training 1, canny defence, rogue talent (bleeding attack), weapon training (light blades +1)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialisation (rapier)

Skills as above plus Appraise +6, Perform (dance) +4

Languages Common, Elven, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, fine clothing, belt pouch, 13 gp, 10 gp, 10 sp

DEVELOPMENT

If any of the thugs survive the battle with the PCs, they flee into the poorest part of town. Unfortunately, there they encounter Terl Yarg, who beats them to death. Their crushed and battered bodies are discovered the next morning. Their brutal deaths are the talk of the slums and taverns the next day, and the PCs automatically hear of the news. If the PCs investigate, they discover the bodies have already been disposed of.

AELLIAN CYELRAE CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Female elf sorcerer (fey) 8

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft., woodland stride

Woodland Stride (Ex) Lafithel can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Thorns, briars and other undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affect her.

ACP 0

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 17

(+3 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*])

Immune sleep

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 38 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk dagger +8 (1d4-1/19-20)

Melee Touch laughing touch +7 (creature touched laughs for 1 round and can only take 1 move action; creatures affected by *laughing touch* are immune for 24 hours)

Atk Options laughing touch 6/day

Special Actions Heighten Spell

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11; spell penetration +10, ranged touch +7)

4th (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 21)

3rd (6/day)—*deep slumber* (DC 20), *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 16)

2nd (7/day)—*daze monster* (DC 19), *hideous laughter* (DC 19), *invisibility*, *web* (DC 15)

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *disguise self*, *entangle* (DC 14), *mage armour*, *mount*, obscuring mist

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of extend*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of blink*, *see invisibility* and *dimension door*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16

SQ *bloodline arcana*

Feats Eschew Materials^B, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative^B, Heighten Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Spellcraft +13 (+15 to identify magic items), Use Magic Device +14

Languages Auran, Common, Elven, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, 15 gp, 12 sp

RUINED REPUTATIONS

As well as unleashing thugs and undead minions against the PCs, the Brethren also work quietly to destroy their reputations, with the long-term goal of forcing them to relocate somewhere else. It should quickly become obvious to the PCs that some dark agency wishes them ill. The GM should look to combine these minor events described below with Hired Thugs (page 24) and Skulking Death (page 28).

BARROOM BRAWL

While the PCs are enjoying a quiet drink in their favourite hostelry, a brawl suddenly erupts at a nearby table. The fight quickly spreads and soon chaos reigns throughout the taproom. The event is staged, if the PCs get involved, Terl (disguised as a simple labourer) drops some dark reaver powder into their drinks.

Dark Reaver Powder: DC 18 Fortitude; *Onset* 10 minutes; *Frequency* 1/minute for 6 minutes; *Effect* 1d3 Con damage and 1 Str damage; *Cure* 2 consecutive saves.

DISEASED BEDDING

If the PCs are staying in a tavern, Terl bribes, blackmails or intimidates a staff member into switching their bedding for blankets and sheets infected with bubonic plague.

The individual doing so also catches the disease, eventually dying if not treated. If the victim survives, she describes a man (Terl using change shape) with a huge wart on the side of his face as the person who forced/bribed her to change the sheets. While Terl could switch the sheets himself, he wants to lay a false lead for the PCs – namely the man with the huge wart.

Bubonic Plague: DC 17 Fortitude; *Onset* 1d3 days; *Frequency* 1/day; *Effect* 1d4 Con damage and 1 Cha damage and target is fatigued; *Cure* 2 consecutive saves.

FIRE

This encounter can take place at either the PCs' home or at the tavern in which they are staying. As they sleep, Terl uses his impressive stealth and vampiric abilities to set a small fire as near to their sleeping chambers as possible. (Note, if the PCs rest in their own home he cannot enter unless invited to do so and sets fire to the roof instead). He doesn't expect the fire to kill them, but sets it the night before his hired thugs (see Hired Thugs) attack. Dealing with the fire disrupts the PCs sleep, which could have detrimental effect on spellcasters' ability to relearn spells.

Fire: Characters caught in a burning building may catch on fire. Every round spent in a burning area, the character can make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. If he does catch on fire, he immediately takes 1d6 fire damage. In each subsequent

round he must make another DC 15 Reflex save or take another 1d6 fire damage. A successful save indicates the he is no longer on fire. A character on fire must make a DC 15 Reflex save for each item of flammable clothing and equipment worn. Failure indicates the item takes the same damage as the character.

Smoke: A character breathing in heavy smoke must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15 + 1 per previous check) or spend the round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Smoke also obscures vision giving concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it.

Skulking Death: If the group is particularly capable, the GM may also run the Skulking Death encounter. The undead detailed therein do not breath and are therefore immune to the choking and coughing effects of the smoke. In this case increase the encounter's EL by 1 (EL 11; XP 12,800).

Consequences: Without prompt action, severe damage renders the building uninhabitable. If the PCs flee the fire without collecting their equipment, some of it may be lost or destroyed (at the GM's discretion).

FRAMED

Unbeknownst to them, the PCs have been framed for a series of high-profile crimes. (This encounter works best if foreshadowed with news of the crimes taking place over a week or so). Several nobles have had very recognisable pieces of jewellery and art stolen. In the course of several robberies, servants and guards have been brutally slain.

The authorities receive an anonymous tip that the PCs are responsible and that they are storing their ill-gotten loot in their chambers. A large squad of guards appears to arrest the PCs. If the PCs resist, they can easily defeat the guards. (However, these actions will bring about swift and dire retribution from the town's authorities).

Arrested PCs are taken to the town's gaol for trial and punishment. Unless the PC can convincingly prove his innocence, (using magic or the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses [but not the other PCs]) he is found guilty and ordered to pay a 500 gp fine. If he refuses to do so, the court orders his right hand to struck off.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Terl (in the form of one of the PCs) mugs an innocent passerby in a well-to-do part of town, in full view of several witnesses. Pretending to be scared off by the witnesses, he dashes away but not before the witnesses get a good look at him.

When the watch gets involved the excellent descriptions given by several witnesses enables them to quickly find the PC in question. Refer to Framed to handle the watch's involvement.

SKULKING DEAD (EL 10; XP 9,600)

In response to the PCs' investigations, the Brethren decide to sacrifice one of their lesser vampire servants and a few spawn to throw these persistent troublemakers off the scent.

This encounter takes place at night. Before the fight begins, Cadan and his minions slaughter all those in the house of the roof Cadan chooses to fight from. Afterwards, the vampire spawn use *gaseous form* to surround the party before attacking.

When the vampire spawn emerge, read:

Four emaciated creatures step from the shadows. Each has pale

skin, two needle-sharp fangs protruding from their mouths and wickedly sharp fingernails caked in wet, glistening blood. Each is clad in old, worn but freshly blood-spattered clothes.

When the PCs first see Cadan Negus, read:

A bald man emerges from the shadows atop a nearby house. Clad in fine robes, fresh blood covers his face and drips down to mar his otherwise pristine clothes. Unarmed, he appears lithe and muscular.

CADAN NEGUS

CR 8 (XP 4,800)

Male human vampire sorcerer (destined) 7

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18, Sense Motive +13

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) Cadan can assume *gaseous form* (AC 15, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Cadan climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; Fly +4 (+12 in *gaseous form*), Stealth +12

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 21; Dodge, +2 when surprised and flat-footed

(+4 Dex, +1 deflection (*ring of protection* +1), +1 dodge, +7 natural [*amulet of natural armour* +1])

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** resurrection vulnerability, vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9 (channel resistance +4); +2 when surprised and flat-footed

hp 76 (7 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** magic and silver/10

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to 0 hit points, Cadan assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Cadan must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Cadan is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

Melee slam +5 (1d4+2 plus 2 negative levels)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, blood drain, create spawn, energy drain

Blood Drain (Su) Cadan can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Cadan heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his

full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Cadan can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Cadan's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 18 Fortitude restores). Cadan can use this ability once per round.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, dominate, touch of destiny (8/day)

Change Shape (Su) Cadan can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Cadan can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Cadan can crush a humanoid's will (DC 20 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Touch of Destiny (Sp) Cadan can touch a creature (as a standard action) giving it a +3 insight bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12 (+16 casting defensively or grappled), bloodline arcana)

3rd (5/day)—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *fireball* (DC 18), *protection from energy*

2nd (7/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *blur*, *mirror image*, *web* (DC 17)

1st (8/day)—*alarm*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *shield*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Bloodline Arcana When Cadan casts a spell with range personal he gains a luck bonus to saving throws equal to the spell's level for one round.

Combat Gear *wand of scorching ray* (20 charges)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con —, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 20

SQ fated, shadowless

Feats Ability Focus (dominate)^B, Alertness^B, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Eschew Materials^B, Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Magical Aptitude, Skill Focus (Knowledge [history])^B, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Toughness^B

Skills as above plus Bluff +13, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +15, Spellcraft +14, Use Magic Device +20

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1

TACTICS

If possible, Cadan and his servants attack when they have the element of surprise. They favour striking in a deserted street or dark alleyway where little help can reach the PCs.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (4)

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

This emaciated creature's muscles bunch and writhe beneath its taut, pale flesh. Needle-sharp fangs fill its mouth and long, wicked fingernails caked with blood turn its hands into vicious weapons.

LE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Blind Fight; Perception +11, Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft., *gaseous form* (fly 10 ft. [perfect]), *spider climb* (climb 20 ft.)

Gaseous Form (Su) A vampire spawn can assume *gaseous form* (AC 11, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) A vampire spawn climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

ACP 0; Stealth +16

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **Weakness** resurrection vulnerability, vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Resurrection Vulnerability (Su) A *raise dead* or similar spell destroys (Will negates) a vampire spawn. Using the spell this way does not require a material component.

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5 (channel resistance +2)

hp 26 (4 HD); fast healing 2; **DR** silver/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4

Melee slam +4 (1d4+1 plus energy drain)

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gains 1 negative levels (DC 14 Fortitude restores). A vampire spawn can use this ability once per round.

Atk Options Blind Fight, blood drain

Blood Drain (Su) A vampire spawn can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If it establishes or maintains a pin, it drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). The spawn heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each round it drains blood.

Special Actions dominate

Dominate (Su) A vampire spawn can crush a humanoid's will (DC 14 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con –, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 15

SQ shadowless

Feats Blind Fight, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +7

Languages Common

Vampire Spawn: The vampire spawn wade into combat, infernal glee in their eyes. They focus on melee combatants using their energy drain to weaken their foes. If a vampire spawn knocks a foe unconscious (or otherwise incapacitates it) next round it uses its blood drain ability to heal its wounds.

The vampire spawns fight until destroyed.

Cadan Negus: Cadan takes position atop a nearby building, using this as a vantage point to hurl *fireballs* and *webs* down upon the party. Before combat, he casts *mage armour*, *protection from energy (fire)*, *protection from good*, *shield* and *mirror image* in that order.

He uses *web* to split up the party (as his minions can move through it using *gaseous form*), but saves his dominate ability for PCs reaching his rooftop vantage point.

AREA FEATURES

The area has the following features as well as any designed by the GM:

Illumination: Dim light (creatures have concealment [20% miss chance] from opponents without darkvision).

Rooftop: Cadan stands upon a flat roof 30 ft. above the street. Characters can scale the building's walls (DC 20 Climb check) to reach him. A 2 ft. high parapet runs around the roof, providing cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).



WHISPERS, RUMOURS & EVENTS

While the GM could simply use the Brethren of the Crimson Altar as a group of vampires the PCs meet and slay in short order, it's much more fun to insert the various members of the group into the PCs' lives in subtle ways. Perhaps they seek out Tregereth Faull to learn the location of a ruined monastery or to discern the properties of a recovered magic item. Alternatively, they could be in the audience at one of Margh Vosper's performances or be robbed by Terl Yarg.

This section presents a number of rumours and events the GM can use to subtly introduce the Brethren and their activities to the PCs. You can roll on the table or pick a suitable entry.

D20

1	The PCs are resting in an upmarket inn or tavern when Margh Vosper makes an entry. Surrounded by sycophants unaware of the bard's true horrific identity they each vie for his attentions.	successful adventuring party) is overdue from their last adventure. They had been searching for an elder artefact – The Crimson Altar – and recently proclaimed they had discovered its resting place.
2	The PCs hear rumours that the slums are particularly infested with rats and other vermin at the moment. The authorities are offering a bounty of 1 cp per rat corpse.	11 Several denizens of the slums have reported hearing strange sounds emanating from a pauper's graveyard. (This isn't related to the Brethren, but if the reports lead to the belief a vampire lairs in the town, the Brethren take steps to destroy those responsible – a mid-level necromancer harvesting body parts for his own blasphemous creations).
3	The PCs are strolling in the city at night when a beautiful, impeccably dressed woman walks past them. She is trailed by several porters carrying boxes and bags containing her new purchases. This is Tregereth Faull on one of her late-night shopping sprees.	12 Travellers report that packs of wolves have been coming unusually close to town – some (at night) even sniffing about at the base of the town's wall! Why they are doing this is a matter of much conjecture (and concern).
4	Cadan Negus is out hunting at night. He is not as discrete as the Brethren. The PCs either come across the drained corpse of one of his victims or hear him assault someone in a nearby street. He flees large groups of adventurers, but returns with a band of spawn to slay those that have spied him.	13 The body of a rather unpleasant thug was recently discovered in his home. The attack has the Watch baffled because the door was barred and the windows were shuttered from the inside. Rumours suggest the thug had been beaten to death and completely drained of blood.
5	The PCs are invited by their new patron to watch one of Margh Vosper's legendary performances before discussing the business at hand.	14 The occupants of a tenement in the slum district complain of noises coming from below their cellar. Investigation reveals a small nest of vampire spawn.
6	Several minor nobles and rich merchants have recently been the victims of daring robberies. In each case, expensive jewellery is missing and the owners all offer rewards for its safe return.	15 Mists have started to gather nightly around a nearby river or other prominent landmark; locals whisper that the mists are not natural.
7	The PC are looking for a reliable, knowledgeable sage and Tregereth Faull is recommended to them by another adventuring group.	16 The number of muggings in the seedier parts of town is slowly increasing. Yesterday, a thief lurking in an alleyway was beaten to death by someone who possessed incredible strength.
8	The PCs are resting in a tavern when swarms of rats start to inundate the taproom from the cellar. (One of the Brethren is hoping the chaos makes it easy to spirit away a victim).	17 A gigantic bat – a dire bat – has been seen flying over the town; several dogs have been taken, but its lair remains unknown.
9	The bats dwelling in the town's abandoned buildings are becoming more aggressive than usual. Although no one has yet been killed by their depredations they have been spotted forming increasingly large swarms.	18 A local sage has been found killed by powerful magic. The sage was known to own several rare tomes of ancient, forbidden lore. They are now missing.
10	The Company of the Golden Blade (a moderately	19 A deranged prophet has taken to wandering the markets and bazaars ranting about "He Who Sees All." He is clearly insane and widely derided as a mad fool.
		20 The PCs get into a barroom brawl and one of the barkeeps – a middle-aged man named Gawen Kersey (actually Terl Yarg in one of his many guises) – breaks up the fight. Spectacularly (but without using any of his vampiric powers).

FELLOWSHIP OF THE BLACKENED OAK

Allied with a power-hungry wyrm obsessed with finding and claiming her birthright, the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak lurks in the shadowed depths of the forest. A powerful alliance of convenience and mutual interests, woe betide any who invade the Fellowship's woodland home.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BLACKENED OAK

Allied with a power-hungry dragon obsessed with finding her slain parent's lair, the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak makes a formidable enemy.

An unlikely band of disparate individuals, the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak comprises the following individuals:

- **Aurakraul** (LE female young adult green dragon): Crafty and mighty, this vicious green dragon is obsessed with her dead parents' lost lair and jealously defends her territory.
- **Dhoean Tahlthar** (NE male half-elf bard 4/ranger 4): Charming and completely amoral, Dhoean is interested only in himself and his base desires.
- **Holg** (NE male half-orc ranger 8): This taciturn, hulking fellow is passionately devoted to his wife, Vola, but is also capable of fearsome acts of violence.
- **Lafithel Traivanna** (CN female elf sorcerer [draconic {gold}] 8): an unpredictable, divisive and suspicious woman, Lafithel is now considering abandoning the Fellowship.
- **Vola** (NE female half-orc druid 8): Devoted to Holg, the woodlands and the Fellowship – in that order – Vola is the group's spiritual backbone.

Wary of those encroaching on their woodland lair, the Fellowship keep a vigilant watch for intruders. Wandering adventurers, desperate bandits, hunters and even loggers have all fallen prey to the group's depredations. Aurakraul rarely takes part in such skirmishes. The Fellowship knows that news of a powerful dragon in the area would inevitably mean many groups of glory-seeking adventurers descending on the forest in

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

The *Fellowship of the Blackened Oak* has been designed to fit easily into almost any GM's home campaign. Dwelling in almost any wilderness area fringed by outposts of civilisation, they rarely leave their woodland home. A few facets of each member's background – the identity of Dhoean's father and his lord for example – remain deliberately vague to allow the GM to customise things to better fit his own campaign.

Each of the band's members benefits from an extensive write-up. This enables the GM to either use the Fellowship as written or to employ individual NPCs as desired. Thus, for example, Aurakraul could be used as a simple rampaging dragon while Dhoean Tahlthar could serve as a woodland guide or black-hearted bard.

Of course, in a pinch any of the humanoid members of the group could also serve as a short-term replacement player character or NPC followers (with a quick alignment change!)

search of battle-wealth and fame. The few survivors of such actions, however, are often brought to Aurakraul for interrogation. None survive such sessions, and the dragon always eats well thereafter...

GOALS

Operating under Aurakraul's leadership, the group's nominal aim is to find her parent's lair (and the treasure within, of course). As detailed in each member's write-up, some of the Fellowship are more dedicated to this goal than others and some have their own agendas.

LOCALES FREQUENTED

The Fellowship dwells in a semi-ruined tower hidden in the deepest, densest reaches of the forest. Set out over two floors, the humanoid members dwell upstairs while Aurakraul lairs on the ground floor. The small network of cellars and storage rooms beneath the tower are crammed full of the mundane equipment taken from those falling prey to the Fellowship while the pitted and yellow-stained bones of those consumed by Aurakraul partially fill a sinkhole behind the keep.

The whole Fellowship is rarely here, however, as members often walk the forest, searching for Aurakraul's legacy, hunting for food or keeping a watch for encroaching adventurers and other folk whose business brings them into the wilderness. In particular, Holg and Vola often disappear for days at a time to be alone with each other.

Dhoean Tahlthar and Lafithel Traivanna also occasionally visit the villages and small towns surrounding the forest. (Dhoean in search of news and Lafithel to purchase such small items of luxury that she cannot do without). It is likely that the PCs may first encounter the Fellowship in this manner. Dhoean in particular keeps an eye open for adventurers planning to explore the forest, offering his assistance and advice to those openly planning such expeditions. Alternatively, Dhoean could try to deflect the PCs from their exploration by sharing news of far-flung treasures or recent events such as goblin raids, wars and such.

HOOK: THE LOST JOURNAL

The PCs may come to the forest after discovering fragments of Sehhar Ilrailias's lost journal (pages 8 and 18-19). The document tells the story of the Crimson Sword's defeat of Aurakraul's parents. If the Fellowship learns the PCs possess such a document, they stop at nothing to gain possession of it.

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BLACKENED OAK

The Fellowship of the Blackened Oak haunts the edge of civilisation, occasionally sending Dhoean or Lafithel into surrounding villages and towns for supplies and news. At home in the wilderness, the band wanders the hidden dells and trackless depths of the forest in search of Aurakraul's legacy and any other hidden treasures they should stumble across.

Encounters with the Fellowship do not always have to end with the clash of blades and the screams of the dying.

LAFITHEL (EL 7; XP 3,200)

Having wandered off from her comrades to gather her thoughts, Lafithel is probably no match for a prepared band of doughty adventurers. Thus, if challenged, she attempts to parley with strangers. If battle breaks out, she uses her powers to flee as quickly as possible. If the PCs seem peaceful – or at least not downright hostile – she tries to convince them to aid her leave the Fellowship. She has no problem betraying her former comrades.

AURAKRAUL (EL 11, XP 12,800)

Flying above her leafy domain, Aurakraul constantly searches for her parents' lair. She claims a great swath of woodland around her lair as her territory and jealously guards it. If she perceives the PCs, she may attack if they seem easy prey. Alternatively, she informs the Fellowship about the intruders who then begin tracking the interlopers.

It is possible that the PCs will not even realise they are in the presence of a dragon if Aurakraul is very well concealed.

HOLG AND VOLA (EL 9, XP 6,400)

The married couple sometimes slip away from their companions to spend days wandering the forest. Although the two are thoroughly black-hearted, they love the primal beauty of the forest and fight fiercely to protect it. Unless they clearly outmatch any they come across, they do not fight larger groups preferring to watch and wait. (Such waiting goes hard on Holg and Vola often has to sooth him with soft words and platitudes).

THE FELLOWSHIP (EL 11, XP 12,800)

Abroad in the wood as a group, the Fellowship is a danger to any they meet. Not above a spot of banditry, the Fellowship delights in setting upon and

capturing interlopers into their domain. If they defeat their enemies, they do not slay them out of hand preferring to take them to Aurakraul as tribute and a sign of good friendship. Humans in particular brought before Aurakraul have little chance of mercy – the best they could hope for is to be eaten quickly.

AURAKRAUL AND THE FELLOWSHIP (EL 13, XP 25,600)

Aurakraul and the Fellowship are rarely encountered together. The only two places where this is likely to occur is the abandoned tower the Fellowship uses as their base of operations or the lair of Aurakraul's parents.

GM Note: This is a complicated encounter. All the NPCs have a variety of spells, abilities and magic items to use in battle and therefore extensive preparation is (sadly) necessary.



PERSONA: AURAKRAUL

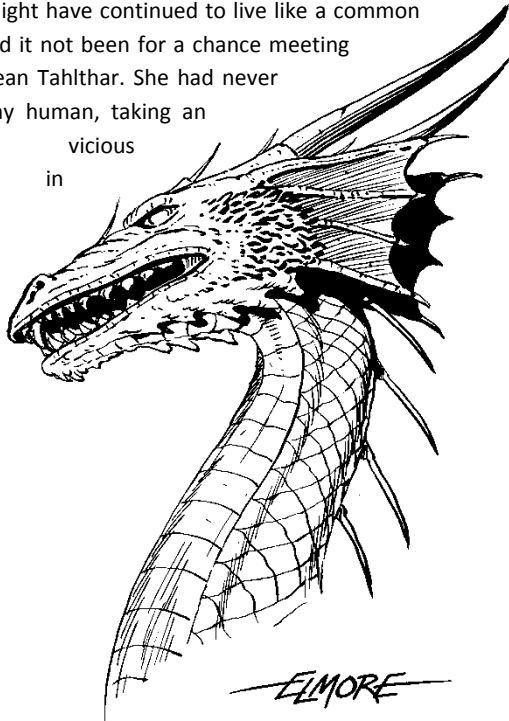
Steeped in battle-cunning and decidedly vicious, this green dragon jealously defends her territory, and is obsessed with her dead parents' hoard.

A vicious and conniving green dragon, Aurakraul remains intent on discovering the truth of her past. She has vague recollections of humans in gleaming mail and plate, chanted magic and the roars of dragons in pain. A chance meeting with Dhoean Tahlthar enabled her to begin to reclaim her birthright, and now she schemes to uncover her past and to take vengeance on the adventurers that orphaned her and those like them. To this end, the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak slowly coalesced around her, named for the most vivid part of her otherwise-murky memory of her parents' lair.

