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# ASUANG

## SHAPECHANGING HORRORS



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## ASUANG

The asuangs are creatures of the night. Their forms are monstrous and they hunger for raw humanoid innards, delighting in consuming sentient prey. However, in a world rife with supernatural dangers, it is not their cannibalistic tendencies or their horrific forms that truly terrify. Rather, people fear the asuangs because when the sun rises, an asuang can wear the face of a perfectly normal person: a merchant, priest, friend or neighbor.

The asuangs are insidious because they can be anybody. The bite of an asuang allows it to wear the shape of its victim, allowing them to take the form of those they kill. When a loved one is revealed as an asuang, it means that at one point, he or she was consumed painfully and replaced by the monster.

Whenever an asuang is revealed, those closest to the victim have trouble accepting the fact that they have been associating with the monster. How could it have happened? Was the wife already a monster when she was left alone with the kids while the father was out hunting? Had the father's overbearing nature towards his daughter's suitors been nothing but a ruse to maintain its disguise? People recall all the moments they might have shared with the infiltrator as it maintained its disguise, and are horrified at the thought that they were in the presence of a complete monster.

Inhuman beasts seizing human form in order to hunt their prey, the asuang are one of the most feared and insidious horrors that walk the face of Kalupaan.

### Distorted Reflections

There are many similarities between the asuangs and other shapeshifters, particularly lycanthropes (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL). Some asuang kinds even take on beastlike forms, a fact which leads some to assume that asuangs are relatives of lycanthropes. However, important distinctions exist:

First, not all asuangs take on beast forms. Indeed, of the most common types, only the busao and the sigbin have this ability - the rest turn into more grotesque creatures with only a hints of beastlike characteristics.

Secondly, asuangs are not of this world - they either come from the shadowy Realm of Kadiliman, or in the oceanic depths of the Realm of Karagatan. Even the manananggal is fused with the elemental soul of a demon, which makes them not completely of this world.

One myth claims that asuangs are otherworldly reflections of shapeshifters found in the world: Busaos and sigbins are reflections of the lycanthropes, while manananggals are distortions of the shapechanging vampires (see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual* for the vampire). Scholars



*Bakunawa rises from the depths to swallow a moon*

point out that the iconic silver weakness of lycanthropes is mimicked by the sigbin's vulnerability to the focused light of the moons. With regards to vampires and manananggals, both abhor the sun and subsist by sucking out vital components from their victims (blood in the case of the vampire, and viscera in the case of the manananggal).

Reinforcing the myth of reflections, an asuang in disguise can be found out by looking into its eyes. Instead of the usual reflection that one would see while staring up close, an inverted reflection of oneself stares back. This inversion also manifests itself in other ways, but unfortunately for those who hunt these dreaded monsters, an asuang can consciously hide this effect. Only when they are occupied with other concerns do these signs manifest.

Third, asuangs are also not limited to a single humanoid form. As they consume more victims, the number of their alternate forms also increases, allowing them to wear the shapes of those they slay. This makes their shape-shifting more varied than lycanthropes, but less powerful than creatures such as changelings that can take the form of creatures that they merely see.

A final similarity exists between lycanthropes and asuangs. Both have a propensity to become active when one of the four moons becomes full. They do not do this out of worship and awe for these heavenly bodies - it instead reminds them that the moon-swallower, the primordial dragon Bakunawa still hungers.

## Draconic Hunger

Bakunawa is a titanic dragon who once sought to consume all the moons in the heavens. It was able to consume three of the moons, before it was thwarted in a legendary battle. Defeated but not destroyed, the Bakunawa crashed back into Karagatan, where it heals its wounds and suffers from its hunger.

The asuangs identify with the Bakunawa's unending hunger, for they also have a constant need to feast. They hate the celestial gods and their place in the high heavens, and the asuangs believe that by consuming as much as they can, their patron's terrible wounds heal faster, until the titan wyrm can assault the heavens once more. The asuang hope one day to join in their patron's war in heaven so that they might feast on the flesh of gods.

Because of their reverence for the moon-swallowing dragon, asuangs are not immediately hostile to dragonborn (see the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK). Asuangs believe that the first dragonborn crawled out of the torn flesh of the Bakunawa, and as such they afford them a degree of respect akin to a maharlika (noble). Opportunistic dragonborn may try to use this to their advantage, but doing so is dangerous – if the asuangs believe that the dragonborn does not in fact share their worship of the Bakunawa, the asuangs turn on the infidel and consume him in fury.

