

# MONSTER STORY: ORC BRUTE

I hate it down here. We are orcs, we are the proud masters of the Scarred Lands. Our nature is to roam freely, to feel the earth underfoot, the sky above. To find challenges worthy of our might and to take what is ours by force.



Not huddle in these musty caves like rats. Everything down here is sickly and deformed. The trees – gnarled and rotting. The moss-covered stones, crumbling with age. Even the creatures who live down here are pathetic like the surroundings – sadistic kobolds littering the floors with their sick contraptions, greedy goblins coveting every scrap they can get their stinking paws on. Killing them was only fun for a short while and now it is not even a sport. I feel my strikes getting less precise and powerful without proper opponents.

At least the gnolls in the wasteland above put up a fight. I hate their spotted hides and I enjoyed every skirmish, leaving a bloody trail in the wake of my axes. The screams, the growls, the pure fury of battle, scent of death in the air as the blood feeds the soil, honoring our prowess. That was the life. And it had to end and for what? Mother never explained fully as she led us to these caverns.

“Power beyond anything you could ever imagine” she said. Well, I wonder what shape this power takes. Is it like the power bestowed upon the poor deformed bastard who found one of mother’s precious shards? I shudder at the thought of my own body being changed like that. It is not the way of the orc – no honor in such ill gained strength, only torment. Our strength lies in the might of our blades, the fury of our hearts, not dark sorcery that mother is so fond of. Yet she is the shaman and you do not argue with the shaman.

So, I obey, as a good warrior does, as a good daughter does. I lead our warbands to crush the retreating hobgoblins to make sure they never reclaim the territory we took. I hunt the strange creatures of the caverns so that we have something to eat, even though I feel sick eating the moldy meat. I bide my time, I watch, and I listen.

Mother may have her own designs, but I hear the grumblings of the other warriors. These tunnels are no place for an orc. Soon, it will be time to forsake this path of corruption devoid of honor and pride. And when that time comes, a new leader will emerge to lead our people where they belong, upwards, to the Scarred Lands, back to the sky and the wind and to the glorious never-ending bloodshed.

“True power is taken, never granted”, she likes to say. She best watch her back lest she wants to find out how good of a student I really am.