Background: Aurakraul's background largely remains a mystery even to her. Her earliest memories are of a company of adventurers attacking her parents in a misty, shrouded grove. Her most powerful recollection was a tall oak set ablaze by magical fire. She believes rapacious adventurers slaughtered her parents and orphaned her, but cannot be sure.

Aside from this single memory, maddeningly vivid in one detail and so murky otherwise, Aurakraul lived a feral existence in the forest marked only by the constant need to hunt. She knows vast swaths of the woods, but has never found a charred tree to match the one haunting her dreams. In time, the desire to find the blackened oak became an obsession.

She might have continued to live like a common animal had it not been for a chance meeting with Dhoean Tahlthar. She had never spared any human, taking an especially vicious delight in



slaughtering the creatures that had taken her parents, but this one looked different and was singing in her language. The two parleyed and each found much to like about the other. Aurakraul found the half-elf to be black-hearted, ruthless, charming and knowledgeable about the ways of her kind – in short, a perfect companion. For his part, Dhoean found the dragon to be a useful and powerful ally, and her thirst for lore about dragons in general and her parents in particular dovetailed nicely with his interest in such things. This alliance of mutual interest and convenience has grown stronger over the years, and the half-elf remains the dragon's favourite amongst the Fellowship.

The Fellowship itself was Dhoean's idea. He proposed a group that would be mutually defensive, an example of safety in numbers. The humanoid agents of the Fellowship could act in areas of civilization where the dragon could not. They could watch for groups of dragon-hunters and do-gooders, leading them astray or drawing them into ambush when they entered Aurakraul's realm. And above all – in Aurakraul's eyes, at least – they could work together to discover the whereabouts of the scorched tree that figures first and foremost in the dragon's half-remembered dream.

Personality: Aurakraul's personality is highly binary - so much so that she could be described as insane. Most of the time, she is calculating, conniving and treacherous. She is a careful planner and in her mind she has numerous ongoing plots and schemes. Aurakraul is clever enough to realize that while she is a dragon, she is a small, young one. She prefers careful thought and planning before striking and often calls upon Vola to perform various divinations to better plan her schemes.

She is surprisingly loyal to the Fellowship, treating them more as peers and less as minions – an unusual attitude for a dragon. She favours Dhoean above all, and their relationship is a true friendship. She respects Holg and Vola for their dedication to the Fellowship and to each other, as well as for their combat prowess. However, her relationship with Lafithel is strained. The elf often uses her natural charisma to sway the Fellowship into making decisions contrary to the dragon's desires, and her flighty, carefree attitude frequently clashes with Aurakraul's deliberate and methodical nature.

When roused to anger her sanguine and collected nature gives way to a terrifying rage. It is during these times that the dragon's pent up fury over her parents' fate as well as her draconic nature erupts. When it does, she wades into battle, tearing at flesh and shattering bones. Even the members of the Fellowship stay clear of her for fear of falling prey to the acrid tang of her noxious breath.

Because she believes humans slew her parents, she finds it very difficult to view them as anything but enemies. Humans falling into her clutches are eaten alive after a cursory session of

torturous interrogation. Other sorts of humanoids might be able to barter for their lives, particularly if they have information or lore of interest to her and volunteer to join the Fellowship.

Mannerisms: Aurakraul's voice is surprisingly pleasant to the ear, praise and threats coming across in an equally purring, warm tone. She is thoughtful, and often pauses for a few moments before responding to even straightforward questions.

Distinguishing Features: Aurakraul's scales are a rich emerald hue. She takes great pride in her appearance; she is fastidious about making sure her teeth are white and her claws are sharp. Her most striking feature is her eyes, a glacial blue that burns with an intensity born of madness hatred or both.

Her right flank is badly scarred and many of her scales there are ruined. She tends to shield that side of her body from those with whom she is speaking. She does so not because this part of her body is especially vulnerable; rather, she does so out of self-conscious vanity; woe to anyone who mocks her disfigurement!

Hooks: Most meetings with Aurakraul feature a desperate battle. Other situations are possible, however.

A group that has discovered the dragon's interests (draconic lore, the location of her family lair, etc.) could arrange a meeting with her, though Dhoean usually handles such encounters,

AURAKRAUL CR 11 (XP 12,800)

Female young adult green dragon

LE Huge dragon (air)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., blindsense 60 ft., Aurakraul sees four times as well as a human in dim light and twice as well in bright light; Perception +18, Sense Motive +14

Speed 40 ft. (woodland stride), fly 200 ft. (poor; Flyby Attack), swim 40 ft.

Woodland Stride (Ex) Aurakraul can move through normal foliage at full speed without taking damage or suffering impediment. Foliage affected by magic, affects her normally.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +0 (+4 jumping), **Climb** +11, **Fly** +8, **Stealth** -8, **Swim** +21

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 32

(-2 size, +16 natural)

Immune acid, paralysis, *sleep*

Fort +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10; **SR** 22

hp 136 (13 HD); **DR** magic/5

Space 15 ft. (frightful presence 150 ft.); **Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +22

Frightful Presence (Ex) Creatures within 150 ft. of Aurakraul with fewer than 13 HD must make a DC 18 Will save or become shaken (or panicked if it has 4 HD or fewer) for 5d6 rounds if they see her charge or attack. A creature making a successful saving throw is immune to Aurakraul's frightful presence for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Melee bite (reach 15 ft.) +18 (3d8+10/19-20),
2 claws (reach 10 ft.) +18 each (2d6+7),
2 wings (reach 10 ft.) +16 each (1d8+3) and
tail slap (reach 10 ft.) +16 (2d6+10)

Atk Options Power Attack (-4 attack, +12 damage with bite, claws and crush, +4 damage with wings and tail slap), crush

acting as her voice in all things. Because of her lawful alignment, Aurakraul honours any compacts into which she enters, although she seeks to twist such bargains to suit her own needs.

Alternatively, the PCs might claim an area of the forest containing the Blackened Oak – perhaps unwittingly building a stronghold nearby – thereby rapidly coming into conflict with Aurakraul and her allies. In a twist of the usual stereotype, perhaps the PCs find Aurakraul's parents' treasure trove, and for once it is the adventurers who must defend the treasure from a vengeful dragon.

In unusual circumstances, such as a potent threat to the forest, Aurakraul may form an alliance of convenience with the PCs. She views the forest as her domain, and with the Fellowship's focus on nature, a threat to the forest could mobilize them out of self-interest. It is probable that this alliance crumbles the moment the threat is overcome, but the dynamics of such cooperation would make for intriguing roleplaying.

Crush (Ex) If flying or jumping, Aurakraul can, as a standard action, land on foes that are three or more size categories smaller than her. She affects as many creatures that fit in her space. Creatures in the affected area must make a DC 22 Reflex save or be pinned, automatically taking 2d8+10 bludgeoning damage in the next round unless Aurakraul moves (or they escape). She can maintain the pin with a combat manoeuvre check as normal. Pinned foes take crush damage every round unless they escape.

Special Actions breath weapon

Breath Weapon (Su) Every 1d4 rounds, as a standard action, Aurakraul can breathe a 50 ft. cone of acid. Creatures in the cone take 10d6 acid damage (DC 22 Reflex save halves). Aurakraul can use her breath weapon while grappling.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st (6/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *shield*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *message*

Spell-like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +15)

At-will—*entangle* (DC 13) *charm person* (DC 13)

Abilities Str 25, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

SQ water breathing

Feats Ability Focus (breath weapon), Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills as above plus Appraise +10, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +18, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nature) +18, Spellcraft +6

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

Water Breathing Aurakraul can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use her breath weapon, spells and other abilities while submerged.

AURAKRAUL'S PARENTS

Slain long ago by the Crimson Swords, Aurakraul's parents had amassed a great store of treasure.

Tsotynbahr and Vureenthothr were a mated pair of mature adult green dragons that dwelled deep in the forest. Powerful predators, they were both hateful, spiteful creatures. Local stories still relate their destruction of several villages and their deaths at the hands of the Crimson Swords.

THE LAIR

Set in an isolated part of the woodlands, Tsotynbahr's and Vureenthothr's lair is beset by mists and warded by impenetrable thickets of gorse and brambles. The blackened and scorched remains of an immensely ancient oak tree (once home to a dryad cruelly slain by the dragons) stands before the cave.

The cave has remained undisturbed since the Crimson Swords retreated from the forest to return several slain members to life. Sadly, encumbered by the bodies of their fallen companions, the survivors could only carry off a few choice items; thus most of the hoard remains untouched.

THE CRIMSON SWORDS

A character making a Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (history) check may know some information about the Crimson Swords. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 15: Active around 50 years ago, the Crimson Swords was a powerful group responsible for the deaths of almost a dozen wyrms.

DC 20: The Crimson Swords were seven-strong. Of the seven, five were humans while the final two were half-elf brothers. Most are now either dead or extremely old.

DC 25: The Crimson Swords comprised Steren Nance (female human fighter; alive but very old), Talan Uren (male human ranger; deceased), Jenna Ahearn (female human cleric; deceased), Caja Uren (female human rogue; deceased), Sehhar Ilrailaias (male half-elf sorcerer/fighter; alive), Morwenna Faull (female human wizard; deceased) and Evlian Soltasean (male half-elf druid; alive).

FORESHADOWING

If the GM desires he could determine that one or more of the PCs are related to the Crimson Swords. Perhaps a PC is the child of one of the members or is related in some other way. The PC could come across accounts of the unclaimed treasure in their parent's journals (pages 18-19), which gives them a reason to explore Aurakraul's domain.

Flocks of birds now nest in the cavern making nests on the many ledges of the cave walls. Deep within the cave dwell thousands of bats that emerge at night to hunt in the surrounding forest. The bones and scales of both dragons still lie where they fell – even a cursory glance at the remains shows that great violence was wrought upon them ere they fell. Scattered about, the remaining treasure of the dragons is slowly being covered with bird droppings and bat guano.

THE HOARD

Unable to carry the vast bulk of treasure away, the Crimson Swords made a map of the lair's location vowing to return. However, they never did; shattered by the battle, the band drifted apart and never mounted another expedition. Thus, adventurers finding the lair discover a great store of treasure. The hoard comprises:

- A great mass of coins scattered about the cavern. In total, there are 151 pp, 3,492 gp, 5,934 sp and 14,648 cp in a heap. Bird droppings and bat guano cover much of the coinage, making retrieval a difficult and smelly task.
- Scattered among the coins (and also drenched in bird droppings) lie the following gems:
 - 4 transparent bright deep green stones (emeralds worth 500 gp each; DC 25 Appraise identifies).
 - 12 transparent red brown stones (spinel each worth

AURAKRAUL'S PARENTS

A character making a Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) check may know some information about Aurakraul's parents. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 20: Aurakraul is the progeny of Tsotynbahr (her father) and Vureenthothr (her mother). Both were mature adult green dragons that fell before the swords and spells of the Crimson Swords. Legends relate how the survivors could not retrieve the bulk of the dragons' treasure because they had to carry away the bodies of several slain members so they could be returned to life. Shortly thereafter, the group drifted apart. Thus, the bulk of the treasure remained unrecovered.

DC 25: Tsotynbahr and Vureenthothr dwelled in a deep cave hidden in the most remote part of the forest. In a shallow valley, ringed by dense thorn bushes the place was practically unreachable on foot.

DC 30: The deepest recess of the dragons' lair contains an ancient permanent *teleportation circle*. Damaged in ages past, the magic of the circle fluctuates, sending those stepping within to several locations of ancient artifice.

- 100 gp; DC 20 Appraise identifies).
- 3 transparent blue stones (sapphires worth 1,000 gp each; DC 25 Appraise identifies).
- A slender longsword of obvious elven manufacture; intricate carvings of leaves decorate the blade (faint evocation [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies as a *+1 longsword*).
- A small granite cube carved with the Draconic rune for warning (faint abjuration [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies as a *stone of alarm*).
- A simple golden crown that feels slightly warm to the touch (moderate evocation [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 21 Spellcraft identifies as a *minor crown of blasting*).
- A golden harp decorated with intricate carvings of elven maidens arms raised in song (faint enchantment [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 20 Spellcraft identifies as a *harp of charming*).
- A small, crude bronze statuette of a griffon (moderate transmutation [DC 21 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 26 Spellcraft identifies as a *figurine of wondrous power [bronze griffon]*).
- A battered-looking flask full of pure water (moderate transmutation [DC 21 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 24 Spellcraft identifies as a *decanter of endless water*).

- A glowing, but otherwise unremarkable short sword (strong evocation [DC 24 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 32 Spellcraft identifies as a *luck blade* with no wishes remaining)
- **Disease:** Characters retrieving the treasure expose themselves to a variety of minor diseases lurking within the bird droppings and bat guano. This concoction of diseases is equivalent to bubonic plague (*onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Con damage and 1 Cha damage and the target is fatigued; cure 2 consecutive saves [DC 17 Fortitude]*).

HOOKS

The PCs could come across Tsotyhbahr's and Vureenthothr's lair by following the map in Sehhar Ilrailaias' lost journal (pages 4 and 18-19).

Alternatively, the PCs could enter the lair through a malfunctioning *teleportation circle* hidden deep within the caves. Using this alternative plot hook turns the situation on its head. Instead of defeating a dragon to gain its loot, the PCs gain the hoard without having to fight. However, Aurakraul and the Fellowship inevitably discover the PCs' good fortune – either through encountering them in the forest or by hearing rumours of their sudden wealth. Thus, the PCs will quickly have their hands full keeping the treasure away from a vengeful Aurakraul.



PERSONA: DHOEAN TAHLTHAR

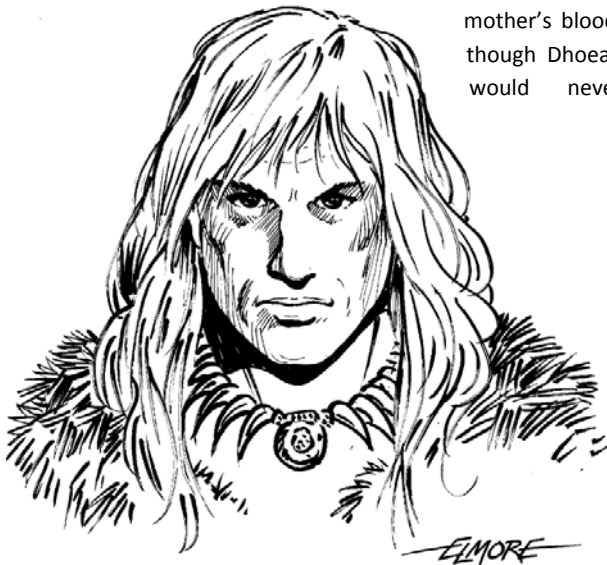
Charming and amoral, Dhoean is interested only in himself and what he wants. And scullery maids...

The son of a seneschal to a cruel and ruthless lord Dhoean Tahlthar was forced into exile and a nomadic life of banditry when his father's master was overthrown. He is the "kingmaker" of the Fellowship, whose strong voice often sways the band into a course of action he favours. He recognizes power when he sees it and works with Aurakraul in the hopes of reaping rich rewards.

Background: Dhoean was born into a life of wealth and privilege. His human father was the grim-faced seneschal of a noble lord while his mother was an elven pleasure-slave given to his father as a reward for loyal service. At first, he demonstrated every negative stereotype of someone born into power and wealth, but although a spoilt and petulant child, he was doggedly loyal to his father. He terrorized the scullery-maids of the castle – in his youth by vicious pranks, but later in more perverse and sinister ways. When not forcing himself on women, Dhoean learned scholarship, diplomacy and court intrigue from his father.

If Dhoean's father was merely amoral, the lord he served was pitiless and heartless. Eventually, his own people rose up against him. Dhoean barely escaped the ensuing bloodbath, but his father was not so fortunate. Alone, the first few years were jarring ones for the now-homeless bard. He refused to be reduced to begging or "playing for his supper" like some common minstrel. Instead, he conned others out of their coin or took it by force. The latter method forced him to remain mobile and learn how to survive on the road; he nearly starved more than once. But eventually the half-elf softened by court life found that he had a knack for survival in the wilds – perhaps the

influence of his mother's blood, though Dhoean would never



admit such a thing. His meeting with Aurakraul was a watershed moment for the young man. It was Dhoean who convinced the dragon to join forces with him and to create the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak.

Dhoean serves a number of roles in the Fellowship, manipulating Aurakraul into doing what he feels is best for the group and also acting as peacemaker when arguments flare up.

He hopes someday to be able to quit the forest and purchase a manor or estate where he can revel in the style and comfort he enjoyed in this youth. And he will be sure to have scullery-maids there. Old habits die hard...

Personality: Dhoean exhibits many of the classic traits of a sociopath. He is superficially charming, manipulative and glib. But under the glossy surface lies a self-interested being with no regard for the suffering or weal of others. Unlike many sociopaths, however, he is capable of restraining short-term impulses in favour of long-term goals.

He embraces none of his mother's heritage, even only speaking her language with the greatest reluctance. He does not think of himself as half-elf, but half-man, and even favours caps or coifs that conceal the points of his ears.

When the PCs first meet Dhoean, he appears pleasant without being exceedingly gregarious. He even puts himself in direct danger to lull his new friends into a false sense of security – making their subsequent betrayal all the more delicious. Dhoean is the most evil of the Fellowship – a true (and dubious) distinction in such a band of malefactors.

Dhoean respects Aurakraul for her strength and ruthlessness, though he regards her obsessions as a severe weakness – one he hopes he can exploit before their enemies learn of it. He has little regard for Holog and Vola; they are tools to be used and disposed of when they are no longer of value. However, he is aware and wary of their great strength and their unbreakable loyalty to each other. Dhoean suspects that Holog is more than he appears to be, and watches him closely. It takes every ounce of self-control and guile to keep Lafithel from knowing how much he despises her. If he had his way, the lovely elf would serve him in the manner that his own mother served his father. He regards her as a disruptive influence that makes it difficult to hold the Fellowship together.

Mannerisms: While "in character" Dhoean smiles a lot and goes out of his way to be courteous, especially to ladies. He presents himself as the stereotypical travelling rake with a heart of gold, even "opening up" to a sympathetic ear to talk about how he is in exile.

When stripped of his pleasant veneer, Dhoean is cold and brutal, almost automaton-like. Whenever a prisoner needs to be tortured for information, Dhoean is the first to volunteer. He is a sadistic brute with no ability to empathize with others.

Distinguishing Features: Dhoean has two styles of dress. In cities and towns he dresses as a minstrel in well-tailored, fashionable, but threadbare clothes. In the woods, he favours utilitarian clothing – close-fitting clothing of brown and olive to better stride through the woods unseen and unheard.

Hooks: Dhoean is the only member of the Fellowship except Lafithel the PCs may meet outside the forest. Of all the Fellowship, Dhoean is the most proactive in terms of dealing with threats to the group – if something could be a danger, Dhoean acts to eradicate that danger. This attitude could easily bring him into contact with the PCs; well-armed adventurers exploring the woods definitely attract his attention.

Dhoean presents himself as a scholar of dragons and their kin; parties with questions about fighting such beasts, or with spoils from a dragon's lair, might seek him out for his expertise. (A few adventurers over the years have approached Dhoean about tracking down a certain green dragon and its evil followers – with predictably disastrous results for the questioners.)

Dhoean also has a passion for art objects relating to music, including musical instruments. Characters recovering such items find the half-elf intent on gaining their acquisition, either by legitimate purchase, theft or brute force.

The status of Dhoean's mother remains vague. If she lives, she might hire the PCs to find her wayward son and bring her word of his disposition. Or it could be that she loathes her son for what he represents and wants him brought to justice. Perhaps an elf PC is Dhoean's half-sibling or even his illegitimate child, a situation ripe for rich, even poignant, roleplaying.

The PCs might also be looking for Dhoean for other reasons. Perhaps his father's killers seek the cruel seneschal's son who ravished so many innocents to bring him to justice. Alternatively, a member of a PC's family might have been victimized by Dhoean, giving the PC reason to seek revenge.

LARTHETH	CR – (XP 0)
Male hawk	
N Small animal	
Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +2	
Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)	
ACP 0; Acrobatics +2 (-6 jumping), Fly +8	
AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; CMD 12 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural)	
Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2	
hp 11 (2 HD)	
Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +1; CMB +0	
Melee bite +2 (1d4) and 2 talons +2 (1d4)	
Abilities Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6	
SQ trained (hunting [attack, down, fetch, heel, seek and track] and come)	
Feats Improved Initiative	
Skills as above	
Languages link	

DHOEAN TAHLTHAR

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male half-elf bard 4/ranger 4

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +3 (+5 in forests); **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +14 (+16 vs. elves or in forests, +18 vs. elves in forest), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. elves)

Speed 30 ft.; Nimble Moves

ACP 0; Acrobatics +10, Climb +7, Stealth +14 (+16 in forests), Swim +7

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 22

(+3 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +2 shield [+1 darkwood buckler])

Immune sleep

Fort +7, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects

hp 52 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7/+2; **CMB** +9

Ranged +1 composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +12/+7 (1d8+3/x3)

Melee mwk longsword +10/+5 (1d8+2/19-20)

Atk Options Precise Shot, favoured enemy (elves +2)

Special Actions bardic performance 18 rounds (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1), share spells (Lartheth)

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +6)

2nd (2/day)—*heroism*, *whispering wind*

1st (4/day)—*cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *undetectable alignment*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *know direction*, *message*, *read magic*, *summon instrument*

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st—*longstrider*

Combat Gear *dust of dryness*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ bardic knowledge, combat style (archery), favoured terrain (forest), hunter's bond (Lartheth), multitiered (bard, ranger), track, versatile performance (wind), wild empathy +6 (+2 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Endurance^B, Extra Performance, Nimble Moves, Precise Shot^B, Skill Focus (Perform [wind]), Skill Focus (Survival)^B, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills as above plus Bluff +9 (+11 vs. elves), Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Knowledge (arcana) +1, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +1, Knowledge (engineering) +1, Knowledge (geography) +1 (+3 in forests), Knowledge (history) +1, Knowledge (local) +1 (+3 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +1, Knowledge (nobility) +1, Knowledge (planes) +1, Knowledge (religion) +1, Perform (wind) +12, Survival +12 (+14 tracking or in forests, +16 tracking elves or tracking in forest, +18 tracking elves in forest)

Languages Common, Elven, link

Gear as above plus 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch, 13 gp, 19 sp

PERSONA: HOLG

This taciturn, hulking fellow is passionately devoted to his wife, Vola, but is capable of fearsome acts of violence.

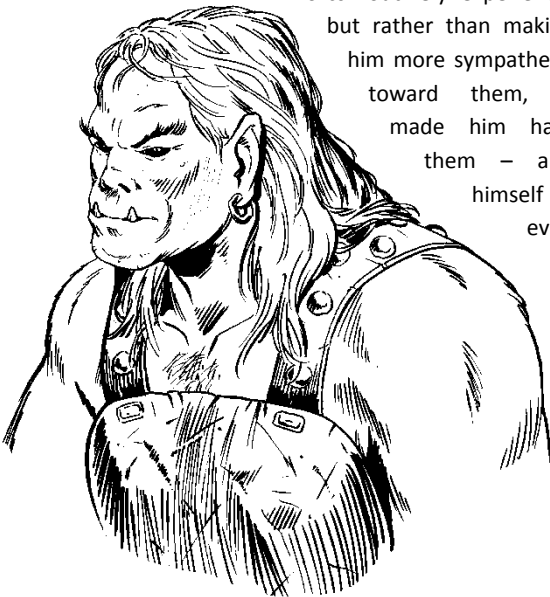
Thick-limbed, Holg is brutish and primitive. A savage warrior at heart, he loves nothing more than the twang of his longbow or the thud of his sword cleaving his foes. Astute observers – particularly elves and half-orcs – might notice that the brute seems to be something other than he appears to be...