The following monsters are the most common asuang variety that adventurers are likely to face. Nothing about the shapechanging horrors are constant, however, and other kinds may be encountered as well. (*Note:* The monsters are arranged in ascending power, from the lowly malakat to the mighty busao.)

### The Myth of Transformation

It is easier for many to believe that a person was somehow "contaminated," and as such, many believe that the asuang condition is transmitted from one person to another. Myths about how people are turned into asuangs spring up, whether through being bitten by one or by ingesting their saliva through food shared with the monsters. Stories like these rise from the hope that perhaps their loved one was alive to the very end, fighting an illness that ultimately consumed them and turned them into cannibalistic monsters. These stories, however, are simply not true. Except in the willful case of the manananggal and busao, people cannot be turned into an asuang.

## Malakat

Perhaps the weakest of the asuang, the malakat is an elemental spawned from the darkest depths of Karagatan where the Bakunawa rests and recuperates.

The malakat are dim-witted, and they have trouble maintaining their disguise for long. Primarily composed of water, wounds and sores oozing foul liquid form on its borrowed skin the longer a malakat spends between feedings. Over time, the assumed form of a malakat becomes filthy and dissheveled, something that immediately alarms those that knew the victim in life.



*Malakat*

Once in combat, a malakat reveals its true nature as it strikes. Its hair elongates and begins to flail around as if underwater. Its nails transform into claws, long and sharp enough to hurt but ineffective in combat. The pupils turn red, the face distorts, and drool falls down from its sharpened teeth, forming tentacles of viscous saliva.

### Malakat Tactics

In groups, malakats like to focus their attacks on an isolated opponent, attempting to use *hair grab* while others use a combination of *saliva tendrils* and *choke and drown* attacks. When the opponent's allies begin to attack

Malakat		Level 4 Skirmisher
Medium elemental humanoid (shapechanger)		XP 175
HP 50; Bloodied 25	Initiative +9	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 17, Will 15	Perception +3	
Speed 7	darkvision	
TRAITS		
Fluid Mobility		
The malakat takes only half damage from opportunity attacks.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⊕ Saliva Tendrils (poison) ☞ At-will		
<i>Attack:</i> +9 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 3d4 + 6 poison damage.		
⊕ Hair Grab ☞ At-will		
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 2; +7 vs. Reflex		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d4 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed.		
⊕ Choke and Drown (poison) ☞ At-will		
<i>Requirement:</i> Target is grabbed.		
<i>Attack:</i> +7 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d4 + 6 damage plus 2d4 poison damage, and the target takes a -4 penalty on checks made to escape the grab until the start of the malakat's next turn.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
Change Shape (polymorph) ☞ At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The malakat can alter its physical form to appear as a unique humanoid or a humanoid targeted by its <i>consume appearance</i> power.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
Consume Appearance (polymorph) ☞ At-Will		
<i>Trigger:</i> The malakat kills a humanoid creature		
<i>Effect (Free Action):</i> The malakat alters its form to appear as the slain creature, and can now use its <i>change shape</i> power to assume the shape of the target.		
Skills Bluff +2		
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 21 (+7)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 10 (+2)	Int 9 (+1)	Cha 7 (+0)
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Primordial	

the group of asuang, however, they quickly scatter in different directions (they aren't afraid of provoking opportunity attacks) and look for a new isolated target.

As part of a more varied group of monsters, a malakat's tactics change. It will only use its hair grab when it is sure that none of its target's allies can get to it immediately. Otherwise, it will simply move about the battlefield, flanking when it can and using choke and drown on targets grabbed by the malakat's allies.

### Malakat Mythos

It is said that a malakat is borne out of the lightless depths of Karagatan, made sentient by the bile seeping from the Bakunawa's wounds. For this reason, the malakat has a very fluid control over its own body, and it is like a blurring ripple when encountered in combat. Many doubt this origin story though, for they say that even the blisters of such a powerful dragon should similarly be powerful, and then point to the malakat as the weakest of the asuang. People who claim these things haven't seen a malakat strangle a full-grown man to death.

One story claims that a malakat actually fears returning to Karagatan, for fear of melting back into the sea. For this reason, it tends to avoid large bodies of water. It is believed that the malakat prefers strangulation as its method of killing because it deals little physical damage to the body of its victim. That way, the malakat finds it easier to maintain its new form longer before it begins to "seep out" again.

### Tianak

The tianak are tiny undead created from infants and the unborn and given a profane hunger for human flesh. Having only been briefly alive, it despises the living. With its tiny size, the tianak can only assume the appearance of similarly tiny humanoids. As such, their preferred alternate form is that of a helpless infant. Many who see it in this guise feel pity for what they assume to be an abandoned child. But when they approach the tianak, it quickly reverts to what it truly is - a decaying little creature with razor-sharp teeth and a horribly disfigured leg.

### Tianak Tactics

When encountered alone or with the company of other undead, the tianak begins in its humanoid form to avoid suspicion. It will even avoid moving when in this form, instead waiting for its would-be rescuers to approach it. When it can, it unleashes its *wail of innocence*. The cries of the infant are unnatural and would alarm its prey, but it also acts as a charm that draws them closer to the tianak and prevents them from attacking it. It will then attach itself

Tianak		Level 1 Controller	
Tiny shadow humanoid (undead, shapechanger)		XP 100	
HP 28; <b>Bloodied</b> 14	<b>Initiative</b> +3		
AC 15; <b>Fortitude</b> 12, <b>Reflex</b> 13, <b>Will</b> 14	<b>Perception</b> +3		
<b>Speed</b> 5 (2 in humanoid form)	darkvision		
<b>Resist</b> 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant			
TRAITS			
Embrace of the Unborn			
Creatures that the tianak attaches itself to take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ <b>Bite</b> (necrotic) <b>⚡ At-will</b>			
<i>Requirement:</i> Tianak form			
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 0; +6 vs. AC			
<i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 2 damage plus 1d8 necrotic damage, and the tianak is attached to the target until the start of its next turn. (see page 16 for rules on the attached condition)			
⬅ <b>Innocent Wail</b> (charm, psychic) <b>⚡ At-will</b>			
<i>Requirement:</i> Humanoid form			
<i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 2; +3 vs. Will			
<i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is pulled 2 squares. The tianak cannot be attacked by the target until the end of its next turn.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
Change Shape (polymorph) <b>⚡ At-will</b>			
The tianak can alter between its tianak form and the form of any infant humanoid that it has killed.			
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +3, Bluff +10			
<b>Str</b> 7 (-2)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+3)	<b>Wis</b> 7 (-2)	
<b>Con</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Int</b> 6 (-2)	<b>Cha</b> 17 (+3)	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> -		

to an opponent affected by the wail, and thereafter attempt to focus on that one opponent

From time to time, the tianak finds others of its cursed kin. These tianaks form into a tianak swarm, and are more straightforward as a group compared to when they act alone. They will no longer bother with disguises, and leap towards whatever prey they can find.

### Tianak Mythos

An asuang's taste for humanoid entrails makes them highly susceptible to becoming ghouls (see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*). They do not share the natural fear

Tianak Swarm		Level 9 Brute	
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 400	
HP 115; <b>Bloodied</b> 57	<b>Initiative</b> +9		
AC 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 20	<b>Perception</b> +4		
<b>Speed</b> 5	darkvision		
<b>Resist</b> 5 necrotic; half damage from melee and ranged attacks			
<b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant, 10 from close and area attacks			
TRAITS			
Derive Nourishment			
Whenever the tianak swarm hits a target it is grabbing with a basic attack, the tianak swarm gains 5 temporary hit points.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⬇ <b>Grasping Bite</b> (necrotic) <b>⚡ At-will</b>			
<i>Attack:</i> +14 vs. AC			
<i>Hit:</i> 4d4 + 6 damage plus 1d8 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape).			
⬅ <b>Fury of the Unborn</b> (necrotic) <b>⚡ Recharge</b> ⏏ ⏏			
<i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 2; +12 vs. Reflex			
<i>Hit:</i> 3d10 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).			
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
Swarm Attack (aura 1)			
<i>Trigger:</i> An opponent begins its turn in the aura.			
<i>Effect (Free Action):</i> The tianak swarm makes a melee basic attack against the opponent.			
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +9, Bluff +11			
<b>Str</b> 11 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+4)	
<b>Con</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+3)	<b>Cha</b> 20 (+9)	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> -		

towards these undead that many races have, and they are not above using their dead comrades who rise from the dead this way. When facing asuang, ghouls of all kinds are usually present as well.