Background: Holg is a half-orc. At least, he is now. But the tale of how Holg came to be what he is today stretches back several centuries and many leagues, to a time when Holg was Arusandair Greybane, an elf ranger. In those days, he was in service to a faraway elven kingdom beset by orcs. Arusandair, and many like him harried the orcs and killed their leaders in brutal, desperate battles. He learned their guttural tongue, becoming wise to their mannerisms and ways.

Arusandair's luck ran out when an orc patrol captured him. Subjected to brutal tortures they impaled him on a spear and left to die. His compatriots recovered his remains and, having no priest to return him to life, prevailed upon a druid to reincarnate him. To their horror, Arusandair returned as a half-orc.

After recovering from their initial shock, his commanders thought that the former elf could make a superb covert agent, but his unwilling transformation traumatized him greatly. He stabbed to death the druid who reincarnated him, before deserting the service of the kingdom forever.

In this wanderings, he encountered the usual prejudices half-orcs routinely experience, but rather than making him more sympathetic toward them, it made him hate them – and himself – even



ELMORE

more. He became so embittered that by the time he reached the woods he now calls home, he resolved to cut himself off from contact with others completely.

But Holg, as he now called himself, spied a half-orc female in his woods one evening. Safely hidden in the brush, he aimed an arrow at her heart, but something stayed his hand. After a time, he dared to speak with her. Her name was Vola, and she was a druid, though not of the hated sect that had thrust Holg into his new body. Indeed, Vola was decidedly non-orcish, a result of her human upbringing. They shared a race, a love of the forest and eventually a love of each other. With their mutual aid and formidable woodland skills, they were easily able to survive in the forest and eke out a simple life.

Two years later, they noticed that game was rapidly being depleted, and Holg sought the cause eventually discovering that Aurakraul's voracious appetite was to blame. The dragon saw the value of two skilled woods-folk as additions to the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak, especially since the ranger Dhoean was frequently away as Aurakraul's eyes and ears in nearby villages and towns. Aurakraul's bargain was a simple one – join the Fellowship and search the woods for her birth-lair in exchange for safety in numbers and an equal share of the spoils. Seeing the value of such an arrangement, and fearful of Vola's fate should he refuse, he agreed on their behalf. Since then, he has proven his value time and again. Holg is an accomplished hunter, and even in the leanest seasons the Fellowship's lair contains more than enough smoked and preserved meats to comfortably maintain the group.

Holg is content with the current situation. He lives more or less as he did, contentedly with Vola. Their lifestyle remains basic, but augmented with spoils from adventurers and travellers falling into the Fellowship's clutches. Holg and Vola have scoured the woodlands for Aurakraul's birth-lair, but have found nothing to date. (In truth, Holg doubts the lair even exists and that it is just the wild imagination of a crazy dragon).

Personality: Holg is gruff and speaks little. Most of the time, he grunts. When he isn't grunting, he communicates largely in monosyllabic words. He is a creature of action, content when he is doing something - hunting, tracking, fighting or loving Vola – but restless when forced to sit and wait. He is thus a good fighter, but a poor ambusher.

While Holg is evil, he is not needlessly cruel. If a prisoner must be executed, he has no qualms about doing it. However, unlike Dhoean, he does so swiftly and takes no pleasure in it, though neither does he feel remorse. "Do what must be done" is a common phrase favoured by Holg.

His loyalty to Vola is absolute, outweighing his loyalty to the Fellowship. This is an open secret in the Fellowship; his love for her is true. He has little regard for Dhoean, who he regards as a

needlessly cruel fop who uses violence and sadism to compensate for some unknown shortcomings. Holg respects Aurakraul for her power, and indeed is a bit afraid of her, though he would never admit it. He is sullen and taciturn around Lafithel; she reminds him of his past life and how his lifespan, once measured in centuries, is now but a handful of decades.

Mannerisms: To the casual observer, Holg appears very orcish. Since he knows nothing of his “other half” (humans) he acts highly orcish. Indeed, he inadvertently almost lampoons being an orc. Vola, having been raised by humans, isn’t able to spot this, but others can. A perceptive linguist might notice a surprising hint of an elf’s accent in his speech, or recognize elven fighting styles in his archery or swordplay. He reacts very negatively to anyone pointing this out, especially in front of Vola.

Holg is the first to goad his companions into action and the last to back down from a fight. His companions have learned that the best way to manipulate Holg is to couch suggestions in terms of Vola’s weal – “We need to be patient; all of us (read as: “including Vola”) could get hurt if we rush in.”

Holg is restless and frequently fidgets.

Distinguishing Features: Holg’s left eye is a milky white and frequently bloodshot. (This does not hamper his sight.) He has many battle scars on his face and forearms. Like other members of the Fellowship, he wears clothes of brown and green to blend into the woods he calls home.

Hooks: Anyone who harms or interferes with Vola eventually encounters Holg. Alternatively, Holg could be swayed to help a group of PCs that aids his wife.

Holg is the member of the Fellowship most likely to capture an enemy for Aurakraul to interrogate. He might catch someone significant to the PCs and the investigation into the disappearance could lead the player characters to Holg and Vola (and the balance of the Fellowship).

FENG CR – (XP 0)

Male wolf

N Medium animal

Init +3; **Senses** scent; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1

Speed 50 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +8 (+16 jumping), Stealth +7

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 19; Dodge

(+3 Dex, +4 natural)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7 (evasion), **Will** +2

hp 37 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

Melee bite +6 (1d8+3 plus trip)

Trip (Ex) If Feng hits with his bite attack, he can attempt to trip his opponent as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If this attempt fails, he is not tripped in return.

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ trained (fighting [attack, down, stay], defend, guard)

Feats Dodge, Improved Natural Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills as above

HOLG

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male half-orc ranger 8

NE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +1 (+3 in mountains, +5 in forests); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12 (+14 vs. elves or in mountains, +16 vs. orcs, in forests or elves in mountains, +18 vs. elves in forests, +20 vs. orcs in forests), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. elves, +5 vs. orcs)

Speed 30 ft.; swift tracker, woodland stride

Swift Tracker (Ex) Holg can travel at normal speed while tracking without penalty. He takes a -10 penalty when moving at up to twice normal speed.

Woodland Stride (Ex) Holg can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects him.

ACP 0; Climb +12, Stealth +12 (+14 in mountains, +16 in forests), Swim +12

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 23

(+1 Dex, +5 armour [+1 *mithral shirt*], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defense], +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*])

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

hp 88 (8 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Holg can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of his next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, he falls unconscious and begins to die.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8/+3; **CMB** +11

Melee +1 *longsword* +12/+7 (1d8+4/19-20) or

Melee +1 *longsword* +10/+5 (1d8+4/19-20) and throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +9/+6 (1d6+3)

Ranged throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +11/+6 (1d6+3)

Atk Options Quick Draw, favoured enemy (elves +2, orcs +4)

Special Options share spells (Feng)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +6)

2nd—*cure light wounds*

1st—*longstrider*, *resist energy*

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of barkskin* (10 chgs.)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 10

SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), favoured terrain (forest +4, mountain +2), hunter’s bond (wolf), track, wild empathy +8 (+4 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Double Slice, Endurance^B, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Iron Will, Quick Draw, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting^B

Skills as above plus Bluff +0 (+2 vs. elves, +4 vs. orcs), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (geography) -1 (+1 in mountains, +3 forests), Knowledge (local) -1 (+1 vs. elves, +3 vs. orcs), Knowledge (nature) +4, Survival +12 (+16 tracking or in forests, +18 tracking elves, +20 tracking elves in mountains or orcs, +22 tracking elves in forests, +24 tracking orcs in forests)

Languages Common, Orc, link (Feng)

Gear as above plus 4 throwing axes, spell component pouch, 12 gp, 2 sp

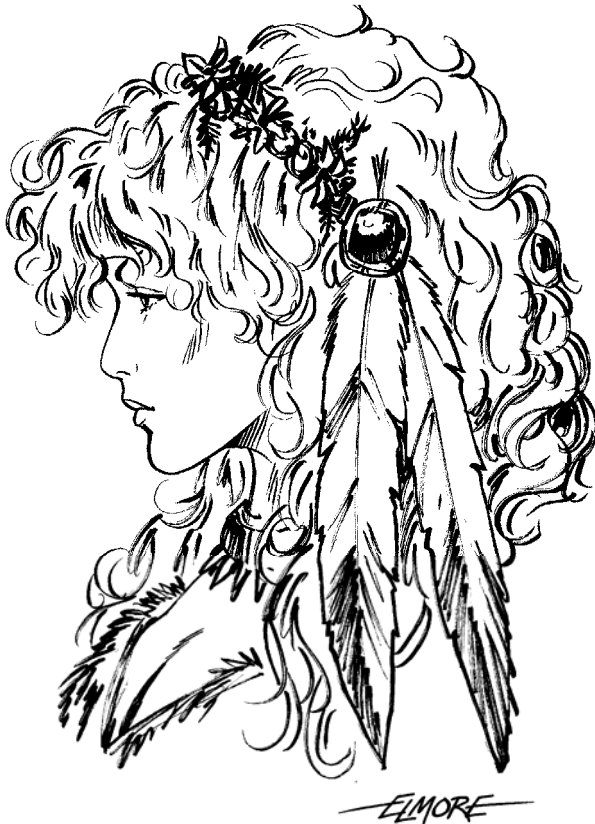
PERSONA: LAFITHEL TRAIVANNA

Capricious and flighty, Lafithel searches for an ancient draconic power source.

A wild and independent spirit, Lafithel is the inheritor of a thousand-year-old family quest to uncover a lost source of draconic magic. While she is the least ruthless and independently capable of the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak, she is also the most unpredictable, and thus the most likely to strike some kind of alliance with the PCs.

Background: The Traivanna dynasty of elves has existed for millennia. The most notable members of this family are blessed with supernatural power and an aptitude for arcane magic whose source descends from a lost draconic legacy. Family members often make spectacular achievements but just as often suffer gruesome fates; all seem cursed to live interesting lives.

Long ago, the founder of the Traivanna line had a powerful vision in which he half-glimpsed a slumbering golden wyrm of unprecedented size and magnificence deep underground in a shadowed and dust-choked chamber decked with ancient banners and filled with wealth beyond imagining. Motes of power sparkled about the sleeping dragon and wisps of magic swirled about the chamber. Unbidden the name Agryt'Untryr came into his mind as the vision faded.



Finding the lair of Agryt'Untryr – the Slumbering Wyrm — has become a family obsession.

The discovery of Agryt'Untryr is no easy task, but the rewards of finding it are so great – and the indoctrination of the family's elders upon their descendants so strong – that every Traivanna has sought it out. Those few who have fallen away from the family's spiritual quest have been sought out and murdered by their kin; they fear that should others discover the existence of Agryt'Untryr, they might complete the quest and a thousand years of effort by the Traivanna family would be for naught.

Lafithel has been as diligent as any seeker from her family, but she has sought to go about it in her own unique fashion. Like other notables in her dynasty, she is a sorcerer, and her belief is that Agryt'Untryr is somehow linked to the power coursing through her own veins. Her reasoning is that the common denominator between all of the Traivanna is their very kinship, so surely Agryt'Untryr's location can be found through her own sorcerous power.

Lafithel reasoned that since the source of her family's power was the admixture, somewhere in the distant past, of dragon's blood with that of her elf ancestors, the best way to study and develop her personal power would be at the foot of a true dragon. She was the only member of the Fellowship who actively sought out Aurakraul. Saying nothing of her familial quest, she indicating that she merely wished to serve the dragon and learn more of her distant kin, she joined the Fellowship.

The elf sorceress has remained with the Fellowship since that time, but in truth, she has retained a place only because of her raw arcane power. She is simply too headstrong and independent to really fit with the rest of the group; she is also the only member of the Fellowship who is not evil – Dhoean has described her as “cheerfully amoral” while suppressing a scowl.

Lafithel's time with the Fellowship is nearing its end. Like Holg and Vola, she finds Aurakraul's obsessive quest for her birth-lair to be an unacceptable sign of weakness (even as she overlooks the parallel between it and her quest to discover Agryt'Untryr). She has learned all she can from the narrow minds of the Fellowship, and will soon move on.

Personality: Dhoean's description of her amorality is accurate. Lafithel is very much like a self-centred child. She lives for the moment and the satisfaction of her own desires and wants, and is heedless of the effects it might have on others. She is not deliberately cruel, but thinks nothing of taking actions that endanger or harm others. She is selfish and petty, and rather flighty (with the exception of her quest). In this one area, she is capable of single-minded obsession and clarity of focus and purpose that seems otherwise wildly out of character.

She has little regard for the other members of the Fellowship, and she pigeonholes them with simplistic, derogatory tags. She views Aurakraul as a pathetic obsessive-compulsive; Dhoean as a manipulative, ruthless bastard; and Holg as an idiot. The only person she has even a passing respect for is Vola. The druid's quest to become a superlative predator is a (child-like) parallel of her family's own and unlike Aurakraul, Vola has managed to pursue her goal without it consuming her.

Although she likes to think of herself as independent, Lafithel is actually the one most dependent on the rest of the group. Every other member of the Fellowship has some modicum of woodland survival skills. On the other hand, Lafithel would probably be dead within a week if left to her own devices, in the forest.

Mannerisms: Lafithel is flighty and inattentive, with a propensity for wandering off-topic and (as Dhoean notes) "being distracted by bright, shiny objects." This might make her seem vapid or stupid to uninformed observers. On the occasions that she is pursuing the Slumbering Wyrms, her sudden snap into focus should be a jarring contrast to observers.

She is very manipulative, using her natural charisma and social skills to prod members of the Fellowship into seeing things her way and following her suggestions. Only Dhoean is her rival in this area, and each is often the other's counterweight in debates on what course of action the Fellowship should pursue.

Distinguishing Features: Though she favours traditional magician's robes, practical considerations force her to wear boots, breeches, blouse and a hooded cloak. As befits her nature, Lafithel refuses to attire herself in the earthy hues that her more woody companions wear. Much to the chagrin of Vola, Holg, and Dhoean, she favours garments of pastel hues that are all-too easily seen in a forest. Her hair is a pleasant blend of silver and gold hues and her narrow green eyes are vibrant. She has the lithe build and high cheekbones common to her race, and a laugh that can sound pleasant, cruel or mocking as the mood suits her.

Hooks: Lafithel does her best to maintain as much luxury as she can – she and Dhoean are the only members of the Fellowship to actively travel to nearby settlements. As a result, PCs might encounter her there (possibly cloaked under a *disguise self* spell). Lafithel visits such places to secure luxuries unavailable in the woods. Exotic oils, soaps, perfumes, hand mirrors and the latest in fashionable clothing – all these things and more are of interest to the vain elf.

Lafithel is aware that if she announces her intention to leave the Fellowship, her companions will likely kill her to keep their secrets from others. As a result, she might seek the aid of a strong group of PCs in escaping the Fellowship – perhaps even by manipulating them into believing she is an unwilling captive.

Because Agryt'Untryr could slumber literally anywhere, a GM can use this as a hook to link Lafithel to any PC. Any object that the PCs might recover, or bit of lore they learn – anything – could be of vital interest to Lafithel, if she believes that it might lead her to Agryt'Untryr.

Like Dhoean and Aurakraul, Lafithel is keenly interested in all things related to dragons. Any such items or lore are of interest to her, and a GM could set up a situation where all three could be attempting to take something draconic belonging to the PCs, through force, guile or persuasion.

LAFITHEL TRAIVANNA

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Female elf sorcerer (draconic [gold]) 8

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 17

(+3 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*], +1 natural)

Immune *sleep*; **Resist** fire 5

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

hp 38 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk dagger +8 (1d4-1/19-20)

Melee 2 claws +8 each (1d6-1)

Atk Options claws

Claws (Su) Lafithel can grow claws as a free action. She can use her claws for 6 rounds per day. These rounds do not need to be consecutive.

Special Actions Empower Spell, bloodline arcana (fire spells +7 damage)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11; spell penetration +10, ranged touch +7)

4th (3/day)—*wall of fire* (DC 19)

3rd (6/day)—*fireball* (DC 18), *fly*, *haste*

2nd (7/day)—*false life*, *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *web* (DC 15)

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 16), *charm person* (DC 14), *disguise self*, *mage armour*, *mount*, obscuring mist

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *lesser metamagic rod of silent*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of wind wall*, *see invisibility* and *stoneskin*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16

Feats Empower Spell, Eschew Materials^B, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative^B, Spell Focus (evocation), Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +14, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Spellcraft +13 (+15 to identify magic items), Use Magic Device +14

Languages Auran, Common, Elven, Sylvan

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, 15 gp, 12 sp

PERSONA: VOLA

Calm and contemplative, Vola is devoted to her husband and to her woodland home.

Devoted to Holg, the woods and the Fellowship – in that order – Vola is the latter’s spiritual backbone. She serves as the group’s healer and uses her druidic magic to give them a substantial edge in the group’s frequent woodland battles. Vola represents a calm, reasonable voice amongst her fellows, though she can be every bit as ruthless as the rest of them – particularly when it comes to protecting Holg.

Background: Like so many of her kin, Vola’s birth was the result of a brutal rape. Her mother was a young peasant living on the edge of lands contested by several warring orc factions who would occasionally stop killing each other long enough to ravage human territories. Unlike many survivors who lived through such ordeals, Vola’s mother, a deeply religious woman who venerated life in all its forms, opted to have her child.

Vola was a living reminder of the orc plunder of the village, and her treatment at the hands of the villagers reflected this. Eventually, her mother purchased Vola’s freedom from the lord she served and took her daughter away from the prejudice of her fellows. Her request was granted, and after a two-week trip mother and daughter made their way to a small city. Once there, Vola’s mother worked as a seamstress while her daughter helped as best she could.

When Vola was ten, her maternal aunt, Sura, came to visit. As devoutly religious as her sister, Vola’s aunt was a druid and offered to teach her niece the ways of her order. Vola’s mother wanted something more for her daughter than a



lifetime of sewing needles, and so she agreed.

What Sura didn’t mention to Vola or her mother was that her druidic order was decidedly evil, and revered the spirit of an ancient man-eating tiger. However, this was not an order of screaming druid savages; their order revered the aspects of the thinking hunter, the one that outwits and outmanoeuvres their prey. Indeed, though thoroughly evil, the order was one filled with contemplative thinkers, examining their respective places in the natural realm, as predator or prey.

By the time she was sixteen, Vola had demonstrated a remarkable aptitude not just for the order’s philosophy but also for their rituals. She was instructed to go out and seek a hunter from which she could learn more. Hearing rumours of dragons in a faraway wood, she slung a rucksack over one shoulder and left the order behind.

And find a hunter she did, though it was not the one she was seeking. Finding herself at first the target of Holg’s bow, their decidedly unromantic introduction has led to a genuine love affair. Both have a passion for the woods they call home, and each has learned a great deal from the other. She has a vague sense that Holg is keeping some important personal secret from her, but thus far, she is content not to pursue it.

Through Holg, Vola has met the dragon she sought, along with the rest of the Fellowship of the Blackened Oak. She has been very disappointed with Aurakraul, seeing the dragon’s obsessive searching as a weakness that could be exploited too easily by those hunting her; in her eyes, the dragon is hardly a vaunted predator. She rarely bothers to conceal her contempt for Dhoean, though his silver tongue persuades her as readily as the others of the Fellowship. She is indifferent towards Lafithel, though she respects the elf’s magical prowess.

If Holg is the hunter in the Fellowship, Vola is the gatherer. She keeps healthy and verdant plant life that sustains her companions; without her and her mate, the Fellowship would live a much leaner existence. She frequently uses her magic to question the animals of the woods, using them as spies for the Fellowship.

Personality: Calm and contemplative, Vola is in many ways the opposite of Holg. She is a proponent of planning, stalking before pouncing and working smarter not harder. Using her magic Vola can organize, execute and augment devastating ambushes against woodland interlopers. Like Holg, she is evil, but not needlessly cruel. She is a pragmatist who avoids needless risks to herself, the Fellowship and Holg. Like Holg, she can sometimes be persuaded to take a course of action by suggesting that not doing so could endanger him.

Mannerisms: Vola weighs each sentence before speaking, giving her speech an unusual, stilted cadence. This might seem to indicate a lack of intelligence; on the contrary, Vola is thoughtful and careful and her pattern of speech reflects this.

She dresses in utilitarian clothing of earth tones that allows her to blend into woodland settings. Her sole nod to feminine vanity is her predilection for braiding wildflowers into her hair.

Her order forbids its members from wild shaping into the form of anything other than a predatory animal; Vola favours birds of prey and tiger forms.

Hooks: The most certain way PCs could meet Vola is through Holg. Anyone who harms or captures Holg will certainly feel her wrath. Alternatively, Vola could be swayed to aid a group of characters that helps her husband. Her loyalty to him eclipses that which she feels for the Fellowship; this could be exploited by a clever group of adversaries.

A number of hooks could connect the PCs to Vola's druidic order. Perhaps the PCs slew a member of her order and Vola has been tasked with seeking revenge. Perhaps the PCs have in their possession, knowingly or not, an item of religious significance to the order, one which they are willing to kill to retrieve.

Despite her cold heart, Vola has a deep love of the woodlands. If the PCs threaten the woods (or their natural balance), they make an enemy of Vola. More interestingly, perhaps she (and Holg) and the PCs might find themselves in a temporary truce against a greater threat to the forest.

FANG	CR – (XP 0)
N Large animal	
Init +6; Senses scent; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1	
Speed 50 ft.	
ACP 0; Stealth +4	
AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17; CMD 25 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +8 natural)	
Fort +9, Ref +8 (evasion), Will +3; +4 vs. enchantment spells and effects	
hp 47 (7 HD)	
Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +5; CMB +12	
Melee bite +11 (2d6+9 plus trip)	
Trip (Ex) If Fang hits with his bite attack, he can attempt to trip his opponent as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If this attempt fails, he is not tripped in return.	
Abilities Str 23, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	
SQ trained (combat [attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel], fetch, stay, work), devotion	
Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)	
Skills as above plus Survival +5	

VOLA	CR 7 (XP 3,200)
Female half-orc druid 8	
NE Medium humanoid (human, orc)	
Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15, Sense Motive +4	
Speed 20 ft.; base speed 30 ft., trackless step, woodland stride	
Trackless Step (Ex) Vola leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. She can leave a trail if desired.	
Woodland Stride (Ex) Vola can move through undergrowth at normal speed without taking damage or suffering any impairment. Undergrowth magically enchanted to impede movement still affects her.	
ACP -2; Swim +4	
AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; CMD 16 (-1 Dex, +5 armour [+1 <i>hide</i>], +2 shield [+1 <i>darkwood buckler</i>])	
Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +10; +4 vs. spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities of fey and spells and effects that utilise or target plants.	
hp 47 (8 HD); orc ferocity	
Orc Ferocity Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Vola can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of her next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, she falls unconscious and begins to die.	
Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +6/+1; CMB +7	
Melee +1 <i>falchion</i> +8/+3 (2d4+2/18-20)	
Ranged mwk sling (range 50 ft.) +6 (1d4+1)	
Special Actions share spells (<i>Fang</i>), spontaneous casting (<i>Augment Summoning</i> , <i>summon nature's ally</i>), wild shape 3/day (Natural Spell, <i>beast shape III</i> , <i>elemental body II</i> , <i>plant shape I</i>)	
Druid Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +12)	
4th— <i>dispel magic</i> , <i>ice storm</i> , <i>freedom of movement</i>	
3rd— <i>call lightning</i> (DC 17), <i>cure moderate wounds</i> , <i>poison</i> (DC 17), <i>water breathing</i>	
2nd— <i>barkskin</i> , <i>heat metal</i> (DC 16), <i>owl's wisdom</i> , <i>resist energy</i>	
1st— <i>cure light wounds</i> , <i>entangle</i> (DC 15), <i>faerie fire</i> , <i>longstrider</i> , <i>speak with animals</i>	
0— <i>detect magic</i> , <i>know direction</i> , <i>read magic</i> , <i>stabilize</i>	
Combat Gear <i>horn of fog</i> , <i>pearl of power</i> (1st)	
Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14	
SQ nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, resist nature's lure, wild empathy +10 (+6 vs. magical beasts)	
Feats Augment Summoning, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (conjuration), Toughness	
Skills as above plus Handle Animal +13, Heal +9, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +13, Linguistics +4, Survival +17	
Languages Common, Druidic, Sylvan, Orc, link	
Gear as above plus 10 sling bullets, wooden holy symbol, spell component pouch, 12 gp, 4 sp	

SEHHAR'S LOST JOURNAL

Talan died today. In truth, I think he was the best of us – fearless, loyal and with a heart as big as his mountain home. It is hard to believe but there are only three of us left now. Yes, less than half of the Crimson Swords still draw breath and it is Talan's demise – the gods rest his soul – which has prompted me to pick up the quill and set down the tale of our greatest adventure.