Other asuang's take this connection a step further, using their blood as a component in a foul ritual. They take the corpse of an infant, be it stillborn or taken forcibly from the womb of its dead mother, and infuse their foul blood onto the tiny corpse. The result is a tianak, a miniature ghoul that inherits the asuang's shapechanging ability.

The ritual transforms them so that they appear to be around the same size as a child that can already crawl. Curiously, they also possess a stunted leg in this form. Those well-versed in the art of ritual casting believe that

the stunted leg is the cost of the slight growth spurt. Even with this impediment, tianaks in their undead form move with unusual speed. It does this by hopping on its one good leg, and it can leap longer or higher if it so chooses. In contrast, they can barely move while in their infant form, as the legs are not yet developed for moving. Besides, seeing a newborn infant walking around, albeit very slowly, tends to blow their cover.

Asuangs who create tianaks usually do so to create anarchy, leaving them near a community soon after they rise from the dead. Left to fend for itself, the remnants of its infant instincts seek the protection of a mother's embrace. But once they do find a mother, the creature's hunger for flesh takes over. For this reason, a tianak's first victim is usually a woman.

Whereas most of their victims are the result of its conflicting instincts, tianaks assault the pregnant out of pure hatred. But it is not the mother that they are after. They remotely understand that they have been denied the gift of life, and because of this attack the unborn child as spiteful vengeance. They tear through the mother's womb, killing her just so they can get to the child. They then devour the unborn and gain the ability to assume the appearance of a healthy baby.

Tianaks rarely remain solitary. While they are incapable of speech, they have a tendency for attracting mindless undead to act as guardians and scapegoats for their feeding. Tianaks are strongest when they finds others of their kind. As a swarm, the tianaks grow bolder with their feeding and do not bother with disguises any longer. In great numbers, these swarms can run over whole communities eating everything in its wake.

## Sigbin

By far the most numerous of the asuangs, sigbins have the uncanny ability to attack the shadow of their prey. Besides the asuang ability to take on the form of those they kill, sigbins are also noted for their ability to become virtually indistinguishable from a shadow hound (see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*).

Beneath all the masks that a sigbin may acquire in its hunger, the creature possesses a unique humanoid form. It rarely uses this guise, however - the skin of this form is unnaturally black, and the body is hairless. Indeed, if it does use this form, it will easily be identified as a denizen of the *Realm of Kadiliman*.

### Sigbin Tactics

The sigbin begins combat by attacking at range with its *tratnya*s, preferably from ambush so that it can use its *strike the shadow* power. It will enter melee in its shadow hound form so that it can use its teleport speed to full advantage - whether in conjunction with a Stealth check or to get into flanking positions. It is common for a sigbin to flee from unfavorable combats, but not before attacking as many creatures as possible with its bite attack. It hopes to infect its opponents with *shadow pox* (see the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE for rules on diseases), so that its attacks can be more devastating in future confrontations.

## The Lower Realms

While the asuang tend to spread chaos in the middle world (also known as the *Realm of Kalupaan*), these horrific creatures usually originate from one of the lower realms. With minimal work, these realms can fit easily into your own cosmology. What follows is a short description of these two realms:

*The Realm of Kadiliman* lies directly below Kalupaan, and this is where creatures of shadow skulk. It is easy to stumble into this realm in the blanket of night, but between the enchantments of the dark fey and the hunger of the asuang, returning to the watchful gaze of the four moons proves to be much more difficult.

From the vast seas of *Kalupaan*, one can be said to reach *Karagatan* by swimming deeper and

deeper into the depths. It is a world where all the elements combine, dominated by the overwhelming presence of elemental water. The primordial pantheon resides here to tame the chaos of the elements. In contrast, the dread dragons and their demonic servants seek to nurture the chaos.

Portals that connect the two lower realms to each other are common, while portals that lead directly to the upper realms appear less frequently. The rarest of these are gateways that lead from *Karagatan* to *Kalikasan* (the Realm of the Fey), and from *Kadiliman* to *Kalangitan* (the Sky World), respectively. Finally, all of these realms connect to *Kalupaan*, the middle world.