Once we were the mightiest of companies – the bane of dragons, feted in every town. But age makes fools and weaklings of us all and as I write this only myself, Steren and Evlian remain in the land of the living. It is my fervent hope that upon reading this a band such as we once were, young and filled with hope and courage, will tread the same path to riches and glory.

In truth, so much time has passed that I wonder whether some other evil has taken the place of that which we vanquished all those years ago. Or perhaps the greatest treasures of the dragons Tsotyhbahr and Vureenthothr still lie unclaimed in the dank cavern from where the pair once burst forth to wreak havoc on unsuspecting homesteads. Whatever the truth, perhaps my recollections of that fateful day when the seven of us ventured deep into the forest will serve as both a motivation and a guide to those who would follow in our footsteps.

As you would expect, the cavern was not easy to find – not easy at all. Indeed, I remember we floundered around in the darkest depths of the woodland for almost a week before Talan eventually found the clearing. He may have been our leader but Talan was, first and foremost, a canny tracker who refused to give up on our quarry. It is fair to say that without his determination to discover the dragons' lair the rest of us would probably have given up the ghost after a couple of days amongst those gloomy trees.

As it was, it was the ranger who discovered the cave entrance which emerged out of the mist like a gaping maw. Talan held his hand up to halt us and I recall catching my breath as I looked for the first time upon Tsotyhbahr and Vureenthothr's hidden base. Even beyond the treeline, the entrance itself was protected by stinging thickets of gorse and brambles. But it is the silence and the dense fog that shrouded the lair which I recall most vividly. It was a thick and cloying mist which restricted our vision and, dare I say it, played tricks on the mind.

The place had an air of foreboding which the rational mind cannot countenance but which, to this day, still sends a shiver down my spine. It was as though we were being watched – and perhaps we were. We approached the cave an hour before first light, hoping to catch the wyrms sleeping. The truth is that, powerful as we were and filled with the arrogance of youth, we could not have triumphed against a pair of green dragons such as they without fortune smiling on us. However, lady luck favoured the bold on this occasion for as we ventured deeper into the lair we could hear the deep, rhythmic breathing of the sleeping monsters. I say luck was with us also because our presence did not disturb the vast colony of bats which had made their home within the furthest recesses of the cavern.

Not daring to use light sources for fear of waking the slumbering wyrms, we relied on the elven sight of Evlian the druid and myself to guide us towards our goal. Eventually we found ourselves within maybe twenty or thirty paces of Vureenthothr – her huge, slick form looming out of the semi-darkness. We could hear Tsotyhbahr breathing and supposed that he lay just beyond his mate.

At a signal from Talan, we fanned out to surround them – silently drawing eldritch blades from muffled scabbards before falling upon the creatures with zealous fury. Talan, Jenna, Steren and Caja attacked the larger Tsotyhbahr while Morwenna, Evlian and myself fought Vureenthothr.

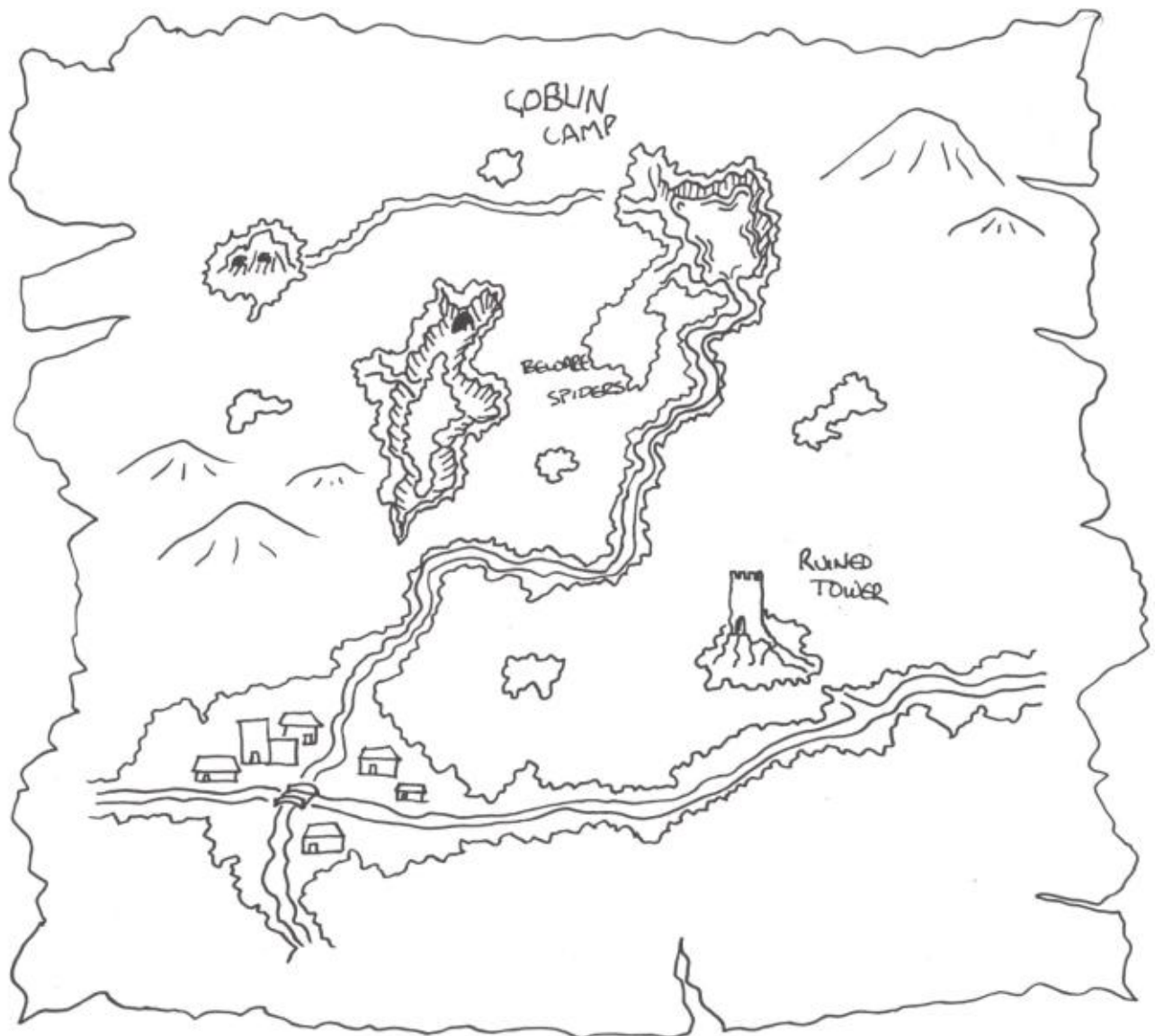
What followed was a horrific slaughter that seemed to last for many minutes but which I suspect was over rather more quickly than that. Powerful bolts of magical energy shot from Morwenna's fingertips – lighting up the cavern – and Evlian set about the Vureenthothr with a primal fury that lent power to her enchanted scimitar. Meanwhile I hung back, loosing arrow after arrow at the creature's fierce, powerful head.

I could hear our four comrades were having a far tougher time against the more powerful male and my heart sank as I heard screams from the darkness beyond my quarry. In truth, however, I did not have time to fear for my friends as I had soon emptied my quiver and leapt into the fray. I am proud to say that it was I, with my blessed blade Whisper – which I have carried with me all these long years, who struck the fatal blow to Vureenthothr. At that very same moment, Talan was dispatching her mate and it seemed to me that their death cries would bring down the very walls of the cavern. Indeed, I recall falling to my knees and covering my ears as the keening wails reached their zenith.

Then all was silence in the darkness – aside from the heavy breathing of myself and my remaining companions. I recall lighting a torch and recoiling in horror at the fact that I was literally covered in dragon blood. Evlian was no better off and her left arm hung limply at her side – broken as we soon discovered. Morwenna, as usual, had managed to avoid even a scratch at the hands of these deadliest of nature's creations. However, only Talan was left standing from the battle with Tsotynbahr. Caja was unconscious and bleeding to death. Steren and Jenna were dead – the warrior crushed by the creature's powerful tail and the priest badly mauled. Following a battle such as this, it is my experience that all strength drains away leaving one feeling rather weak and saddened. There was certainly no euphoria as we gathered our fallen comrades and tended to Caja and Evlian. The pact we had made to resurrect our companions meant that we were only able to search briefly through the dragons' hoard and select a few choice treasures to carry away.

When we eventually returned to civilisation, Steren and Jenna left the group to battle their own personal demons. Those of us who remained quickly turned our attention to other quests but, in truth, I think we never had the strength to return to that cavern for what we had earned. Needless to say that, somewhere in the trackless reaches of that forest lies a fortune unclaimed, waiting in the darkness for the bold or the reckless. I only hope my recollections aid them on their journey.

Sebhar Itrailaia



WOODLAND DRESSING

When the PCs enter the woods in which the Fellowship lurk they may discover certain signs that all is not as it should be. They may also discover sites or objects of related interest. You can improvise such minor discoveries or you can use the table below to determine what the PCs discover.

D20

1	The PCs discover an old campsite; little remains but the fire pit. However, a DC 20 Perception check reveals splatters of dried blood on several nearby tree trunks and stones – as if a battle was fought here.	
2	As the PCs travel through the forest they pass by a well-made and hidden hunter's hide. A DC 25 Perception check reveals the hide. Inside, it is snug and dry. Signs of recent occupation – such as rotting food and the stench of sweat – are obvious.	
3	The PCs come across the torn, dismembered body of an owlbear (DC 14 Knowledge [arcana] identifies). A DC 15 Heal check reveals something massively strong ripped the owlbear apart.	
4	A DC 20 Perception check reveals a single dark green scale under a thorn bush. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals it came from a green dragon.	
5	The PCs stumble upon the partially melted remains of a tree deep in the forest. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check reveals acid destroyed the tree.	
6	The remains of a campsite lie mere feet away from the trail upon which the PCs travel. The tents have collapsed and the other goods are rotting. There is no sign of violence (or the campsite's residents).	
7	The PCs discover what appears to be a perfect campsite; a natural hollow shielded by dense bushes and fed by a fresh spring. A DC 25 Perception check reveals a hunter's hide deep within the bushes positioned to observe the campsite.	
8	The PCs stumble upon a shallow, mass grave that had been partially dug up by forest animals intent on feasting on those within. The remains (of five humans) are decomposed and have been worried by many animals both small and large. All their equipment is missing.	
9	The PCs enter a region of forest that is strangely quiet; no animal sounds echo through the area. In the centre of the area, they discover four or five trees splintered and fallen. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) reveals something large and powerful knocked them down.	
10	Two large wolves stand upon the trail observing the PCs. If the PCs make any move toward them	they turn and lope off into the woods. This is Feng and Fang (Holg's and Vola's animal companions).
11	As the PCs pass under a tree, a splatter of blood drips down on them from above. Investigations reveal several of the branches are covered in blood. Intelligent PCs may work out that the blood dropped on the tree from above.	
12	The PCs encounter Dhoean Tahlthar, who masquerades as a friendly local woodsman and guide. Dhoean gets as much information from the PCs as possible about their journey or quest without raising their suspicions before leaving. If the PCs are working against the Fellowship, he gathers his companions and returns several days later.	
13	A loud roar or shout of anger and frustration echoes through the woods. Nearby birds take flight at the sound of it and small woodland animals instinctively hide. The roar is a frustrated Aurakraul venting her anger. She is some distance off and is unaware of the PCs.	
14	The PCs happen upon some of Aurakraul's tracks. They are weeks old, but a DC 18 Survival or Perception check reveals several of her footsteps and a subsequent DC 21 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals they were made by a Huge dragon or dragon-like creature.	
15	Lartheth, Dhoean's hawk animal companion is following the PCs. The PC making the highest Perception check spots the hawk first. It follows the PCs for a short while but does not come close enough to be engaged in melee. If the PCs use ranged attacks against it, it flies off.	
16	The PCs hear a rumour that something lurks in the wood; several groups of loggers have gone missing.	
17	The PCs learn the Company of the Scarlet Cloak entered the woods a month ago in search of a lost treasure to which they believed they had a map. They have not yet returned and are assumed lost to the denizens of the place.	
18	Strange mists have been reported in the lower reaches of the wood. Locals believe they are an ill omen and that something gathers its strength far from the eyes of civilised folk.	
19	The PCs stumble across the slashed, dismembered and acid-burnt remains of a large goblin war band.	
20	At night, a PC on watch catches a glimpse of something large moving through the darkness as its bulk blocks out the stars. It does not trouble the PCs.	

KAI'S SCOUNDRELS

Each cast out from their own societies, Kai's Scoundrels have become a tightly-knit band of smugglers without peer, famed for the transport of illicit wares. Kai's Scoundrels presents six fully detailed NPCs that can be used individually or as a group. Perfect as foils to law-abiding PCs, alternatively if your PCs need something illicit, and can find them, Kai's Scoundrels just may be able to help...

KAI'S SCOUNDRELS

Six opportunistic scavengers have formed an unlikely friendship under the leadership of “Killer” Kai. Skilled smugglers the six wander the land keeping ahead of the authorities and searching out new opportunities for profit. Kai’s Scoundrels comprises:

- **“Killer” Kai** (N female human magus 7/rogue 1): The daughter of a minor baron, Kai plots to one day reclaim her birthright from her perfidious uncle.
- **Marrowspitter** (CN male gnoll druid 7): Filled with restless energy, Marrowspitter has romantic feelings for Kai.
- **Marra Brandytopple** (NE female halfling summoner 7/ranger 1): Haunted by her parents’ deaths, Marra is haunted by a gigantic black mastiff.
- **Mercutsio** (CE male half-elf rogue 1/bard 7): Ravishing life for everything he can get, Mercutsio is a depraved, self-centred hedonist.
- **Torn Tusk** (NE male half-orc sorcerer [elemental—fire] 8): A savage combatant who delights in burning his enemies, Torn nurses a sullen hatred for Marrowspitter.
- **“Captain” LeVar** (CN male human afflicted wereshark rogue 3/fighter 4): Of his life before infection LeVar remembers almost nothing.

Kai turned to smuggling after encountering Marrowspitter, a gnoll already working as a smuggler. After purchasing supplies from the gnoll, Kai suggested that they would be better served working together, for a larger profit. The two met Marra Brandytopple shortly afterwards and she gladly joined the group. Sometime later, circumstances partnered the smugglers with Mercutsio and Torn Tusk who had already formed an unlikely friendship. This was an arrangement all found agreeable. And one that continued for several years until the group encountered “Captain” LeVar Perilous, a human infected with

lycanthropy. The five invited LeVar to join their band and he gladly provides muscle for the Scoundrels.

The group refers to themselves as “the Scoundrels,” or “Kai’s Scoundrels”. They’ve become known by that name to thieves’ guilds, city watches and sheriffs through the land.

OPERATION

Kai’s Scoundrels are like any business; they purchase product from their suppliers and sell it to customers at an increased price. Of course, unlike a normal business much of the Scoundrel’s goods are illicit in nature. Each of the Scoundrels covets wealth (but for different reasons) and thus far their association has brought much success.

After identifying an opportunity (rebels in need of weapons, an unscrupulous collector of rare artworks, a thief needing to off-load certain items and so on) the Scoundrels (through Kai or Mercutsio) introduce themselves and work out a deal. The Scoundrels prefer to avoid heavily built-up areas during their work and often (using LeVar’s expertise) travel via a small sail boat. Through Marrowspitter and Torn Tusk, the Scoundrels are able to deal with humanoid tribes that other smugglers cannot safely approach. When dealing with such customers, the Scoundrels normally transport weapons and armour or act as intermediaries during ransom negotiations.

While Kai’s Scoundrels occasionally deal in immoral substances like drugs, poisons, alcohol or weapons, they also transport banned artworks or books, foods, persons or even religious iconography. Because of their transient lifestyle, Kai’s Scoundrels have a preference for goods that can easily be carried on their persons, or in small vehicles.

The Scoundrels avoid humanoid trafficking, for moral and practical reasons as well as the difficulties the Captain’s “problem” presents. For a slice of the profits, the Scoundrels can

LORE

A character making a Knowledge (local) check, or a Diplomacy check to gather information, may know some information about Kai’s Scoundrels. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 10: Smuggling is a revenue sources for thieves’ guilds. Those looking to contact smugglers should start there.

DC 15: A particular band of smugglers, called Kai’s Scoundrels, are adept at getting merchandise into the hands of those willing to pay for it.

DC 20: Kai’s Smugglers are six mercenaries who operate as highly successful smugglers. Those who crave things that are difficult to acquire praise their resourcefulness. (PCs making this check also learn how to send a message to the Scoundrels).

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Kai’s Scoundrels’ design enables a GM to easily insert the smugglers into his home campaign. PCs may be looking for contraband that the Scoundrels can provide. Peaceful initial contact can make later conflict with the Scoundrels more involving. Alternately, the Scoundrels could be supplying humanoids that the PCs are trying to eliminate, or the PCs may try to stop the Scoundrels from delivering such goods. A sheriff or bailiff may have uncovered the Scoundrels’ activities and hires the PCs to arrest or kill the Scoundrels. It’s also possible the Scoundrels could have been hired to transport something the PCs wish to acquire, either for themselves or a patron.

Finally, depending on your PCs’ backgrounds, they might have prior knowledge of individual scoundrels.

be hired by thieves' guilds, to transport goods to distant buyers.

The Scoundrels are also struggling to prevent LeVar sinking further into the curse of lycanthropy. They've tried belladonna to no effect, and likewise had no luck with *remove curse* or *break enchantment*. As LeVar goes without being cured, it becomes more likely his transformation will be irreversible, but the Scoundrels aren't sure what other options there might be. When the Scoundrels realize the Captain has become incurable, they're likely to destroy the creature, rather than let it loose.

SAFE HOUSES & BOLT-HOLES

Although they move around constantly, the Scoundrels maintain several isolated bolt-holes, located in remote wilderness areas. A bolthole might be a small tunnel complex, a cottage or hunting lodge or even a simple cave. If unexpectedly separated, the Scoundrels reunite at the nearest bolthole in a week's time.

With others located a few days travel from most major cities and towns in which they have worked, the Scoundrels' various boltholes are each about a thousand square feet (30 x 30 ft) in size. They are barely large enough to hold the entire group, but easy to hide. Little of value is stored inside, for security and so that the Scoundrels are not obligated to return in the future to

recover their treasures.

Similarly, the Scoundrels have safe houses in several major cities. Like their bolt-holes, these safe houses store nothing of particular value, being deliberately set up to be disposable. While working in a city or town, the Scoundrels rent a small house (furnished, if possible) or a number of rooms at a good inn from which to operate.

They've also been known to lease rooms from thieves' guilds or former business acquaintances. However, after an incident where several thousand gold pieces worth of silks and spices mysteriously disappeared while the Scoundrels were at a meeting with the local thieves guild, they prefer to carry their contraband with them.

Of course, the Scoundrels also have contacts with many nefarious groups who could provide shelter and succour in extremis. Through LeVar's contacts, the group also has access to a number of ocean-going vessels, making travel to remote islands, distant trading posts and so on much easier.

ENCOUNTERING KAI'S SCOUNDRELS

You can adjust the CR of Initial Contact and Savage Foes by adding (increasing the CR by one) or removing (decreasing the CR by one) a Scoundrel.

INITIAL CONTACT (EL 10; XP 9,600)

Opponents Kai, Mercutio and Marra.

Set-Up The PCs encounter Kai, Mercutio and Marra while drinking in a bar or searching for a difficult-to-find item. The Scoundrels are initially indifferent to the PCs, but if rendered friendly may aid the PCs find what they seek (for a handsome fee). If the PCs attack, the Scoundrels first objective is to flee. They'll return later for revenge.

Tactics Kai focuses on dealing damage in melee, while Mercutio protects Kai and keeping her alive. Marra summons creatures and give Kai the chance to flank.

Morale This team concentrates on withdrawing, to fight again in more favourable circumstances.

Terrain urban; **Encounter Distance** 1d10 x 10 ft., or indoors.

SAVAGE FOES (EL 10; XP 9,600)

Opponents Marrowspitter, Torn Tusk and Captain LeVar

Set-Up The PCs may encounter these three Scoundrels as they invade a humanoid tribe's lair; the Scoundrels are there on business – either buying or selling. The Scoundrels do not aid in the lair's defence and only fight if attacked. They flee at the first opportunity, but may approach the PCs if they end up with the item(s) the Scoundrels were negotiating to acquire. Their initial contact is peaceful – they'll try to purchase the item at a reasonable price. If the Scoundrels

are rebuffed, they'll resort to thievery (once they've gathered the entire band).

Tactics If it's a full moon, Torn Tusk and Marrowspitter supporting LeVar. Other times, Marrowspitter uses his spells to prevent opponents from maneuvering. The Captain eliminates a single foe at a time, flanking if possible, as Torn Tusk rains down area of affect damage.

Morale If the Scoundrels feel they're outmatched after two combat rounds, they'll withdraw. On or near the full moon, the Captain may be left behind.

Terrain humanoid lair; **Encounter Distance** 2d6 x 10 ft.

THE SCOUNDRELS (EL 12; XP 19,200)

Opponents Kai, Mercutio, Marra, Marrowspitter, Torn Tusk and Captain LeVar

Set-Up The Scoundrels are only encountered en-mass while they are working. While they rest between jobs, they socialise in smaller groups. Alternatively, the PCs may discover one of the Scoundrel's bolt-holes.

Tactics Together, the Scoundrels are at their most deadly. The Captain, Kai, Marrowspitter and Mercutio close for melee combat, flanking as often as possible. Marra's summoned creatures try to crowd out her opponents and provide flanking opportunities. And Torn Tusk blasts away, mostly trying to avoid hitting his comrades.

Morale If attacked unexpectedly, the Scoundrels escape as quickly as possible, regrouping later. When they're on the offensive, if Kai feels the Scoundrels are outmatched after two combat rounds, she signals a withdrawal. If any of the Scoundrels fall in battle, though, it's a fight to the death.

Terrain any; **Encounter Distance** various

COMBAT & TACTICS

Kai's Scoundrels consider discretion the better part of valour and unless prevented from fleeing, the Scoundrel's first objective in unexpected combat is escape. The Scoundrels don't shy away from violence, but they're aware that they perform better when combat is on their terms. As rogues, the Scoundrels prefer confined spaces, short ranges and ample opportunities to flank; locations like thieves' guilds, sewers, aboard sailing ships, or other indoor spaces. If they're caught at range or in an open space, the Scoundrels are out of their element and much easier to defeat.

SMUGGLING

When it comes time to move illicit goods from one place to another, Kai's Scoundrels can be ingenious and innovative.

To their way of thinking, the most effective way to avoid being caught with illegal goods is to avoid being caught, period. Over Mercutio's vociferous objections, the Scoundrels prefer wilderness travel, rather than through populated areas. In this way they avoid fellow travellers (and more importantly their fellow travellers' questions). Travelling cross-country often lengthens their trips, which leads to higher fees for their employers, but avoiding the authorities makes the additional time well spent.

Circumstances arise when the authorities can't simply be avoided, such as city gates and border crossings. At these times, the Scoundrels avoid detection by avoiding a thorough search. To achieve this in the past, the Scoundrels have disguised themselves as beggars, missionaries, lepers and town guards; all groups which receive less scrutiny than others. The Scoundrels also use more elaborate ruses; both Kai and Marra have disguised themselves as mothers-to-be, rushing to the midwife moments before giving birth, whereas Torn Tusk and the Captain once hauled a cart of corpses seemingly riddled with the plague (with the contraband stowed within the bodies).

To avoid suspicion when transporting important cargo, the Scoundrels establish a pattern of comings and goings over several weeks. The thoroughness of the guard's searches often decreases with regular visitors and this, combined with a disguise as a simple labourer, is a safe way of transporting hidden goods. On one occasion the Scoundrels spent weeks disguised as washerwomen, carrying baskets filled with the dirtiest linens they could find; they finally moved their goods through once the guards had thoroughly abandoned rooting through the baskets of sodden cloth.

Alternatively, when speed is of the essence, the Scoundrels use a distraction to lure the guards away from their post. Staged combat between Brightfeather and the Black Shuck is very successful in this regard, but Mercutio's ability to create a disruption of this sort remains unrivalled; he has staged

impromptu lovers' quarrels, theatrical performances and civil unrest to enable the Scoundrels to discretely slip past now-unmanned guard posts.

Of course, bribery also works. Guards are usually modestly paid and overworked, and a reasonable amount of gold can convince them to overlook contraband. The Scoundrels use this tactic when the contraband is not harmful in and of itself (it's generally easier to persuade a guard to overlook illegal art or books than weapons) or when they have identified an immoral guard or one that desperately needs gold. This tactic has, however, backfired several times when the guard is offended by or refuses the bribe. Once or twice, a guard has taken the gold but betrayed the Scoundrels; this danger keeps bribery from being one of the Scoundrel's preferred tactics. When the time comes to grease a palm, it's Mercutio that offers the bribe, although Kai prefers to be there as well.

Occasionally, the nature of the contraband may lend itself to or prohibit certain means of transportation. When transporting a series of rare religious writings, the Scoundrels hid the books within crates of iron ingots; the ingots were heavy enough to hide the weight of the books, yet mundane and awkward enough to make a thorough search seem unnecessarily difficult.

In areas where gold, steel or other materials are forbidden or heavily taxed, a plating of other metals avoids most easily used forms of detection. The Scoundrels once avoided onerous taxation on a shipment of steel by having it shaped into religious statues and plating them with gold; the guards were unwilling to risk damaging religious icons and moved the Scoundrels through with the steel undiscovered.

The Scoundrels also fondly recall transporting an immensely expensive painting. To conceal it, they stored it alongside obvious forgeries of other famous works, and posed as merchants selling such reproductions. At one point, a professional art appraiser hired by the city guards to locate stolen artwork examined the works; as the Scoundrels struggled to contain their laughter, he savaged the supposed reproduction for terrible use of colour and wild brush-strokes compared to the "original."

Finally, occasionally the Scoundrels use magic to ply their trade. As they approach checkpoints, contraband can be stowed

SLEIGHT OF HAND AND PERCEPTION

As noted in the description of Sleight of Hand, it's easier to find items than it is to hide them. Usually, the Scoundrels take time to prepare before going through a checkpoint, taking 20 on their Sleight of Hand checks to conceal their contraband. It's possible for a group of guards to take 20 searching a vehicle or container, but unless their suspicions have been raised in some way, it's rare; conducting such a thorough search on every vehicle or container would be enormously time-consuming and lead to lengthy queues (and delays).

on the Black Shuck, who is then concealed (but not dismissed) while the Scoundrels proceed. Once she has passed the guards, Marra can use *maker's call* to retrieve the Shuck, contraband included. Some durable goods can be swallowed by Brightfeather and later regurgitated, and the roc's great fly speed is useful when avoiding or escaping authorities. Spells such as *disguise self* (practically a requirement if Marrowspitter is to enter a city), *invisibility*, *misdirection*, *shrink item* and *wood shape* can be used to conceal items. Plans that rely on magic, however, are often easily uncovered with a simple *detect magic*; for this reason, the Scoundrels prefer mundane methods of concealment and misdirection.

SMUGGLER'S GEAR

When they carry contraband on their persons, the Scoundrels use several different pieces of equipment to conceal it. Unless otherwise noted a character using this gear to conceal items negates the +4 bonus that normally applies to a searcher frisking them. A DC 20 Perception check locates a hidden compartment, unless otherwise noted.

Gear listed here costs 10% (or 5 gp, whichever is greater) more than a standard item of the relevant type.

Clothing Linings: A second lining sewn into clothing hides light or soft items. Concealed pockets can also be put inside most clothing. The majority of Marra, Mercutio, and Torn Tusk's clothes have such linings.

Empty Heels: Both Kai and the Captain wear boots with an empty heel, allowing small items to be stored inside.

False Scabbards: Excluding member's that do not wield a blade, every Scoundrel has a hollow compartment within their weapon's scabbard. A hollow chamber adds an extra 1-2 inches length to a sword's scabbard (or somewhat less for a dagger) and enables the Scoundrel to hide gems, potions and the like.

Pouch Linings: Every pocket, pouch, backpack, tent and bedroll owned by Scoundrels has at least one such lining.

Secret Compartments: All manner of containers, from crates to barrels, can be modified to store hidden items. One of the Scoundrel's most fiscally rewarding jobs is smuggling duty free alcohol; to do so, they purchase barrels, in which they create divided chambers. The majority of the barrel is filled with alcohol, while the smaller chamber, attached to the spigot, is filled with water (or, in one memorable case, pickled onions).

HOW DO THEY PAY FOR ALL THIS?

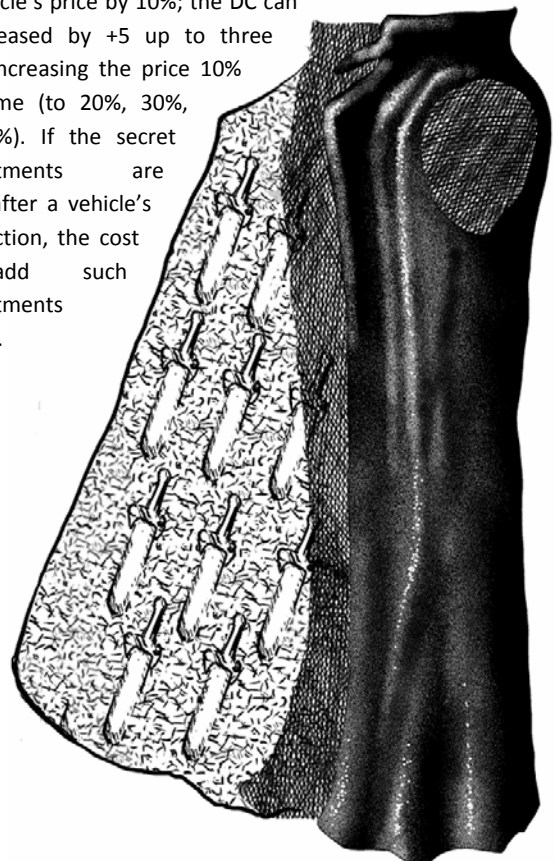
Each of the Scoundrels is noted as having roughly a thousand gold pieces worth of their "product" on hand. At times, this is literally in actual illicit goods, but just as often it's invested in the costuming, bribes, disguises, props and tools that are described here. Any such expenses are factored in to the sales costs of the Scoundrel's wares, of course.

Modified storage containers are often difficult or illegal to acquire. Their price is based on the difficulty of the Perception checks to notice the hidden compartment. A simple false bottom in a crate or barrel (DC 15 Perception check locates), costs 50 gp (in addition to the container's price); the DC can be increased by +5 up to three times, doubling the price increase each time (to 100, 200, and 400 gp). Adding hidden compartments to an existing container increases the costs by 50%.

Vehicles: Some contraband is so bulky that it can only be transported in specially modified vehicles.

Such hidden spaces can be simple or elaborate, but generally contain about 10-20% of the vehicle's entire load (in general, a higher percentage can be concealed in a larger vehicle). The Scoundrels occasionally purchase or hire such vehicles for use, but rarely employ anything larger than a cart or merchant's wagon; this caution comes after having a merchant's wagon with a storage compartment concealed in the undercarriage seized. This disaster led to several hours of awkward questions and a rather bloody rescue by Marrowspitter and Mercutio.

Vehicles with hiding places are expensive, but are commonly employed by merchants seeking to hide their most valuable goods from brigands and thieves. The additional price for such hidden compartments is based on the difficulty of the Perception checks to notice the secret compartment: a basic false bottom or floor (DC 15 Perception check locates), increases the vehicle's price by 10%; the DC can be increased by +5 up to three times, increasing the price 10% each time (to 20%, 30%, and 40%). If the secret compartments are added after a vehicle's construction, the cost to add such compartments doubles.



PERSONA: “KILLER” KAI LINNOW

Half her life has been motivated by a desire for vengeance.

Background: Kai was born Kaira Linnow, daughter and heir to Baron Linnow. She lived a life of privilege, exposed to the finery of nobility, but the innocence and privilege of her childhood came to a crashing end when she was seven, as her uncle led hobgoblin mercenaries into her home and slew her father. Through the actions of a few brave guards, Kaira and her brother, Kilroy, escaped into the woods, only for Kilroy to succumb to his wounds later that night. The young Kaira clung to the vivid memory of holding her dying brother, and began nursing a thirst for revenge.

Fleeing her home (and triumphant uncle), Kaira travelled to a nearby large city as a beggar pleading for (or stealing) coin, food and transportation. Arriving in the city, the intelligent, attractive and nimble young girl was quickly recruited into the thieves’ guild. She took to her lessons with uncommon ferocity, becoming a prodigal student and impressing the guildmaster. When her aptitude of magic manifested itself, the guild apprenticed her to a magus who owed the guildmaster a debt.

With the combination of magical talent and thieves’ skills Kai quickly became one of the guild’s enforcers, hunting those who tried to avoid the guild’s fees. However, after serving for several years, she amicably severed ties with the guild to join Marrowspitter and begin what would become Kai’s Scoundrels.

Personality: Kai is a furiously angry young woman. She spends most nights haunted by visions of her brother dying in her arms, or worse, having risen from the grave and demanding to know why she hasn’t yet avenged him. She is obsessed with making money, intending to eventually fund a campaign to reclaim her birthright from her usurper uncle.



Kai often appears cold and uninvolved, allowing others among the Scoundrels to do most of the work. She opens up with the other Scoundrels, more comfortable in their company.

Kai once believed in the rule of law and the virtue of being a good person, but she feels life has shown her that a person gets what they want through force; that the strong survive by plundering the weak and that the law is an inconvenience to be avoided. Somewhere inside her, she still wants to believe all the things her father taught her; Kai is not truly evil, although she could easily fall into that black abyss. She hasn’t abandoned the idea of laws and justice, but she’s become unconvinced that they play a real role in the world, other than as stories told to make young children behave.

Kai’s well-buried heart has prevented the Scoundrels from engaging in some of the worst elements of criminal enterprise and is responsible for her decision to spare Captain LeVar’s life. Kai sees parallels between herself and the Captain; like her, a bout of brutal violence beyond his control ripped his life away. This pity, however, only extends so far and she realizes that the Captain’s situation will have to be addressed, sooner rather than later.

Despite herself, Kai continues to have a weak spot for the children and the helpless; a number of times, she’s ordered the Scoundrels to go out of their way to avoid harming a child. If someone threatens a child in her presence, she acts swiftly and decisively to end the threat.

Mannerisms: Kai wears a smirk that she can’t wipe from her face. She is continuously opening and closing both of her fists, often cracking her knuckles while doing so. She also constantly watches a room’s exits.

Distinguishing Features: Kai’s luxurious raven-coloured hair is worn long. She has bright blue eyes and alabaster skin marked by dark black tribal tattoos along her curves. She dresses in form-fitting clothing, accentuating her athletic physique.

KAI’S ALIGNMENT

With her motivations and willingness to do anything to accomplish her goals, ‘Killer’ Kai certainly seems a match for the evil alignment. But she’s not indiscriminate – in fact, she is hesitant to kill (as opposed to most truly evil foes), and isn’t willing to harm those she believes don’t “deserve” it.

Similarly, as a criminal, she shows more than a little contempt for law, but believes in the order those laws provide. She lives by her own code, and is unwilling to compromise on those terms, neither of which are characteristics of a truly chaotic person. Since she’s neither good nor truly evil, and neither chaotic or lawful, Kai’s alignment is neutral.

Hooks: Vengeance motivates Kai, although she tries to hide it. Characters might be involved with her through ties to her father, or her usurping uncle. She also made both friends and enemies in the thieves' guild and PCs might know her from there.

Relations: Marra is dear to Kai's heart and as close as family. She feels pity for the Captain's miserable state and would like to alleviate his curse. She considers Mercutio an amusing buffoon, while Torn Tusk's dour personality prevents the two from truly growing close. She has developed intense, even romantic,

KILLER KAI CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This striking, raven-haired beauty wears a light chain shirt and a smirking sneer and appears almost eager for a fight.

Female human magus 7/rogue 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +8 (+9 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +7

Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Acrobatics +12, Swim +5

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 21; **Dodge** (+2 Dex, +5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +1 deflection, +1 dodge [ring of protection +1])

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

hp 62 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7

Melee +1 scimitar +9 (1d6+3/18-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +8 (1d8+2/x3)

Atk Options Arcane Strike (+2 damage), arcane accuracy, arcane pool, sneak attack +1d6

Arcane Accuracy (Su) As a swift action, Kai gains a +3 insight bonus on attack rolls until the end of her turn. This costs 1 arcane pool.

Arcane Pool (Su) Kai has 8 points in her arcane pool, which refreshes daily when she prepares spells. As a swift action, Kai grants a weapon she is holding a +2 enhancement bonus for 1 minute. Alternatively, Kai can add any of the following weapon properties: *flaming*, *flaming burst*, *frost*, *icy burst*, *keen*, *shock*, or *shocking burst*, using an amount of bonus equal to the property's price modifier. These bonuses stack with existing enhancements; bonuses and properties are decided when this ability is used and do not apply if the weapon is used by anyone else. If Kai uses this ability again, previous uses immediately end. Using this ability costs 1 pool.

Magus Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +10 [+14 casting defensively or grappling]; empowered magic, knowledge pool, spell combat, spellstrike, spell recall)

3rd—*displacement*, *vampiric touch*

2nd—*bull's strength*, *glitterdust* (DC 15), *invisibility* (2)

1st—*shield*, *shocking grasp* (2), *grease* (2; DC 14)

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

Empowered Magic (Su) Kai can cast one spell each day as if it were modified by Empower Spell, without increasing the

feelings for the gnom, Marrowsplitter; the two spend evenings talking and Kai finds his presence a great comfort.

Tactics: If possible, Kai starts a fight invisible and displaced. She closes to melee as quickly as possible, using Arcane Pool to make her +1 scimitar both *flaming* and *frosting*, while casting either *grease* or *displacement* (and using spell combat, if possible). Subsequently, if she's having difficulty hitting, she use Arcane Accuracy, but otherwise uses Arcane Strike each round. Kai fights aggressively, using Spell Combat every round with *invisibility*, *shocking grasp* or (for healing) *vampiric touch*.

casting time or the level of the spell.

Knowledge Pool (Su) When Kai prepares her spells she can treat any one spell from her spell list as if it were in her spellbook, preparing that spell for the day. If she loses this spell if she does not cast it before the next time she prepares spells. She can restore spells cast in this way using her spell recall ability. Using this ability costs one arcane pool per spell level (minimum 1). Kai could use this ability to prepare *fireball* or *dispel magic* (among other spells), but tends not to.

Spell Combat (Ex) When she has a free hand, as a full-round action, Kai can both cast a spell and make melee attacks. All her attack rolls take a -2 penalty and she can cast a prepared spell with a casting time of 1 standard action. If she casts defensively, she can take up to a -3 penalty on all her attack rolls and add the same amount as a circumstance bonus on her concentration check. If the check fails the spell is wasted and her attacks still take the penalty. Kai can choose to cast, or make weapon attacks, first.

Spellstrike (Su) When Kai casts a touch spell she can deliver the spell through her weapon as a melee attack instead of the melee touch attack that normally delivers the spell. Kai makes a free attack with her weapon (at her highest bonus) and if successful deals normal damage plus the effects of the spell. This attack uses the weapon's critical range.

Spell Recall (Su) As a swift action, Kai recalls a single spell she has already cast by expending Arcane Pool points equal to the spell's level (minimum 1). The spell is prepared again, just as if it had not been cast.

Combat Gear wand of *invisibility* (5 charges), *scroll of fireball* (2), arrows (20)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 10

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Dodge, Extra Arcane Pool, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills as above plus Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Linguistics +7, Spellcraft +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Gnom

Gear as above plus signet ring (from the Linnow barony sized appropriately to a young girl), 1,000 gp in gems, jewellery and the Scoundrel's current product

Spellbook 3rd—*displacement*, *vampiric touch*, 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *glitterdust*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *web*, 1st—*burning hands*, *colour spray*, *feather fall*, *grease*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *true strike*, *chill touch*, 0th—all (as wizard)

PERSONA: MARRA BRANDYWINE

She escaped fate, only to be followed by the Black Shuck.

Background: Young Marra Brandywine was not an exemplary ranger. She trained because her parents were hunters and she was loath to disappoint them, but despite their hard work, she showed no knack for the outdoor life.

While training with her parents, Marra heard a distant, haunting wail. Her parents turned her around and retreated toward camp, obviously fearful of the source of the howling. As Marra scampered up an embankment near their camp, she looked up to see an immense mastiff, black as night, standing on the hill and felt the stones she was holding give way. Marra's father dove to catch her, and her mother ran to help him; as the hillside gave way and buried her parents, fortune allowed Marra to cling to a tree-root and avoid the lethal cave-in.

Since that time, the Black Shuck, a spirit of misfortune and death, has escorted Marra. Normally, the Shuck appears to those on the verge of death; Marra believes the Shuck has been 'forced' to follow her because it wrongly predicted her demise.

MARRA BRANDYWINE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Shorter than a typical halfling this woman bears cherubic, smiling face and looks ready to burst into laughter.

Female halfling summoner 7/ranger 1

NE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +3; **Senses** bond senses; Perception +5

Bond Senses (Su) As a standard action for up to seven rounds each day, Marra shares all the senses the Black Shuck, sensing everything it does. There is no range to this effect, but Marra and the Shuck must be on the same plane. Marra can end this effect as a free action.

Speed 20 ft.

ACP -1; **Acrobatics** +8, **Climb** +0, **Ride** +13, **Stealth** +10

AC 20, **touch** 15, **flat-footed** 16; **CMD** 17

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +5 armour [+1 *chain shirt*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

hp 64 (8 HD); shield ally

Shield Ally (Ex) Whenever Marra is within the Shuck's reach (10 ft.) and he is not grappled, helpless, paralyzed, stunned or unconscious, Marra gains a +2 shield bonus to her AC and a +2 circumstance bonus on her saving throws.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk lance (reach 10 ft.) +7/+2 (1d6-1/x3)

Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +10/+5 (1d4-1/x3)

Atk Options Mounted Combat, favoured enemy (animals +2)

Special Actions eidolon, maker's call

Eidolon (Su) Marra summons the Black Shuck with a minute-long ritual. His hit points are unchanged from the last time he was summoned (unless he was slain, in which case, he returns with half his total hp). Marra can dismiss the Shuck as a standard action; otherwise, the Shuck can be sent back by *dismissal* or *banishment* (but not *dispel magic*), is

Personality: To Marra, every moment she lives comes to her through fortune, as it was luck that saved her from her parents' fate. She revels in living, drinking and eating cheerfully while always smiling and laughing with an infectious *joie de vivre*. Only dire circumstances cause Marra even a moment of seriousness.

Marra both loves and loathes her sinister Eidolon. She rides the Shuck, treating him as a beloved pet; yet, it was this creature that killed her parents. Marra resents the Shuck for their deaths and shows no concern if the Shuck is injured or killed.

The Black Shuck is Marra's grim opposite. The Shuck has never met anything it likes, constantly issuing guttural growls while it exudes a sense of menace. Marra ignores the Shuck's growls, disregarding the beast's behaviour until someone else remarks up on it.

Mannerisms: Marra always has a joke at the ready and is never without food or drink in her hand. Her sense of humour isn't hurtful or insulting; she, prefers to laugh along with those around her instead of at them.

banished seven rounds after Marra becomes unconscious, falls asleep, or is killed, and is banished if reduced to or below negative hp equal to his Constitution score. Treat the Black Shuck as a summoned creature that can touch and attack creatures warded by *protection from evil* and similar effects. The Shuck and Marra bear an identical glowing rune for as long as he is summoned. This rune can be hidden through mundane means, but cannot be concealed through magic (although *invisibility* conceals it while the spell lasts).

Maker's Call (Su) As a standard action once per day, when the Shuck is on the same plane, Marra can call it to her side (as *dimension door*, CL 7). When this is done, the Shuck appears as close as possible to Marra. If the Shuck is out of range, the ability is wasted.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11)

7/day—summon monster IV (Augmented Summoning; used only when the Shuck is not summoned; duration 7 minutes; if used a second time, the first use immediately ends.)

Summoner Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +11; share spells)

3rd—*black tentacles*, *summon monster IV*

2nd—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *haste*, *invisibility*, *summon eidolon*

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *grease*, *identify*, *mage armour*, *shield*

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*

Combat Gear +1 *shocking arrow* (5), arrows (20)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 18

SQ wild empathy (+5, +1 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Augmented Summoning, Mounted Combat, Resilient Eidolon, Spell Focus (conjuration)

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +10, Knowledge (nature) +5, Spellcraft +12, Survival +4 (+5 tracking)

Languages Common, Elven, Halfling; link

Gear as above plus *bag of holding* (type I), 850 gp in jewellery or whatever the Scoundrels are presently transporting.

THE BLACK SHUCK

This immense mastiff stands as tall at the shoulder as a man. It has fur black as night and glowing red eyes.

NE Medium outsider

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +9

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +12, Climb +13, Stealth +9

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 24
(+3 Dex, +11 natural)

Weakness *dismissal* or *banishment*; see *Eidolon*, above.