Sigbin

<b>Sigbin</b>	<b>Level 6 Lurker</b>
Medium Shadow Humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 250
<b>HP 55; Bloodied 27; Regeneration 5</b> <b>AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 19, Will 17</b> <b>Speed 6</b> , (teleport 7 while in shadow hound form) <b>Immune</b> shadow pox; <b>Vulnerable</b> radiant (if the sigbin takes radiant damage, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	<b>Initiative +10</b> <b>Perception +8</b> darkvision
<b>STANDARD ACTIONS</b>	
⊕/⊗ <b>Tratnyr</b> (weapon) ☞ At-will	
<i>Requirement:</i> Humanoid or hybrid form. <i>Attack:</i> Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 2d8 + 6 damage.	
⊕ <b>Bite</b> ☞ At-will	
<i>Requirement:</i> Hybrid or shadow hound form. <i>Attack:</i> +11 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target contracts shadow pox (see below).	

⊕ **Strike the Shadow** (necrotic) ☞ At-will

*Requirement:* Combat advantage against the target.

*Effect:* The sigbin makes a melee basic attack. If the attack hits, it deals an additional 1d6 necrotic damage.

**MINOR ACTIONS**

⊕ **Change Shape** (polymorph) ☞ At-Will

*Effect:* The sigbin can alter its physical form to appear as a shadow hound (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL), a hybrid form, a unique humanoid form, or a creature targeted by its *consume appearance* power.

**TRIGGERED ACTIONS**

⊕ **Consume Appearance** (polymorph) ☞ At-Will

*Trigger:* The sigbin kills a canine or humanoid creature.

*Effect (Free Action):* The sigbin alters its form to appear as the slain creature, and can now use its *change shape* power to assume the shape of the target.

**Skills** Bluff +12, Stealth +12

<b>Str</b> 17 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+2)	<b>Cha</b> 14 (+5)

**Alignment** Chaotic evil      **Languages** Common

**Equipment** 2 tratnyrs (see the D&D 4E ADVENTURER'S VAULT)



### Shadow Pox

### Level 6 Disease

Endurance improve DC17, maintain DC 12, worsen DC 11 or lower

The target is cured.

**Initial Effect:** The target gains Vulnerability 5 (necrotic).

Whenever the target is attacked by a power with the necrotic keyword, it attacks the lowest defense of the target instead of the defense the power normally attacks.

**Final State:** The target dies, and its soul is trapped in the Realm of Kadiliman. The target cannot be resurrected until the soul is rescued.

## Sigbin Mythos

It is quite likely that the term “asuang” came from association with the sigbin. Lorekeepers believe that the term ‘asuang’ was taken from either “aso ang” or “aso-asohan”; which in the tongue of the islands, mean “the dog” and “false dog” respectively. Both of these terms may refer to the sigbin. This is a minor naming issue, however - the term *asuang* is now used to refer to any of these depraved shapeshifters and their offshoots.

Sigbins are said to be completely invisible in daylight, but any lorekeeper worth their salt will immediately dismiss this notion. Sunlight stings the shadowy fur of the sigbin and focused radiant energy outright harms them. As such, they stay in dark retreats during the day.

While their form can tolerate the natural light of the moons, they hate the celestial bodies of the night more than they do the sun. To them, the moons belong in only one place - the titanic belly of Bakunawa. Whenever one of the moons are full, the sigbin are reminded of how much work is left to be done to sate Bakunawa’s hunger. Interestingly, this leads them to be just as active on nights of the full moon as lycanthropes.

## Manananggal

The manananggal is a practitioner of the arcane arts that has bound its own soul to that of a demonling of elemental air. Able to divide itself at its torso, its upper body prowls the night skies in search of prey.

Unlike many *asuang*s, the manananggal is incapable of assuming the form of those that it kills. Instead, it maintains the humanoid form that it had before the soul bond. Likewise, the transformation of a manananggal is unlike the other *asuang*. It divides itself at the torso and its arms turn into bat-like wings as the upper half takes flight. Its face contorts and wrinkles in a hag-like manner, while its teeth sharpen into fangs and a long, tubular tongue juts out in between. Where the creature segmented from each half, its own innards lash out constantly.