Fort +6, **Ref** +8 (evasion), **Will** +2 (+6 vs. enchantments)

hp 45 (6 HD)

Life Link (Su) Whenever the Black Shuck takes damage that reduces it to or below -13 hp, as a free action Marra can sacrifice hit points and prevent that much damage done to the Shuck. This can prevent the Shuck from being sent back to its home plane.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11

Melee bite (reach 10 ft.) +12 (1d8+7 plus push)

Atk Options Power Attack (-2 to hit, +6 to damage), magic attacks

Push (Ex) In addition to dealing damage with his bite, the Black Shuck may make a free combat manoeuvre check. If successful, its opponent is pushed back 5 ft.

Abilities Str 20, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 11

SQ devotion, evolutions (bonus—bite, climb, limbs [legs] 2; selected—ability increase [Str], improved damage [bite], improved natural armour, magic attacks, mount, push, reach [bite], scent)

Feats Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +6, Survival +9

Languages Common, Elven, Halfling; link

SUMMON EIDOLON

School conjuration (summoning); **Level** summoner 2

Casting Time 1 round

Components V, S, M (a silver coin)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one eidolon

Duration 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You open a rift between dimensions that summons your eidolon. Treat this as if you had summoned your eidolon normally, except that it only remains with you for the duration of this spell. While summoned in this way, your eidolon cannot touch any creature warded by *protection from evil* or a similar effect and your eidolon can be sent back to its home plane by *dispel magic*.

If you cast this spell while your eidolon is already on your plane, this spell has no effect. This spell allows you to summon your eidolon even if it has been returned to its home plane due to damage.

The Black Shuck behaves as it appears: a huge mastiff, irritable in demeanour and menacing of mien.

Distinguishing Features: Marra has bright red hair, a swathe of freckles across her nose, pleasant dimples and a smile that can light a room. She dresses in comfortable, simple clothes, often in dark colours that hide dirt well.

Hooks: Other characters may have heard stories of the Black Shuck, and some may have even heard about the death of Marra's parents and the missing young girl. As an attractive young woman, Marra has also left some broken hearts along her way, some of which might still seek her out.

Relations: Marra considers Kai a sister, and knows that she buries a deep pain, but wants Kai to enjoy what pleasures she can. She finds the Captain unnerving, even in human form. She enjoys Mercutio, and the two have spent drunken nights in each other's company. She admires Torn Tusk's talent for spellcraft but finds the half-orc too sullen. Marrowspitter's black sense of humour and the burgeoning romance between he and Kai pleases Marra immensely.

Tactics: Given time to prepare, Marra dismisses the Black Shuck and use her *summon monster* spell and spell-like ability to summon a handful of creatures, then recalls the Shuck with her *summon eidolon* spell. During combat, Marra casts spells from the Shuck's back, strengthening the Shuck and summoning more creatures.



PERSONA: "CAPTAIN" LEVAR

He struggles to resist the curse of bestial savagery.

Background: Captain LeVar remembers little of his past; he's not sure if LeVar is his first name, or last. He remembers being bitten, though; he remembers the smell of the sea, the sudden stillness; the cries of men around him as strangely piscine figures with black, empty eyes climbed aboard the ship. He remembers fighting, then the red-hot pain of one of the creatures clamping onto his thigh, and the ice-cold water. He remembers being desperate to swim, unable to breathe, and then, he recalls darkness.

Some time later, wet and cold, the scoundrels found him. They nursed him back to good health; for that, and not ending him when his curse revealed itself, the Captain owes the Scoundrels his life.

The Captain is succumbing to his lycanthropy. Some nights, he recovers consciousness soaked in blood and with a bloated belly. The Captain has avoided satiating his hunger on the Scoundrels, who are acutely aware of his 'problem' (another reason they avoid populated areas).

Personality: In his human form, the Captain is reserved, cautious to voice his thoughts in case he's forgotten something relevant and looks foolish. The constant feeling that he's forgetting something makes him bellicose, though he's close enough with the Scoundrels to check himself.



When in hybrid or animal form, the primal consciousness of the shark takes over and the Captain is consumed by the shark's animalistic desires (particularly the need to feed).

Mannerisms: The Captain speaks much like a stereotyped pirate, sneering a great deal (the scar on his right cheek prevents many other facial expressions). He nods or shakes his head constantly during conversation and has difficulty sitting still for long periods of time.

It's notable that the Captain may not actually be a Captain. He certainly knows about sailing ships and commanding seagoing vessels, but his memories aren't distinct enough to actually say that he ever held such a rank. The Scoundrels gave him the moniker "Captain" based on his mannerisms.

"CAPTAIN" LEVAR

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This leather-faced man has a scar running across his forehead and left eye. He wears a torn and ripped heavy black jacket over his breastplate.

Male human afflicted wereshark rogue 3/fighter 4

CN Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +10 (+11 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +10

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

ACP -2; Acrobatics +6, Stealth +5, Swim +8

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 19; +1 vs. traps (+2 Dex, +7 armour [+1 breastplate], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence])

Fort +7, **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps), **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

hp 56 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +7

Melee +1 battleaxe +9/+4 (1d8+2/x3) or

Melee +1 battleaxe +7/+2 (1d8+2/x3) and
mwk handaxe +7/+2 (1d6+1x3)

Ranged throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +8 (1d6+1)

Atk Options Power Attack (-2 attack, +2 damage with hand axe +6 damage with battleaxe), Vital Strike, sneak attack +2d6

Change Shape (Su) Using a full-round action, the Captain makes a DC 15 Constitution check to change to hybrid or animal form. The full moon gives the Captain a +5 morale bonus to shift to animal or hybrid form.

Combat Gear *potion of displacement* (2), *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), evasion, rogue talent (combat trick)

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (handaxe)

Skills as above plus Bluff +4, Intimidate +5, Profession (sailor) +10, Sleight of Hand +5, Survival +8

Languages Common

Gear as above plus alchemical silver manacles (Large), 1,000 gp in jewels or the Scoundrel's current product

Distinguishing Features: If he stood at full height, the Captain would tower six and a half feet tall, but he spends his life half-crouching, used to the movement of a ship beneath him. He has weather-beaten skin, a dark red scar across his forehead and left eye and black eyes that glimmer with menace. He wears a scraggly black beard and wears a torn but functional black jacket and a wide-brimmed hat, regardless of the weather. Tattoos cover his arms and chest and his back bears thick scars from the lash. With a mess of small scars and pox-marks across his face and arms, the Captain is an easy man to recognize.

Hooks: While he may not remember anyone from his time as a sailor, any number of people could remember the Captain.

“CAPTAIN” LEVAR (HYBRID FORM) CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Where once stood a man, now there is a terrible, grey, thing, with soulless black eyes and a gaping maw of nightmarish teeth.

Male human afflicted wereshark rogue 3 / fighter 4
CN Large humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10 (+11 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +10

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; Swim 40 ft., base swim 60 ft

ACP -2; **Acrobatics** +6, **Stealth** +1, **Swim** +16

AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 22; **CMD** 22; +1 vs. traps (-1 size, +2 Dex, +7 armour [+1 *breastplate*], +1 shield [Two-Weapon Defence], +6 natural)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps), **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

hp 63 (7 HD); **DR** Silver/5

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +7

Melee +1 *battleaxe* (with Vital Strike) +10 (4d6+4/x3) or

Melee +1 *battleaxe* +10/+5 (2d6+4/x3) and bite +3 (1d8+4) or

Melee +1 *battleaxe* +8/+3 (2d6+4/x3) and mwk handaxe +8/+3 (1d8+3) and bite +3 (1d8+4)

Ranged throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +8 (1d6+1)

Atk Options Power Attack (-2 attack, +4 damage with battleaxe and bite, +2 with hand axe), sneak attack +2d6

Change Shape (Su) As a full-round action the Captain can make a DC 15 Constitution check to change to animal form, or a DC 20 Constitution check to change to human form. The full moon gives a +5 morale bonus to shift to animal form, and a -5 penalty to shift to human form.

Combat Gear *potion of displacement* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), evasion, rogue talent (combat trick), trapfinding

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (handaxe)

Skills as above plus Bluff +4, Intimidate +5, Profession (sailor) +10, Sleight of Hand +5, Survival +8

Languages Common

Gear as above plus alchemical silver manacles (Large), 1,000 gp in jewels or the Scoundrel’s current product

Anything from former employers to spurned lovers may be looking for him, for anything from paying a debt to repaying the Captain for services rendered. The Captain has blackouts, some of which have lead to a loss of life; such an incident might cause sheriffs or private citizens to come looking for the Captain.

Relations: The Captain recognizes his debt to the Scoundrels and in particular to Kai. He knows that the Scoundrels will kill him once he has been lost to his lycanthropy and he is grimly thankful for it. With no past and doom looming in his future, the Captain values the Scoundrels as friends. When the Captain does meet his end, though, he’ll do it taking Mercutio with him. He knows the half-elf is dangerously unstable, and likely to eventually lead the others into disaster

Tactics: If he’s given a chance to prepare, Captain LeVar changes into hybrid form (with his weapons drawn, so he doesn’t forget them later). If taken by surprise, he tries to withdraw to shift to hybrid form then rejoins combat. The Captain tries to flank opponents to use his sneak attack.

During nights of the full moon, the Captain has his allies secure him in a set of alchemical silver manacles, to prevent further lethal blackouts.

“CAPTAIN” LEVAR (ANIMAL FORM) CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This dull grey fish’s fins slice through the water, its black eyes rolling and its gaping jaws showing countless teeth.

Male human afflicted wereshark rogue 3 / fighter 4
CN Large humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10 (+11 vs. traps, trapfinding), Sense Motive +10

Speed Swim 60 ft.

ACP 0; **Acrobatics** +8, **Stealth** +3, **Swim** +18

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 22; +1 vs. traps (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps, evasion), **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

hp 63 (7 HD); **DR** silver/5

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +7

Melee bite (with Vital strike) +8 (2d8+4)

Atk Options Power Attack (-2 attack, +6 damage with bite), sneak attack +2d6

Change Shape (Su) As a full-round action the Captain can make a DC 15 Constitution check to change to hybrid form, or a DC 20 Constitution check to change to human form. The full moon gives the Captain a +5 morale bonus to shift to hybrid form, and a -5 penalty to shift to human form.

Abilities Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ armour training (1), bravery (+1), rogue talent (combat trick), trapfinding

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defence, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (handaxe)

Skills as above plus Bluff +4, Intimidate +5, Profession (sailor) +10, Sleight of Hand +5, Survival +8

Languages Common

PERSONA: MARROWSPLITTER

Rejected by his people for his drive, this dynamic gnoll found his own way.

Background: Marrowspitter was born with a goal-oriented personality, a rare and undesirable trait among male gnolls, and found himself a pariah among his people. His druidic talents were desirable to other races, so he struck out to sell his abilities among humanoid communities. While travelling in tropical lands, he encountered the incredible rocs, and summoned one as his animal companion. Less than a year afterward, he met Kai and they formed the Scoundrels.

Personality: A motivated individual, Marrowspitter has none of the laziness that is common to his race. He has a dark sense of humour, enjoys sarcasm and isn't hesitant to speak his mind.

Mannerisms: Marrowspitter growls in a guttural tone as he talks and stares intently at whomever he's speaking with.

Distinguishing Features: Tall and broad, Marrowspitter has well-maintained tan fur with black spots. He wears black dragon scale armour, taken from a druid he defeated in battle. Brightfeather, Marrowspitter's animal companion, is a huge tropical bird, of distinctive appearance.

Hooks: A long time criminal, Marrowspitter has made a number of allies and enemies in black markets across the world, and any of them might look to settle a debt.

Relations: Marrowspitter has romantic feelings for Kai, something he's almost entirely unfamiliar with. He's fond of most of the Scoundrels except the Captain; he would prefer to simply kill the lycanthrope and have done with it.

Tactics: If given time to prepare, Marrowspitter casts *barkskin* and *bull's strength* (using share spells) on both himself

and Brightfeather. He starts combat by casting *shillelagh* and wades into melee. Brightfeather tries to flank with his master, both attacking the same target. Rarely, Marrowspitter rides Brightfeather, but not often in combat.

MARROWSPLITTER

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This hyena-headed humanoid bears a savage-looking cudgel and wears a breastplate of black dragon scales.

Male gnoll druid 7

CN Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive +2

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; Woodland Stride, Trackless Step
Woodland Stride (Ex) Marrowspitter moves through any sort of natural undergrowth at his normal speed and without damage or suffering other impairment. Areas that have been magically manipulated, however, still affect him.

Trackless Step (Ex) Marrowspitter has the option to leave no trail in natural surroundings and prevent be tracked.

ACP -3; Ride +10

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 22

(+1 Dex, +7 armour [+1 *dragonhide breastplate*], +3 shield [+1 *dragonhide heavy*], +1 natural)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7; +4 vs. spell-like abilities and supernatural abilities of fey and spells and effects that target plants

hp 76 (9 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11

Melee club +11/+6 (1d6+5/x2)

Ranged spear (range 20 ft.) +7 (1d8+5)

Atk Options Cleave, Mounted Combat, Power Attack (-2 to hit, +4 damage)

Special Actions wild shape (2/day; *beast shape II* or *elemental body I*)

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +9; share spells)

4th—*spike stones* (DC 16)

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 15), *spike growth* (DC 15)

2nd—*barkskin* (2), *bull's strength* (2)

1st—*cure light wounds*, *entangle* (2), *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*

0—*detect magic*, *light*, *mending*, *purify food & drink*

Combat Gear *scroll of flame strike* (3), *wand of cure moderate wounds* (10 charges)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ, wild empathy (+5, +1 vs. magical beasts), resist nature's lure

Feats Cleave, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills as above plus Knowledge (nature) +9, Linguistics +0, Spellcraft +9, Survival +10

Languages Common, Druidic, Gnoll; link

Gear as above plus 1000 gp in gems, jewellery, or whatever the Scoundrels are presently transporting

BRIGHTFEATHER, MARROWSPLITTER'S ANIMAL COMPANION

This immense bird has brilliant blue plumage, with a streak of red down the chest and sinister-looking talons.

CN Large animal (roc)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

ACP 0; Fly +7, Stealth +7

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 25

(-1 size, +4 Dex, +12 natural)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9 (evasion), **Will** +3 (+7 vs. enchantments)

hp 45 (6 HD)

Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +11

Melee 2 talons (reach 10 ft.) +11 (1d8+6/19-20 plus grab) and bite (reach 10 ft.) +10 (1d8+6)

Atk Options Power Attack (-2 to hit, +4 damage)

Abilities Str 22, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 11

Feats Improved Natural Attack (Talons), Toughness, Weapon Focus (Talons)

Skills as above

Languages understands Common; link

PERSONA: MERCUTSIO

He seems a harmless fop, but he is, in fact, a brutish rake.

Background: Mercutsio's mother told him often that he was an accident. As a boy, he and his mother wanted for nothing financially, but lacked genuine affection, which his resentful mother never provided. As he grew older, he was unable to make friends with his peers, who aged more quickly than the lonely half-elf. Where most children learned how to relate to others, he learned contempt; where others were shown kindness, he received only cruelty and indifference.

MERCUTSIO

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This attractive half-elf is dressed in finery, with a well-crafted rapier at his side.

Male half-elf rogue 1/bard 7

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12 (+13 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +15

Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Acrobatics +14, Escape Artist +15, Stealth +14

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 20

(+4 Dex, +5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +2 shield [+1 light steel], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1])

Immune sleep

Fort +2, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7 (+9 vs. enchantments); +4 vs. sonic, language dependant or bardic performance

hp 31 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9

Melee mwk whip (reach 15 ft.) +10 (1d3 nonlethal) or

Melee mwk whip (reach 15 ft.) +8 (1d3 nonlethal) and mwk spiked shield +8 (1d3)

Atk Options Improved Shield Bash, sneak attack +1d6

Special Actions bardic performance (18 rounds; day; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence [+3], inspire courage [+2], suggestion [DC 15])

Bard Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +9)

3rd—*fear* (DC 15), *glibness*

2nd—*alter self*, *detect thoughts* (DC 14), *eagle's splendour*, *silence* (DC 14)

1st—*charm person* (DC 13), *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *hideous laughter* (DC 13), *unseen servant*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ bardic knowledge (+3), lore master, multitalented (bard, rogue), versatile performance

Feats Agile Manoeuvres, Improved Shield Bash, Skill Focus (Performance [oratory]), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Bluff +13, Diplomacy +16, Disable Device +4, Linguistics +7, Perform (oratory) +16, Perform (string) +13, Sleight of Hand +14, Use Magic Device +13

Languages Common, Celestial, Draconic, Elven, Gnoll Orc

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, 1000 gp in gems, jewellery, or whatever the Scoundrels are transporting

Since reaching adulthood, the half-elf has ravaged his way across the continent, leaving broken hearts and damaged lives in his wake. Mercutsio pursues base pleasures with the thirst of a dying man. He met Torn Tusk moments before a bar brawl (that Mercutsio caused) and back-to-back, the two formed an unlikely alliance. When the duo encountered Kai and her Scoundrels, both sides quickly realized the advantages of an alliance.

Personality: Mercutsio consumes, ravishing life for everything it has to offer. He rarely pauses to consider the harm his actions cause others. Because he values his connection to the Scoundrels, he'll consider their desires, but his need to fulfil his own base urges still lands him in trouble.

Mannerisms: Mercutsio always smiles like the cat that swallowed the canary. He's gregarious to everyone and spends his coin freely on food, drink and women; over the short term, he can come across as generous and pleasant tempered.

Distinguishing Features: The garish clothing Mercutsio wears suits the half-elf's devil-may-care attitude and makes him appealing to naïve young ladies (a fact he values greatly).

Relations: Mercutsio values the Scoundrels for what they can provide him. So far, they provide quite a bit, so he's personable and charming towards them, except toward Captain LeVar, who the half-elf feels has nothing to offer him.

Hooks: Mercutsio has left so many enemies in so many towns, it's a wonder he isn't constantly being attacked. From former suitors to lover's husbands, there are any number of ways characters could have connections to Mercutsio's past.

Tactics: Mercutsio flees combat wherever possible. If his companions are present, he reluctantly stays, using bard performance to aid them and trip and disarm combat manoeuvres.



PERSONA: TORN TUSK

To Torn, the world is crumbling to ashes.

Background: Torn Tusk was born into flames as his mother's hut burned and was found clinging to life in the smouldering cinders.

Fearful of his ominous birth, the orcs of the tribe bullied and taunted the young Torn Tusk, mercilessly mocking him as weak. When his knack for sorcery emerged, he carefully nursed his talents in secret until confident in his abilities. Only then did he take his revenge on those who had spurned him, and was disappointed to find the scent of his tribe's burning flesh did not please him as much as he had hoped.

His tribe in ashes, Torn Tusk travelled the world as a mercenary. He was aimless before saving Mercutsio's life in a bar-fight. Now he finds purpose in accompanying the half-elf on his malicious adventures and in the company of Kai's Scoundrels.

Personality: Torn Tusk sees fire as a metaphor for life: uncaring and remorseless, it consumes, and leaves nothing behind. Ultimately, everything burns. Torn Tusk is a morose and taciturn pessimist who eternally expects the worst.

Mannerisms: Torn Tusk communicates mostly with nods and shakes of his head, or grunts and snarls. When he does speak, it's often to harshly point out the potential flaws or down sides in the proposed plan.

Distinguishing Features: Torn Tusk keeps his full head of thick black hair in neat dreadlocks, and much of his flesh bears burn scars. In dim light, his eyes flicker as though lit from the inside, and he prefers to wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing.

Hooks: As a mercenary, Torn Tusk fought against heroes and villains alike, and any number of enemies or allies from that time might look for him. It's also possible that one or more survivors from his tribe still seek revenge.

Relations: Despite his sullen exterior, Torn Tusk has a fondness for the other Scoundrels. The half-orc lacks the social grace to show this affection, but his need to constantly point out the flaws and negative outcomes in the others plans arises from a heartfelt desire to protect them from being hurt. He's also developed unrequited feelings for Kai, and nurses a growing resentment of her relationship with Marrowspitter.

Tactics: Torn Tusk protects himself regularly with the *mage armour*. Given the opportunity to prepare, Torn Tusk protects three of his companions (starting with Kai) with *protection from energy (fire)*. During combat, after casting *improved invisibility* on himself, he rains down as much damage on his enemies avoiding his friends wherever possible. If he gets a chance, he targets arcane spellcasters with empowered *scorching ray*.

TORN TUSK

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This half-orc's face bears terrible burn scars and his eyes seem to flicker with an inner light.

Male half-orc sorcerer (elemental [fire]) 8

NE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Fly +7

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 17

(+2 Dex, +4 armour [*mage armour*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*])

Resist fire 10

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

hp 62 (8 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity (Ex) Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Torn Tusk can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of his next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, he falls unconscious and begins to die.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4

Melee quarterstaff +4 (1d6)

Ranged mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +7 (1d8/19-20) or

Ranged Touch elemental fire ray (30 ft. range; 7/day) +6 (1d6+4 fire)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12; Empower Spell, bloodline arcana)

4th (4/day)—*greater invisibility*,

3rd (6/day)—*fireball* (DC 19), *fly*, *protection from energy*

2nd (7/day)—*flaming sphere* (DC 18), *scorching ray*, *shatter*, *web* (DC 16)

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 17), *feather fall*, *mage armour*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *shield*

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*

Bloodline Arcana (Su) Torn Tusk can change the damage type (to fire) of any spell inflicting energy damage.

Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (20 charges), *wand of fireball* (CL 10, 5 charges), *wand of displacement* (5 charges)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 18

Feats Empower Spell, Eschew Materials^B, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness

Skills as above plus Bluff +10, Intimidate +12, Spellcraft +12, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Common, Goblin, Orc

Gear as above plus 1,000 gp in gems, jewellery, or whatever the Scoundrels are presently transporting

THANEGAR'S HORDE

Rather incongruously named, Thanegar's Horde by their embittered and crippled half-orc warlord these goblin marauders plague country villages and wandering travellers alike. Held together by the will of their broken lord, the horde comprises the disparate remnants of several goblin tribes along with bugbear and human renegades. Claiming the ruined fortress of Shatterspear Hold, Thanegar unleashes his minions into the surrounding countryside to vent his hatred and anger upon the world while he broods upon his shattered dreams of blood, conquest and glory. Although he has all but abandoned his ambitions of empire, the threat his sizable force of organized goblins represents to the surrounding folk cannot long be ignored

*Amid the crumbling ruins of a shattered keep,
Shrouded in anger, his bitterness deep,
Lurks the battle-scarred leader of a murderous band,
Which preys on travellers and blights the land,*

*Haunted by past failures, his ambition lies broken,
Thus he seethes and broods, his dreams unspoken,
The dregs of many cultures find solace in his hall,
These thugs and wretches are outcasts one and all,*

*From vicious half-orc warrior to petty, self-styled lord,
Crippled Thanegar is the leader of this most degenerate horde...*

THANEGAR'S HORDE

A grandiose epithet for a gang of goblins and bugbear marauders, Thanegar's Horde is the product of a half-orc's lust for power and conquest. Exiled for his treacherous, blood-soaked ambitions by his people, Thanegar assembled a small army of goblins and bugbears and assaulted a modest border fort of a nearby human kingdom. His orcish tactics did not mesh well with his goblin troops, though, and his force was massacred. Retreating into the forest with the few survivors he now claims a ruined keep and sits within brooding — a pauper-king of wretches and outcasts.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY

Though he prefers to call it a horde, what Thanegar really leads is a large gang. The much weakened "horde" now comprises:

- 28 Goblin Warriors (NE goblin warrior 3; page 8)
- 6 Goblin Scouts (NE goblin ranger 5; page 8)
- 4 Goblin Wolfkeepers (NE goblin ranger 6; page 9)
- 14 Bugbear Shock-Troopers (CE bugbear rogue 2/barbarian 1; page 10)
- 11 Human Thugs (NE human fighter 3/rogue 3; page 11)
- Bertliak (CE male bugbear ranger 2/assassin 3; page 12)
- Dhaeris the Cad (CE male half-elf bard 8; page 13)
- Eranil Surnae (NE female dhampir sorcerer [infernal] 8); page 14)
- Gheldorwhik (NE male goblin rogue 7; page 15)
- Thanegar (NE male half-orc oracle [battle] 9; page 16)

Thanegar leads the horde, although some of its members have begun to realise he is not the warlord he claims to be. He exercises his authority through three lieutenants. When none of these are about, however, the goblins organize themselves into small groups of four to eight individuals. Occasionally, however, a bugbear can be convinced to work with its lesser kin for a time. More often than not, however, these brutes operate alone. The humans know that working with their voracious "allies" is begging for an early death, and normally keep to themselves.