## Manananggal Tactics

The manananggal opens up with *kulam*, cursing a

new opponent each round and wracking its victims in pain. It will likely spend its action point early on, since it will be unable to use its action point once it disjoins. Whenever it finds an opportunity to catch at least two prone creatures, it blasts away with *cloud of black wings*. It will then either move into the zone and attack the enemies within, or send out its demonic allies to do so.

When the manananggal *disjoins*, its tactics change dramatically. The deathwing, or upper half, moves wildly from foe to foe, attacking without regard for its own safety. In contrast, the creeper tries to stay away from battle, only attacking when it sees an advantageous opening. Unlike the winged half, it will tend to focus its attacks on a single opponent (usually the party’s controller).

## Manananggal Mythos

Even though it lacks the ability of other *asuang*s to steal the appearance of their prey, a manananggal has little trouble integrating itself into humanoid communities. Few suspect that baranggay’s prized maiden or its most charismatic warrior might be an *asuang*. As it tends to possess a forceful personality, lesser *asuang* tend to flock to the manananggal. Thus, it is said that a manananggal is easier to find through the blundering of their minions.

The ritual for transforming into a manananggal is a secret jealously guarded by manananggal families. A ritual caster cannot complete this ritual without swallowing a *tiktik*, a minor air demon. The demonling resides in the upper body of the caster and bonds with its soul. The manananggal families thus tend to pay supplication to a mighty demon lord of elemental air, in addition to an *asuang*’s usual reverence for Bakunawa. If the demon lord favors them, it occasionally gifts them with the prized *tiktiks*.

A manananggal can feed on any humanoid, but it has a preference for the pregnant. When it chances upon such prey, it uses its proboscis tongue to suck out not only the entrails, but the unborn child as well. Tales suggest that this is because a manananggal is incapable of begetting children of their own, and this is not so much a preference as their own way of alleviating the soul bond that they entered. Both this tale and the one about manananggal families, though contradictory, are widely circulated.

Ideally, a manananggal reconstitutes with no inci-

dent after it feeds. However, should the deathwing be destroyed, the creeper is capable of regenerating the lost portion, with only an increased state of hunger to show for it. Even the bonded tiktik, which would have been destroyed along with the upper body, reforms with this regeneration.

The reverse does not hold true, however, and the manananggal understandably takes care to hide its lower half whenever it can. For if the lower half of a manananggal is destroyed, one of two things may happen:

The manananggal may decide to pass on its tiktik to a willing recipient. The recipient casts the ritual as normal, but instead of summoning a new tiktik, the manananggal passes its demonling to the caster. With only half a body and no demon to sustain it, the manananggal then perishes.

If a manananggal's fear of death is too great, or if it cannot find a willing recipient for its tiktik, it lives off the rest of its days as literally half the being it once was. Bit by bit, the tiktik takes complete control of the soul. In time, the manananggal becomes a balbal - a gluttonous force of destruction that is fit to be called a true demon.

## Balbal

The remnants of a manananggal that lost the lower half of its body, the ugly balbal has also lost the charm and cunning of its old form. It is now motivated by hunger alone, a fact that other asuangs use to effectively direct this engine of chaos.

Few features hint at the balbal's former humanoid existence. While retaining the general shape of the manananggal's upper half, the wings have expanded to the point where the rib cage has been forced open. As it flies, the ribs open and close slightly, adopting a grotesque maw that the balbal favors over its mouth. The proboscis tongue, no longer functional, has instead developed into a barbed whip that the creature uses in place of lost arms.

## Balbal Tactics

The balbal does not hesitate to enter combat, flying into the midst of its opponents and trying to grab one of them with its *barbed tongue*. If successful, it will then drop whatever it is holding and use its ribcage maw offensively. It will only use its *false corpse* when bloodied, picking up its preferred illusion focus to make it appear as the corpse of someone dear to its enemies. This gets its opponents leery of finishing off the balbal, afraid to "defile the corpse of their beloved."

## Balbal Mythos

Separated from everything that has kept it human, the manananggal loses itself to the demon that it has bonded with. As the tiktik takes over, the degeneration

### Manananggal Witch

Level 11 Elite Controller

Medium elemental humanoid  
(air, demon, shapechanger)

XP 1200

HP 222; Bloodied 111

Initiative +10

AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 23

Perception +5

Speed 6

Resist 10 variable (1/encounter)

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

### TRAITS

#### Thirst for Blood (necrotic)

The manananggal witch deals an additional 1d8 necrotic damage against bloodied creatures.