Rivalry between groups is fierce, and infighting motivated by

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Thanegar's Horde's design enables a GM to easily insert the featured tribe into a home campaign. The horde fits best in a rural area near a large forest. The PCs might encounter the horde while hunting the bounty on Bertliak's head or they might be seeking something in the ruins of Shatterspear Hold. You can also insert elements into your campaign as you see fit. The lesser goblins make good random encounters, and the leaders can make capable minions for greater villains.

turf, loot or simple grudges result in as many casualties as ambushing travellers. Such skirmishes only occur when roaming groups meet in the forest as no such violence is tolerated in camp.

LAIR

When Thanegar and the remnants of his horde retreated to the forest, they discovered an ancient ruined keep. While hardly habitable for civilised folk, for a goblin it made a cosy home. The ruins have been rechristened Shatterspear Hold, and from their fortress the horde strikes against the surrounding countryside.

Shatterspear Hold consists of a central keep of human construction and now reinforced by goblin cunning it is an unassuming, but sturdy, structure. Most of the outer walls are intact, but when one steps inside, it quickly becomes evident that the fortress has been "goblinized." Refuse fills the halls and grisly trophies decorate the walls.

There is not enough space inside the keep to comfortably accommodate the entire horde. Thanegar and his lover (Eranil [page14]) have private quarters within the keep as do his trusted lieutenants. Other chambers not re-purposed to house weapons, armour, loot or provisions go to whichever soldiers can hold them (although in practice, it is usually the bugbears that claim them). The remaining humans and goblins are left to lair elsewhere in the structure and a small, noisome stand of tents has sprung up within the walls. Most are inhabited by goblins, though three spacious tents set up at the north end of the camp belongs to the humans. Discovering the Hold might be easy, but infiltrating or assaulting it is no minor feat.

At least two lookouts are always posted atop the keep. By day the humans watch, and by night the goblins gaze out over the surrounding forest.

LORE

A character making a Knowledge (local) check may know some information about Thanegar's Horde. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 15: Goblins have been harassing travellers and merchants along nearby roads for nearly a year now. Every few months, they raid an isolated settlement.

DC 20: The goblins use advanced guerrilla tactics and are suspiciously well-trained and equipped. They are sometimes accompanied by bugbears and humans.

DC 30: The goblins are led by a vicious half-orc named Thanegar. He led them in a failed campaign against a fortified border post a year ago and now resides in a ruined fortress deep in the woods.

COMBAT & TACTICS

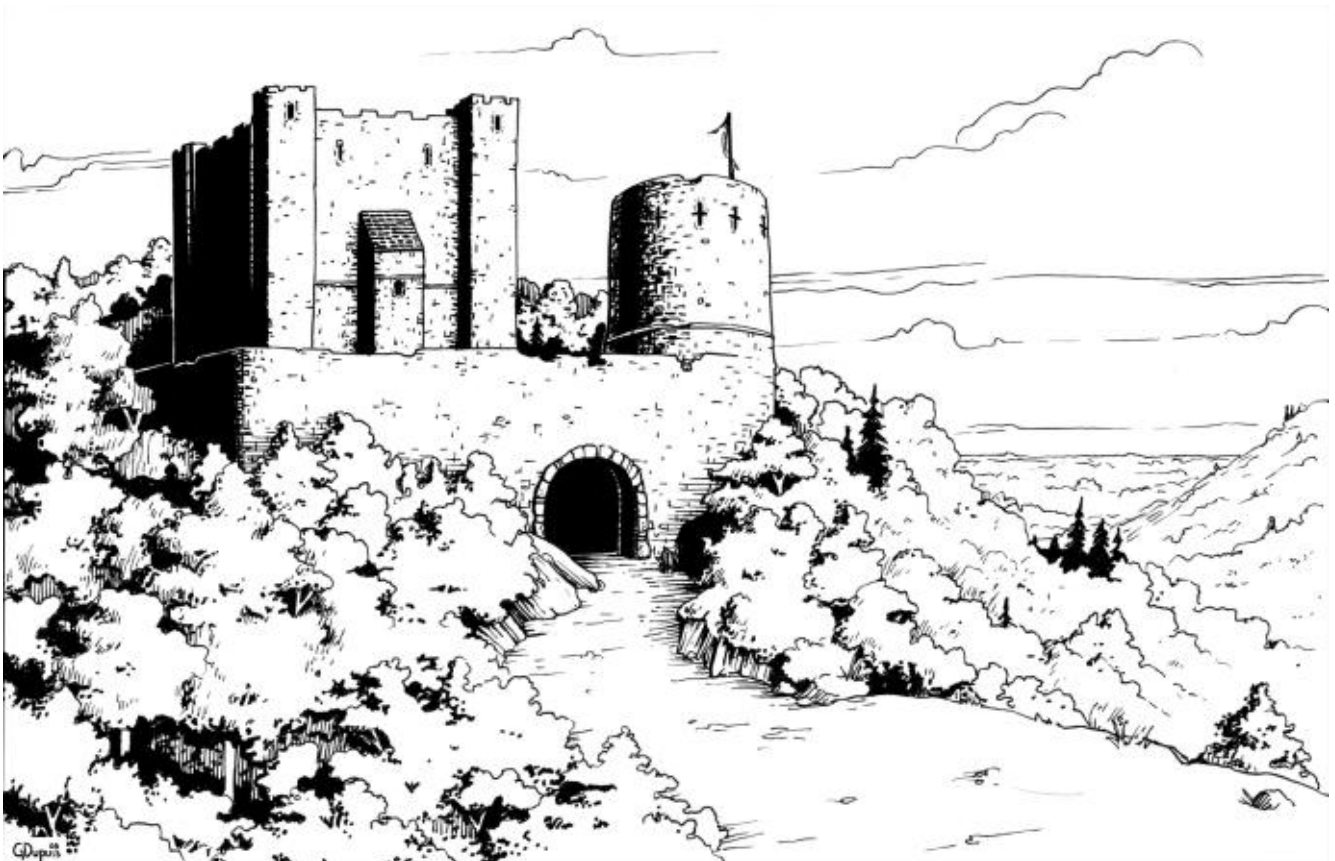
The goblins have standing orders to assault and rob those travelling too close to Shatterspear and to present their spoils and their prisoners to Thanegar. The warlord doles out a portion of the plunder to those participating in the fight and keeps a cut for himself. Beyond this, Thanegar typically leaves his troops to their own devices in how they conduct their daily banditry.

A group of goblins usually stake a stretch of road near the forest and stage ambushes for a few weeks before the attention of the militia or wandering adventurers force them to seek less dangerous ground. They favour guerrilla tactics and traps, often digging shallow ditches to catch wagons or horses. A rapid surprise attack makes short work of their usual prey, but if they meet strong resistance, they flee into the forest. Even though Thanegar orders they take prisoners for ransom his orders are usually heeded only by squads under the direct command of one of his lieutenants. Most goblins exhibit no mercy; the most fortunate victims simply receive a swift death.

Thanegar himself rarely participates in day-to-day attacks, and these opportunistic predations constitute the bulk of the

horde's activities. Once every month or two, however, the would-be-warlord emerges from his depression, rallies his minions and leads a raid against whichever unfortunate rural settlement has caught his attention. He does not repeat the mistakes of his past and such assaults are always preceded by small scouting parties. They make half-hearted attacks against the settlement over the period of a few days, testing the local defences. Sometimes, the non-goblin members of the horde infiltrate the area a day beforehand, posing as refugees or travellers and create chaos when the attack begins.

The assault always begins at night, when the goblins' darkvision grants them a significant advantage. They send their wolves to the fore, while goblins take pot-shots with their bows, staying well beyond the range of torchlight. Once the horde breaks into a settlement, the bugbears are given free rein to unleash their sadistic desires. Initially, Thanegar supports his soldiers with his oracle abilities and spells, but once things are underway, he joins the fray. Once victorious, the horde loots the settlement, burns what they cannot steal and retreats back to their forest fastness.



GOBLINS

Thanegar's Horde consists mainly of goblins – the surviving fragments of several minor tribes. These gibbering wretches are the lifeblood of the horde, serving as the bulk of its frontline fighting force. While the Horde contains several goblins that are far more skilled than their common brethren, the vast majority of the troops under Thanegar's command rely on nothing but their innate savagery and cunning.

GOBLIN WARRIORS

These warriors form the bulk of the horde and are regarded as entirely expendable by their betters. Though they prefer ranged combat (attacking from ambush whenever possible), they charge into melee after a few rounds, hoping to surround their target and cut it down quickly. The morale of a goblin warrior is a fragile thing and they often flee if their foes outnumber them, and scatter if their commander falls.

GOBLIN WARRIOR CR 1 (XP 400)
This stunted green-skinned humanoid offers a hateful sneer as it brandishes a pitted longsword.

Goblin warrior 3
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1
Speed 30 ft.
ACP 0; Climb +6, Ride +7, Stealth +14

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 16; Dodge (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 dodge)
Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0
hp 19 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2
Melee longsword +4 (1d6/19-20)
Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +7 (1d4/x3)
Combat Gear arrows (20)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative
Skills as above
Languages Goblin

SPITTLELICK THE LUCKY

This horridly scarred veteran is the resident outcast of the horde. Simple even for a goblin and possessing little battle skill, he has nonetheless survived more battles than any other warrior in the horde. Most members of the horde aren't sure what to make of his unusual fortune, and tend to avoid him for fear of his stealing their luck. He can usually be found in the far corner of camp admiring his collection of polished rocks.

GOBLIN SCOUTS

Not all the goblins in Thanegar's Horde are ill-organized rabble; several have been trained as guerrillas, experts in hit-and-run tactics. They serve as scouts and skirmishers and are slightly more intelligent than their warrior brethren. These goblins typically rise to positions of leadership, but such elevation often sparks brawls with a goblin's rivals. They usually charge into combat as soon as battle begins and prefer human targets.

GOBLIN SCOUT CR 4 (XP 1,200)

This lightly armoured goblin cackles with maniacal glee, expertly spinning a pair of hatchets as it closes in.

Goblin ranger (skirmisher) 5
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +30; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +9, Sense Motive +1
Speed 30 ft.
ACP 0; Climb +10, Ride +8, Stealth +20

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 20 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather])
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2
hp 42 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +6
Melee mwk handaxe +9 (1d4+2/x3) and mwk handaxe +9 (1d4+2/x3) or
Melee mwk handaxe +11 (1d4+2/x3)
Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +10 (1d3+2/19-20)
Atk Options favoured enemies (animals +2, humans +4)
Hunter's Bond (Ex) The scout may use a move action to grant half his favoured enemy bonus against a single target of the appropriate type to all allies within 30 feet for 1 round.
Hobbling Attack (Ex) When the scout hits with an attack, the target's land speed is reduced by half for 1d4 rounds.

Combat Gear dagger (3), *potion of cure light wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6
SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), favoured terrain (forest +2), track (+2), wild empathy (+3, -1 vs. magical beasts)
Feats Double Slice, Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse
Skills as above plus Craft (trapmaking) +8, Intimidate +3, Survival +9
Languages Goblin

TWO-HANDED HICKLES

This vicious goblin scout compensates for his small size by using large weapons, earning his moniker by wielding a masterwork bastard sword (+5 [1d8+2/19-20 and +5 [1d8+1/19-20]] in each hand. He possesses Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword) instead of Weapon Finesse. Despite his stature (or because of it), he is one of the most vocal and ruthless squad-captains in the horde, and is known for planning very lucrative, but high-risk attacks.

GOBLIN WOLFKEEPERS

Most horde goblins are warriors, thrown against their enemies as a living shield with little hope for long-term survival or advancement. For the wolfkeepers, this is not the case.

These goblins are afforded a position of honour within the horde – the only goblins to garner such respect. They are also some of the few soldiers who do more than simply fight. The wolfkeepers' chief duties are to breed, raise and command the wolves that serve as the first wave of attack during raids. Their skill at caring for animals also extends to humanoids, so they also serve as the horde's healers. They are also among the horde's most accomplished archers.

In routine banditry, they normally leave their wolf companions at Shatterspear Hold. Wolfkeepers can also offer support with their limited spellcasting ability. If a wolfkeeper participates in an ambush, he starts the battle with an *entangle* spell, allowing his warrior companions to shoot their bows longer before being forced to melee.

When raiding a settlement, their tactics are similar, and they are accompanied by their wolves. The wolves keep foes away from the wolfkeepers, tripping and then savaging any enemies closing on their masters.

The wolfkeepers have a much higher morale than other horde goblins. They fight even if their foes outnumber them, fleeing only when death or defeat becomes obvious.

GOBLIN WOLFKEEPER CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This fur-clad goblin moves with frightening purpose as it knocks a cruelly barbed arrow into its longbow.

Goblin ranger 6

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8 (+10 in forests); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +11 (+13 vs. animals, +15 vs. humans; +2 in forests), Sense Motive +2 (+4 vs. animals, +6 vs. humans)

Speed 30 ft.; favoured terrain (forest)

ACP 0; Ride +17, Stealth +21 (+23 in forests)

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 21

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 *studded leather*], +1 dodge)

GRUNT SQUAD (EL 8; XP 4,800)

Opponents Goblin Scout (2), Goblin Warrior (5), **EL 7 (3,200 XP)** Remove 1 Goblin Scout and 1 Goblin Warrior; **EL 9 (6,400 XP)** Add 1 Goblin Scout and 1 Goblin Warrior.

Morale The goblins flee once their numbers have been reduced by 50%, or if both scouts fall.

Terrain wood-fringed track; **Encounter Distance** 2d6 x 10 ft.

This is the standard ambush party of the horde and likely a party's first encounter with the cretins. The goblins remain hidden in the underbrush as targets approach. The Advance Scouts charge as soon as an enemy is in range. The Grunts make ranged attacks for two rounds before closing for melee.

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

hp 49 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6

Melee spear +8/+3 (1d6+1/x3)

Ranged +1 *composite longbow* (range 110 ft.; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot) +12/+7 (1d6+2/x3)

Atk Options favoured enemies (animals +2, humans +4)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +8; share spells) 1st— *entangle* (DC 13), *magic fang*

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ combat style (archery), favoured terrain (forest +2), hunter's bond (animal companion), track (+3), wild empathy (+4, +0 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills as above plus Bluff -2 (+2 vs. humans, +0 vs. animals), Handle Animal +7 (+11 vs. animal companion; link), Heal +11, Knowledge (geography) +0 (+2 in forests), Knowledge (local) +0 (+4 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +0 (+2 vs. animals), Survival +11 (+4 tracking, +18 tracking human, +16 tracking animals; +2 in forests)

Languages Goblin

HORDE WOLF

The fur bristles on the back of this snarling wolf as it stalks forward, intent on tearing out its enemies' throat.

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1

Speed 50 ft.

ACP 0; Stealth +9

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 15 (+2 Dex, +4 natural)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +2

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus trip)

Trip (Ex) A wolf can trip its opponent as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity if it hits with its bite. If the attempt fails, the wolf is not tripped in return.

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ link

Feats Combat Reflexes, Toughness

Skills as above

MASTER KNOBWHOCKET

The horde's chief cook and quartermaster, Master Knobwhocket takes to his craft with feverish passion. Few creatures beyond goblins find his food palatable. Those caught circumventing his authority as quartermaster are usually fed to Bratchet, a hulking wolf he dotes on like a favoured child. He sometimes sends out small scouting parties to search for rare mushrooms or other cooking ingredients. He has Craft (cooking) +11 instead of Heal.

BUGBEARS

In addition to the goblins, Thanegar's Horde counts several bugbears in its ranks. Survivors of the Broken Knee tribe, these shaggy sadists are the horde's shock-troops. When an unlucky group of travellers falls prey to a horde ambush, they are often first greeted with the snarling charge of a bugbear.

In battle, the bugbears are straightforward but deadly. They like to attack with surprise, getting as close as they can to their targets before attacking. After their initial assault, they rage if they expect the battle to be brief. Otherwise, they wait until their hp drops below 25. Their first priority is getting to a flanking position so they can use sneak attack and, if they can, they position use Cleave. Sometimes, these creatures move on to a new foe when their current target is near death, relishing in the pain of the injured foes around them and assuming their lesser brethren will finish off the doomed enemy. Squads containing bugbears never take prisoners, unless a lieutenant is present.

These creatures are far more concerned with inflicting pain than they are with surviving battle, and if they are alone or fighting alongside other bugbears, they fight to the death. Otherwise, they retreat when their allies flee.

THE BROKEN KNEE TRIBE

Lurking among the shadows of the deep woods, the Broken Knee tribe hunted the denizens of the wood and feasted upon their still warm flesh. Feared for their practise of hacking off their prisoners' legs before using the severed limbs as weapons in gruesome games of mock battle, the tribe dwelled too deep in the forest for the nearby lords to root out.

A migrating tribe of trolls crushed the tribe in a short, vicious war and the few surviving bugbears fled. Falling in with the shattered remnants of Thanegar's Horde they first tried to force the goblins to their service. When Thanegar slew the tribe's greatest surviving champion in single combat, however, they threw in their lot with the powerful half-orc, scenting great opportunities for looting in their future.

RHUASTUMF

This brute possesses unusual cunning and restraint for a bugbear and is one of the horde's greatest minds when it comes to small-unit tactics. He resents that his penchant for forethought diminishes him in the eyes of Thanegar, who instead favours martial prowess and bold action. Rhuastumf knows of Ghedlorwhik's discontent with Thanegar, and would be the goblin's chief backer in the event of a power struggle.

BUGBEAR SHOCK-TROOPER CR 5 (XP 1,600)

A large shaggy goblinoid bolts from the trees with a cry of fury, its great sword poised to cleave asunder all in its path.

Bugbear rogue 2/barbarian 1

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +9 (+11 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +1

Speed 40 ft.

ACP 0; **Stealth** +17 (fast stealth)

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 23
(+4 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather])

Fort +5, **Ref** +10 (evasion), **Will** +2

hp 43 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9

Melee mwk greatsword +10 (2d6+7/19-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +8 (1d6+5)

Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack (-2 attack, +4 attack [+6 with greatsword]), rage (6 rounds), sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear javelin (3), *potion of cat's grace*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7

SQ fast movement, rogue trick (fast stealth), trapfinding

Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills as above plus Disable Device +13, Intimidate +10, Survival +9

Languages Goblin

When raging, the Bugbear Shock-Trooper has the following altered statistics:

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 25

(+4 Dex, -2 class, +4 armour [+1 studded leather])

Fort +7, **Will** +4

hp 55 (6 HD)

CMB +11

Melee mwk greatsword +12 (2d6+10/19-20)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +8 (1d6+7)

Abilities Str 24, Con 19

BUGBEAR GANG (EL 8; XP 4,800)

Opponents Bugbear Shock-Trooper (3)

EL 7 (3,200 XP) Remove Bugbear Shock-Trooper (1); **EL 9 (6,400 XP)** Add Wolfkeeper (1).

Morale These bugbears are bloodthirsty and fight to the death.

Terrain light forest; **Encounter Distance** 2d8 x 5 ft.

This is a versatile encounter that can represent a small gang of bugbears out scouting, or a strike-team during a larger raid. They prefer to attack with surprise, getting as close to their victim as possible before charging. In the first round, each bugbear rages and charges a different target, in the hopes of inflicting sneak attack damage. They flank with one another, and position themselves to maximize the effect of Cleave.

SCOUNDRELS AND OPPORTUNISTS

Not all of the horde are goblins. Though most of the horde's victims are slain, occasionally Thanegar's order to claim prisoners is heeded. Such lucky individuals are always humans or half-elves, as Thanegar does not regard halflings or gnomes as worthy warriors and the goblins never offer mercy to elves or dwarves. Many of the captured victims are themselves bandits – already the dregs of society. Those captured are given the opportunity to join the horde. Many refuse – even bandits and brigands have principles – and are summarily executed, but there are always a few who accept Thanegar's offer. Of those joining the horde, only the most hardened and resilient survive.

Human thugs never work alone with goblins, as they know what happens to men foolish enough to venture out alone with a band of goblins. They usually serve as bait for the ambushes, pretending to be victims of a recent attack, hoping to get close to the targets before combat begins. Once the trap is sprung, these men prove to be some of the most dangerous troops in the horde.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Though the bugbears are more physically imposing, these thugs fight smart, and they fight dirty. They support their allies in melee combat, directing their attacks against healers and spellcasters. They use Step-Up to stay engaged with such foes, and if they can, flank them to deal sneak attack damage.

BAITED AMBUSH (EL 9; XP 6,400)

Opponents Human Thug (2), Goblin Warriors (4), Goblin Scout (1)

EL 8 (4,800 XP) Remove Goblin Scout (1) Goblin Warrior (1); **EL 10 (9,600 XP)** Add Bugbear Shock-Trooper (2).

Morale These creatures flee if more than half of them are slain. The humans surrender if all of the goblins are killed.

Terrain country road; **Encounter Distance** 3d6x 10 ft.

This is easily one of the most dangerous, and successful, ambush strategies the horde regularly utilizes. A non-goblin thug lies in the road feigning injury as the rest of the gang hides in the tree line.

Once someone happens along to offer aid to the thug, he attempts to get within striking distance. When the thug is adjacent to at least two foes, the goblin warriors launch a volley of arrows from the trees as the scout and the other thug charge into melee.

The advance scout focuses on the toughest-looking foe while the humans attempt to flank with him and harry spellcasters. After two rounds, the warriors close to melee, and the advance scout and the humans fall back to consume their potions before re-joining the fray

Their loyalty to the horde is a fleeting thing, however, and these men are opportunists by nature. They flee the horde entirely if brought below 15 hp.

If at least half of the goblins accompanying them are slain, these thugs can be pressed into surrender with a DC 24 Diplomacy or a DC 18 Intimidate check. If this check is successful, they help the PCs finish off the remaining goblins. They may even become tenuous allies against the rest of the horde, though they are unwilling to return to Shatterspear Hold. Even if they refuse to return to the fortress, they still offer directions and a rough sketch of its layout.

HUMAN THUG

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

This scoundrel displays a smug grin as he moves forward with measured strides, passing his blade from one hand to the other.