### STANDARD ACTIONS

#### ⚔ Dagger (weapon) ⚡ At-will

Attack: Ranged 5; +16 vs. AC

Hit: 3d4 + 10 damage.

#### ☞ Kulam (psychic) ⚡ At-will

Attack: Ranged 5; +14 vs. Will

Hit: 1d10 + 9 psychic damage, and the target falls prone and can't stand up (save ends).

#### ☘ Cloud of Black Wings (necrotic, zone) ⚡ Recharge ☞ ☞

Attack: Area burst 2 within 10, targets non-demons; +14 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d6 + 9 necrotic damage, and the target is considered bloodied (save ends).

Effect: The attack creates a zone of tiny flying demons until the end of the manananggal's next turn. The zone is considered difficult terrain and blocks line of sight for all non-demons.

Sustain Minor: The zone persists, and the manananggal may move it 3 squares.

### TRIGGERED ACTIONS

#### Disjoin (polymorph) ⚡ Daily

Trigger: The manananggal is bloodied.

Effect (No Action): The manananggal witch is removed from play and is replaced by two monsters; the manananggal deathwing and the manananggal creeper. Both halves occupy either the witch's original space, or an unoccupied square adjacent to it. Each half acts on the same initiative count as the manananggal witch.

Skills Arcana +14, Bluff +11

Str 9 (+4)

Dex 21 (+10)

Wis 10 (+5)

Con 15 (+7)

Int 18 (+9)

Cha 18 (+9)

Alignment chaotic evil

Languages Common, abyssal

<b>Manananggal Creeper</b>	<b>Level 11 Lurker</b>	
<b>Small elemental humanoid (blind, demon, shapechanger)</b>	<b>XP -</b>	
<b>HP 43; Bloodied</b> <i>always bloodied</i>	<b>Initiative -</b>	
<b>AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 23</b>	<b>Perception +5</b>	
<b>Speed 6</b>	blindsight 10	
<b>Resist 10</b> variable (1/encounter)		
<b>TRAITS</b>		
<b>Thirst for Blood</b> (necrotic)		
The manananggal deals an additional 1d8 necrotic damage against bloodied creatures.		
<b>STANDARD ACTIONS</b>		
⊕ <b>Snaking Viscera</b> ⚡ <b>At-will</b>		
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 3; +14 vs. Reflex		
<i>Hit:</i> 3d8 + 7 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape).		
<i>Miss:</i> If the creeper was hidden as it made this attack, it can make a Stealth check to remain hidden.		
⊕ <b>Tear the Flesh</b> ⚡ <b>Encounter</b>		
<i>Requirement:</i> Target is grabbed by the creeper.		
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 3; +14 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> 4d8 + 7 damage, and the target is considered bloodied until it escapes the grab.		
<i>Hit:</i> Half damage.		
<b>Reconstitute</b> (polymorph) ⚡ <b>Daily</b>		
<i>Requirement:</i> Can only be used while adjacent to the deathwing, or when the deathwing has been destroyed.		
<i>Effect:</i> Both halves are removed from play, and the manananggal witch returns to play in the space occupied by the lower half. The witch's form will have hit points equal to the sum of the deathwing and the creeper's current hit points (a destroyed deathwing's current hit points are 0).		
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +15		
<b>Str</b> 9 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+10)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 18 (+9)	<b>Cha</b> 18 (+9)
<b>Alignment</b> chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, abyssal	

<b>Manananggal Deathwing</b>	<b>Level 11 Skirmisher</b>	
<b>Medium elemental humanoid (air, demon)</b>	<b>XP -</b>	
<b>HP 55; Bloodied</b> <i>always bloodied</i>	<b>Initiative -</b>	
<b>AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 23</b>	<b>Perception +5</b>	
<b>Speed 2</b> (clumsy), fly 8 (clumsy grounded)	darkvision	
<b>Resist 10</b> variable (1/encounter);		
<b>Vulnerable 10</b> radiant		
<b>TRAITS</b>		
<b>Thirst for Blood</b> (necrotic)		
The manananggal deals an additional 1d8 necrotic damage against bloodied creatures.		
<b>STANDARD ACTIONS</b>		
⊕ <b>Wing Slice</b> ⚡ <b>At-Will</b>		
<i>Attack:</i> +16 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 1d8 + 10 damage.		
⊕ <b>Proboscis Tongue</b> ⚡ <b>At-will</b>		
<i>Requirement:</i> Bloodied target		
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 2; +14 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d10 + 7 damage, and the deathwing gains 5 temporary hit points.		
⊕ <b>Whirlwind Assault</b> ⚡ <b>Recharge</b> whenever the deathwing hits with a <i>proboscis tongue</i> attack		
The deathwing flies 4 squares, and can make a <i>wing slice</i> attack as it leaves each square. The winged half does not provoke opportunity attacks while using this power.		
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +14, Perception +10, Stealth +15		
<b>Str</b> 9 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+10)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 18 (+9)	<b>Cha</b> 18 (+9)
<b>Alignment</b> chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, abyssal	