Human fighter (free hand fighter) 3/rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +9 (+10 vs. traps), Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft.; Step-Up

ACP -1; Stealth +11

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 21 (22 vs. disarm); +1 vs. traps, Dodge, elusive

(+3 Dex, +5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +2 dodge)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6 (+7 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +2

hp 37 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7 (+8 disarm)

Melee +1 longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Ranged mwk shortbow (range 60 ft.) +9 (1d6/x3)

Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Feint (+9), deceptive strike, sneak attack +2d6 (slow reactions)

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potions of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ rogue talent (slow reactions), trapfinding, trap sense (+1)

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Step-Up

Skills as above plus Appraise +9, Bluff +8 (+9 to feint or hide), Disable Device +4, Disguise +8, Sleight of Hand +11

Languages Common, Goblin

SIMPERING SARHA

Simpering Sarha was a common thug before he came to the horde, surrendering when the goblins wiped out the rest of his brigand gang. He is an unapologetic opportunist, a shameless toady who has earned the derision of nearly every member of the horde. His loyalties are extremely fluid and he has been saved thus far only by his eagerness to please his superiors.

PERSONA: BERTLIAK

Bertliak is the horde's nominal champion, and its greatest fighter, excepting Thanegar himself. He is admired by most of his fellows and held up as an ideal warrior.

Background: Bertliak learned murder from his mother, taught alongside his two siblings. Instructed in stealth, intimidation and killing he was by far the best pupil. After handily slaying his brothers, he struck out on his own, to bring terror to the local populace.

He wandered for years slaying as he willed, and soon earned a large bounty on his head. He was fascinated with the idea of others hunting him, and decided to turn the tables, laying traps for the various bounty hunters that stalked him. Eventually a small band of bounty hunters formed an alliance to capture him. Unprepared for the number of foes assailing him, Bertliak was hard-pressed until a nearby group of Thanegar's goblins heard sounds of battle and came to his aid, mistaking him for one of their own. The bounty hunters slain, Bertliak was brought before Thanegar. The warlord was impressed by Bertliak's bloodlust, and rewarded him with a prestigious position within the horde.

Personality: Bertliak is a sociopath, carnage is his sole passion. He is dismissive of others, and when he does offer his attention to others, it is usually in the form of unobtrusive attempts to intimidate. He craves the fear of others as if it was a drug, and has turned the practice of murder into an art form.

Bertliak has no friends, nor does he wish for any. To him, all others are prey, and those observing him at rest often see an unsettling grin spread across his face (as he ponders horrific new tortures). In all things (except for drawing out a murder), Bertliak lacks restraint. If he wants something, he takes it.

Mannerisms: Bertliak's sense of smell is exceptional and he often leans forward to sniff something of interest.

He is a creature of few words and does a poor job of concealing his feelings – his ears twitching rapidly when he is excited, and draw back when he is agitated or upset.

Distinguishing Features: Bertliak sports many scars on his arms (these are his tally of kills). A master of ambush, his attire usually incorporates twigs and leaves into its design.

Hooks: Bertliak still has a bounty on his head, and this could draw mercenary PCs to seek him out. If he learns that he is again hunted, he stalks the hunters, stealing into their quarters to plant obvious signs of his presence, just to demonstrate how close he is able to get to them.

Of all of Thanegar's lieutenants, Bertliak is the least invested in the horde. In truth, he feels nothing for the needs or desires of others, and knows nothing of loyalty – they are simply concepts that he does not understand. For the time being, he follows Thanegar because the warlord leads him to good slaughter; when he feels this is not the case, he leaves.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Bertliak is a savage warrior and a decent hunter. He prefers sudden ambushes, though for him, the terror his victims experience is just as important as their death. He stalks his victims, allowing them to catch fleeting glimpses of him as he waits for the opportune moment to strike. Though he likes to prolong fights against single foes, if fighting multiple opponents, Bertliak starts battle with a death attack. He fights defensively to take measure of his foes before focusing on the greatest threat. Once confident of victory, he attacks a separate target each round, hoping to prolong his victims' pain. He only flees if his opponents clearly outclass him, but numbers never give him pause. He would rather die than admit defeat to what he considers a lesser foe.

BERTLIAK

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Wielding an axe and curved blade, this bugbear's long ears twitch excitedly as it steps noiselessly forward.

Male bugbear ranger 2/assassin 3

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12 (+14 vs. elves), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. elves)

Speed 30 ft.

ACP -1; Stealth +18

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 25

(+4 Dex, +5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

Fort +7 (+8 vs. poison), **Ref** +13, **Will** +3

hp 63 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11

Melee mwk scimitar +10/+5 (1d6+5/18-20) and mwk handaxe +10/+5 (1d6+5/x3) or

Melee mwk scimitar +12/+7 (1d6+5/18-20) or

Melee mwk handaxe +12/+7 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +10/+5 (1d8+5/x3)

Atk Options death attack (DC 14), favoured enemy (elves +2), poison use, sneak attack +2d6

Death Attack (Ex) If Bertliak studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a successful sneak attack he can kill or paralyze (for 1d6+3 rounds) his target (DC 14 Fortitude negates).

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 7

SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), track (+1), wild empathy (+0, -4 vs. magical beasts)

Feats Double Slice, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills as above plus Bluff +9 (+11 vs. elves), Disguise +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +1 (+3 vs. elves), Survival +1 (+2 tracking, +4 tracking elves)

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above

PERSONA: DHAERIS THE CAD

Dhaeris is the horde's most potent spy. The unofficial voice of the non-goblins within the horde, he is the only one among them who has Thanegar's ear. Lately, however, he has been thinking of fleeing back to civilization.

Background: Dhaeris is the illegitimate son of a noble, born of his favourite whore. Though his father cared nothing for him, he showered his mother with coins and baubles. Dhaeris grew accustomed to a decadent lifestyle, but when his mother was murdered, he quickly spent her meagre savings. Educated in the arts of magic and seduction, however, he plotted to reclaim his former lifestyle by courting wealthy noblewomen, with the eventual goal of murdering or blackmailing them. For two years,

DHAERIS THE CAD

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This handsome half-elf has chiselled features, sunken eyes and a roguish, disarming smile. He wears bedraggled clothes.

Male half-elf bard 8

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +2, Sense Motive +15

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics +13, Stealth +13

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 19; Dodge (+2 Dex, +4 armour [mithral shirt], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5; +4 vs. bardic music, sonic, and language dependant effects

hp 39 (8 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +7

Melee +1 rapier +10/+5 (1d6+2/18-20)

Atk Options Arcane Strike

Special Actions bardic performance (32 rounds/day; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage [+2], inspire competence [+3], suggestion, dirge of doom)

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12)

3rd—*confusion* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *haste*

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *invisibility*

1st—*charm person*, *disguise self*, *grease*, *silent image*, *undetectable alignment*

0—*detect magic*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Combat Gear *potion of glibness*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 18

SQ bardic knowledge, well-versed, lore master (1/day), versatile performance (wind instruments, sing)

Feats Arcane Strike, Dodge, Extra Performance, Weapon Finesse

Skills as above plus Appraise +13, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +15, Perform (sing) +15, Perform (wind instruments) +17, Sleight of Hand +13, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin, Halfling

Gear as above plus masterwork ivory fife, 37 gp, 17 sp

he achieved some small success, but was finally caught by a suspicious husband. On the way to stand trial in a nearby city, goblins attacked his escort. Dhaeris freed himself and helped slay his guards. Afterwards, Thanegar offered him a position as a spy. He accepted and joined the Horde.

Personality: Comfort is Dhaeris' first priority, followed closely by the fawning adoration of others. He is lazy, and always chooses the path that leads to the greatest reward for the least effort. He thinks highly of himself, especially in regards to his style and wit, and is always comparing himself to those around him. Consequently, he prefers the company of oafs and thugs. To him, the goblins of the horde make ideal foils.

He is impolite in an unusually charming fashion, showing a lackadaisical irreverence that projects the image of a coolly-confident, likable scoundrel. He is highly sarcastic and there is virtually no topic (except his own comfort) that he takes seriously. He is nearly impossible to fluster, but sinks into uncharacteristic desperation if he loses his beloved luxuries.

Mannerisms: An indispensable spy, Dhaeris flaunts his worth by lazing about camp whenever his skills are not required.

Distinguishing Features: Dhaeris is a fop, and prefers to look his best at all times. Tragically, this is not always possible when living in a forest, but he tries to keep his dark hair groomed, wearing it in a simple, swept back style. He sports a goatee that has become rather scruffy of late.

Dhaeris owns several high-class outfits, though most are woefully out-dated. He keeps them clean with *prestidigitation*, but must use mundane means to repair them; they bear numerous patches and stitches. His most prized possession is his mother's ivory fife.

Hooks: Dhaeris owes his life, or at least his freedom, to the Horde, and he is not unappreciative. He is not treacherous like Gheldorwhik or fickle like Bertliak, but he is simply not invested in Thanegar's army. For him, this woodland romp is, and always has been, a temporary adventure with which he is now bored. Ghedlorwhik's attempts at forging a lasting friendship with a "fellow intellectual" especially frustrate him. Because of this, he is the easiest of Thanegar's lieutenants to turn against Thanegar.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Dhaeris avoids battle whenever possible and flees (or surrenders) almost immediately if abandoned by his allies. He has a strong aversion to pain and panics if he is injured. He uses his powers in a support role employing inspire courage and *haste* to great effect. He saves at least one healing spell for himself and targets attractive females with *charm person*. If victorious, he coerces his new friend into joining the horde. Should his enemies triumph, he surrenders, begging those he has *charmed* for mercy.

PERSONA: ERANIL SURNAE

Eranil is Thanegar's lover and confidant. Drawn to his confidence and lust for conquest, she is now realising she has made a huge mistake and that, if anything, Thanegar is a liability.

Background: Eranil's family tree is tainted with both infernal and vampiric influences. She is the last scion of a fallen, doom-wreathed noble family reputed for their consultations with devils, demons and other unknowable otherworldly powers.

Personality: A sensuous creature who takes pleasure wherever she finds it, Eranil is a decadent temptation. She is obsessed with her own pleasure and comfort and manipulates anyone to get what she wants. She dreams of her triumphant return to the nobility and seeks land and titles; she doesn't mind if she marries them or takes them by force, but they will be hers.

Mannerisms: In public, Eranil appears chaste and innocent – seemingly unaware of her appearance and power over men. In private, she casts aside her disguise and indulges her most hedonistic desires.

Distinguishing Features: Eranil is astonishingly beautiful.

Hooks: Eranil wants to leave Thanegar, but has not decided how to wrest the horde from his clutches. Ideally, she desires a new companion who can serve as the horde's figurehead while she manipulates him to do exactly what she wants. The PCs' arrival gives her the perfect opportunity to try her plan.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Eranil remains out of melee and uses her spells to turn friend against friend. If reduced below half hit points, she flees. She does not risk her life for anyone, Thanegar included.



ERANIL SURNAE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

This sensuous woman has a brooding, dark beauty about her.

Female dhampir sorcerer (infernal) 8

NE Medium humanoid (dhampir)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 18

(+3 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection +1*])

Resist energy draining effects, fire 5; **Weakness** light sensitivity
Resist Energy Drain (Ex) Eranil takes no penalties from energy draining effects, although she can still be killed if she accrues 9 or more such levels. After 24 hours, any negative levels she has are removed without need for an additional saving throw.

Light Sensitivity (Ex) Eranil is dazzled in areas of bright sunlight (or within a *daylight* spell).

Fort +4 (+6 vs. disease or poison), **Ref** +6, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. mind-affecting effects)

hp 46 (8 HD); negative energy affinity

Negative Energy Affinity (Ex) Eranil reacts to positive and negative energy as if she were undead.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4

Melee mwk sickle +5 (1d6) or

Melee Touch corrupting touch +4 (shaken [4 rounds])

Ranged mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +8 (1d8/19-20)

Atk Options corrupting touch (7/day)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12 [+16 casting defensively or grappling]; bloodline arcane [charm subschool])

4th (4/day)—*charm monster* (DC 21)

3rd (6/day)—*deep slumber* (DC 18), *haste*, *suggestion* (DC 18)

2nd (7/day)—*false life*, *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 18), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *shield*

0—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage armour*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12 [+16 casting defensively or grappling])

3/day—*detect undead*

Combat Gear bolts (10), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of fireball*, *fly* and *stoneskin*, *wand of magic missiles* (CL 5th, 25 charges)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 18

Feats Combat Casting, Deceitful^B, Eschew Materials^B, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills as above plus Bluff +19, Disguise +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Spellcraft +8, Use Magic Device +18

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance +1*, 12 gp

PERSONA: GHELDORWHIK

Gheldorwhik is Thanegar's deputy, although he has grown unhappy with the warlord's leadership lately. He is the most ambitious of Thanegar's lieutenants and those crossing him quickly learn how crafty and malicious goblins can be.

Background: Ghedorwhik's unusual intellect and extreme sadism elevated him above his kin. His penchant for traps and tactics earned him respect, but he grew bored with "provincial" life among his tribe. Thanegar's arrival and obvious ambition excited Ghedorwhik and he quickly offered the nascent warlord his services. He sabotaged many of his tribe's weapons and traps rendering them useless and the tribe quickly surrendered. Initially serving as a scout, Ghedorwhik soon proved his own worth and rose quickly to his current position.

When Thanegar directed the fateful attack on the border

GHELDORWHIK CR 6 (XP 2,400)
This grey-skinned goblin sniggers as he regards his surroundings. He wears oiled black leathers, and flashes a toothy grin as he cocks his crossbow.

Male goblin rogue (sniper) 7
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +10, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.; rogue crawl
ACP 0; Acrobatics +14, Climb +11, Ride +9, Stealth +23

AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 21; +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge; **CMD** 20
(+1 size, +5 Dex, +4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 dodge)
Fort +3, **Ref** +10 (+11 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +2
hp 49 (7 HD)

Space 30 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5
Melee short sword +7 (1d4+1/19-20)
Ranged +1 *light crossbow* (range 80 ft.; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, accuracy, deadly range) +12 (1d6/19-20)
Accuracy (Ex) Ghedorwhik halves all range increment penalties when using any type of bow or crossbow.
Deadly Range (Ex) Ghedorwhik applies sneak attack damage to targets within 50 ft.
Atk Options sneak attack +4d6 (bleeding attack)
Special Actions quick trapsmith
Quick Trapsmith (Ex) As a full-round action, Ghedorwhik can set an already built, simple trap (CR 3 or less).
Combat Gear bolts (10), *sleep bolts* (3), *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 6
SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack, rogue crawl, quick trapsmith), trapfinding (+1), trap sense (+1)
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot
Skills as above plus Bluff +8, Craft (trapmaking) +11, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (engineering) +11
Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus *cloak of elvenkind*, masterwork thieves' tool, 1 preset trap mechanism, 15 gp

post, Ghedorwhik argued the plan was fatally flawed. He knew his commander was not utilising his troops' strengths, and was unsurprised at the ensuing massacre. Ghedorwhik has since realized that Thanegar's leadership is little but show and bluster and now works to replace the warlord by quietly sowing discontent amongst the troops.

Personality: Ghedorwhik's intellect is his most defining trait. Though most goblins display cruel cunning, Ghedorwhik backs up this craftiness with genuine intellect. He has the mind of an engineer and is the horde's trapsmith and tactician, responsible for planning most of their major assaults.

He fancies himself a comedian, though his sense of humour is exceedingly dark. Nothing amuses him more than a victim struggling in one of his fiendish mechanisms, and at times he arranges for an unsuspecting goblin to stumble into a device.

Arrogantly, Ghedorwhik respects no one until they demonstrate they are his intellectual equal; those surpassing his intellect earn his ire. His sadistic cruelty rivals a bugbear's. He likes to cause pain, considering depraved acts of violence to be high-brow comedy. As a hobby, he skins small animals alive, sewing their hides into a large patchwork blanket.

Mannerisms: Ghedorwhik is condescending to others and his sardonic displays of superiority earn him few friends. He is usually smirking, as if enjoying some private joke.

Distinguishing Features: Ghedorwhik is missing half an ear, as the result of an altercation with a particularly vicious squirrel. He wears oiled black leather armour and his hand-whittled crossbow is never far from his side. He carries a series of unusual lockpicks that can serve as crude skinning tools.

Hooks: Ghedorwhik often scouts the forest searching for new ambush sites or victims. Though he hates fighting alone, he scouts alone, as other goblins get in his way. He often leads ambush squads and employs many traps in their attacks.

Although Ghedorwhik plots to replace Thanegar, he fails to realize how unpopular he is among his fellows. If mutiny strikes, Ghedorwhik finds himself with few supporters. Clever PCs can take advantage of this and bring chaos to the horde's ranks.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Gheldorwhik is reluctant to enter melee. He prefers sniping from hiding and taunts his enemies when they cannot find him. He also favours poisoned dart traps (CR 1), swinging axe traps (CR 1) and javelin traps (CR 2). He has enough supplies to craft 1d3+1 traps, and always has at least one assembled mechanism to use with his quick trapsmith ability.

If pressed into melee, he flees (often using a pre-prepared trap-strewn route to slow pursuit). If unable to escape, Ghedorwhik surrenders, putting on a pathetic display of cowardice. If spared, he escapes at the earliest opportunity.

PERSONA: THANEGAR

Thanegar is the undisputed leader of the horde, and though he seldom ventures from his fortress, his commands are obeyed by all who dwell in Shatterspear. He has been increasingly languorous in his leadership lately, prone to fits of despair and self-harm that has some of his troops worried and others whispering for new leadership.

Background: Thanegar was the bastard son of an esteemed orc marauder, the product of his father's comely (and short-lived) human slave. It was proclaimed at his birth that he was touched by powerful spirits, and so he was groomed as a successor to the tribe's shaman. Thanegar was not pleased with such a reflective life, though – he wanted to be a warrior and a warlord. After gaining some influence, he made a bid for power, but it failed miserably and he was exiled from his tribe.

Fleeing to a nearby human kingdom to lick his wounds, he heard rumours of border raids by bands of goblins and saw his key to conquest. He was able to bully a few groups into submission and using this clout brought more tribes under his banner. Ready for conquest and glory he hurled his goblin warriors against an out-of-the-way border post. Unfortunately, while Thanegar is a terrifying warrior, he is a mediocre commander, and his troops were utterly crushed. He fled into the forest with the few survivors and since then has been using

his goblins as an instrument of vengeance against the world he feels has denied him.

Personality: Thanegar is a creature of spite and bitterness. He clings to ideals that have earned him nothing but failure, and blames the world for his shortcomings. Cruelly disillusioned, he has abandoned his dreams of conquest, at least outwardly. Now, he simply wants to make the world and those in it suffer, to share his shattered perceptions of reality. To that end, he has his goblins harass the surrounding populace, taking solace in the fact that he is making life more difficult for the folk of the kingdom that (unknowingly) crushed his dreams.

Though he was once plunged easily into uncontrollable rages, he has become somewhat dismissive of his surroundings lately, and reacts to a group of unexpected heroes with casual bemusement. While he does his best to hold to his nihilism, he is in truth a deep romantic. Though capable of passionately rousing troops to battle, he has a poor understanding of tactics. He would love nothing more than to lead a glorious charge of warriors against a mob of cowering victims and wade through pools of his enemies' blood, but employing such straightforward tactics in a large-scale battle seldom works for him.

He loves Eranil and (misguidedly) sees in her a partner who will stand by him no matter what.

THANEGAR

CR 8 (XP 4,800)

This maimed half-orc's eyes burn with hate, peering out from behind a greasy mop of hair. His layered armour is well-cared for but dented in several places, and a chainmail kilt does little to conceal his twisted and knotted right leg.

Male half-orc oracle (battle) 9

NE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +11, Sense Motive +11

Speed 15 ft., base speed 20 ft. (lame); surprising charge

Surprising Charge (Ex) Twice per day, Thanegar can move up to his speed as an immediate action.

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 18; Shield of Swings (+6 armour [mwk breastplate])

Shield of Swings (Ex) When Thanegar uses a full-attack action with his falchion he can reduce the damage by half to gain a +4 shield bonus to AC and CMD. Both modifiers last until the beginning of his next turn.

Immune fatigue

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

hp 78 (8 HD); orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity (Ex) Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Thanegar can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of his next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, he falls unconscious and begins to die.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +8

Melee +1 *thundering falchion* +10/+5 (2d4+4/15-20)

Atk Options Dazzling Display, Power Attack (-2 attack, +4

damage [+6 with falchion]), Shield of Swings

Combat Healer (Su) Once per day Thanegar can cast a *cure* spell as a swift action, by expending two spell slots. This does not increase the spell's level.

Oracle Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +12 [+16 casting defensively or grappling])

4th—*cure critical wounds, divine power, summon monster IV, wall of fire*

3rd—*contagion* (DC 16), *cure serious wounds, magic vestment, prayer, wind wall*

2nd—*aid, bull's strength cure moderate wounds, fog cloud, silence, spiritual weapon*

1st—*bane* (DC 14), *command* (DC 14), *cure light wounds, doom* (DC 14), *enlarge person, entropic shield, shield of faith,*

0—*detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, mending, read magic, resistance, stabilize*

Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 17

SQ oracle's curse (lame), revelations (combat healer, surprising charge, weapon mastery [falchion])

Feats Combat Casting, Dazzling Display, Improved Critical (falchion)^B, Power Attack, Shield of Swings, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion)^B

Skills as above plus Intimidate +15, Knowledge (history) +13, Spellcraft +13

Languages Common, Goblin, Orc

Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, spell component pouch, 59 gp, 4 pp

Mannerisms: Thanegar's favourite pastime is brooding. Of late, he has become increasingly depressed at the loss of his dreams and the creeping realization of his own inadequacies. Although he has long practiced grievous acts of self-mutilation as a means of toughening himself and adding to his collection of scars, these masochistic bouts have more recently been motivated by a growing sense of self-loathing.

Distinguishing Features: Thanegar is a towering half-orc, though his prominent hunch makes him seem shorter. Tangled strands of greasy hair hang down to his shoulders, obscuring much of his face. His armour is well maintained and polished, but heavily dented, and it serves to hide many of the scars he has inflicted upon himself. His most notable feature, however, is his right leg, which is poorly hidden by a skirt of chainmail. It juts out from his armour like a gnarled tree branch, twisted where the bone beneath has grown in knots. He usually walks with the aid of a staff, but quickly reveals his fighting ability when he casts his staff away and draws the massive falchion strapped to his back.

Hooks: Until the PCs assault or infiltrate Shatterspear, they are unlikely to encounter Thanegar unless they brazenly crush several of his raiding bands. If they do so, he rouses himself and despatches bands of bugbears to slay his enemies. If this fails, he leads forays into woodlands to crush this unexpected opposition.

Far more important than Thanegar's ire, however, is the increasingly tenuous nature of his hold over the Horde. A growing number of his soldiers have noticed his depression, Gheldorwhik chief among them. This canny goblin's influence in camp is small, but gaining ground, and clever PCs can take advantage of this to create a schism in the horde (see Gheldorwhik [page 15]).

COMBAT & TACTICS

Although a mediocre commander, Thanegar is a skilled warrior well versed in the ideals of personal combat. If expecting trouble, he casts *entropic shield*, *magic vestment*, *enlarge person*, *bull's strength* and *divine power* on himself. If caught by surprise, he calls for his troops, hoping they can stall his foes for a round or two while he casts as many spells as possible. Once in the thick of things, Thanegar divides his foes with *wall of fire*. From there, his tactics are straightforward and brutal

– he wades into melee, attempting to engage any foe that looks to be a worthy melee combatant. He favours Power Attacks, though he switches to Shield of Swings if surrounded. If he drops below 35 hit points, he casts a *quicken cure serious wounds*. Thanegar fights to the death.

If leading his troops in battle (which usually only occurs during larger raids), Thanegar takes a commanding position and barks orders as he drinks in the carnage his troops inflict. He supports his soldiers with *prayer*, but after doing so, he does little unless a particular foe seems particularly bothersome.



YOU MIGHT ALSO ENJOY



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