## The Tanggal Ointment

The statblocks for the manananggal, above, assumes that the party encounters the asuang before it disjoins. By using a ritual that involves a specially prepared tanggal ointment, it can disjoin outside of combat. If the manananggal is able to perform this ritual (which lasts for about 10 minutes), the upper half can be encountered with 111 hit points, an initiative modifier of +10, and is worth 600 xp when defeated. It is still always considered to be bloodied.

When recovered, this foul-smelling ointment (which is composed of chicken dung, coconut oil, and decayed humanoid innards) can be used as a component for arcane rituals. Treat it as alchemical reagents of an appropriate value for a treasure parcel of the party's level.

Balbal	Level 15 Brute
Medium elemental magical beast (air, demon)	XP 1200
<b>HP</b> 181; <b>Bloodied</b> 90 <b>AC</b> 27; <b>Fortitude</b> 27, <b>Reflex</b> 26, <b>Will</b> 26 <b>Speed</b> 2 (clumsy), fly 6 <b>Resist</b> 10/variable (2/encounter) <b>Vulnerable</b> 10 radiant	<b>Initiative</b> +10 <b>Perception</b> +8; darkvision
<b>STANDARD ACTIONS</b>	
⬇ <b>Barbed Tongue</b> ☞ <b>At-will</b>	
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 2; +20 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 2d10 + 12 damage, damage, and the target is grabbed. <i>Special:</i> When the grab ends, the target takes 2d10 damage.	
⬇ <b>Ribcage Maw</b> ☞ <b>At-will</b>	
<i>Requirement:</i> Target is grabbed by the balbal. <i>Attack:</i> +18 vs. Fortitude, 4 attacks <i>Hit:</i> 1d8 + 6 damage per hit, or 1d10 + 6 damage per hit against a bloodied target.	
⬅ <b>False Corpse</b> (illusion, psychic) ☞ <b>Encounter</b>	
<i>Requirement:</i> A humanoid-sized inanimate object held in its ribcage maw. <i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 3; +18 vs. Will <i>Hit:</i> 4d10 + 7 psychic damage, and until the end of its next turn, the target takes 10 psychic damage whenever it misses the balbal with an attack. <i>Sustain Minor:</i> The balbal continues to deal damage whenever the opponent misses it with an attack. The balbal cannot use <i>ribcage maw</i> and sustain <i>false corpse</i> in the same round.	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +12	
<b>Str</b> 19 (+11)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+12) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+8)
<b>Con</b> 21 (+12)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+6) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+7)
<b>Alignment</b> chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> abyssal
<b>Equipment</b> a banana trunk for <i>false corpse</i>	

consumes the personality, the charm, and the intellect so prized by the witch. Only a fraction of its former cunning remains; everything else is replaced by the hungry, destructive nature of the demon within.

A balbal craves destruction like all other demons, but it also understands the importance of concealing its existence until the right time. It has lost the *asuang* ability to shapeshift, instead acquiring a twisted version with its false corpse ability. Given time, it can consume a corpse and bind an illusion of the corpse on an inanimate object so that it appears like its victims, allowing it to conceal its feeding

Tiktik	Level 10 Minion Skirmisher
Tiny elemental magical beast (air, demon)	XP 125
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion <b>AC</b> 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 22, <b>Reflex</b> 23, <b>Will</b> 22 <b>Speed</b> 6, fly 6	<b>Initiative</b> +15 <b>Perception</b> +6; darkvision
<b>TRAITS</b>	
<b>Scuttling Dodge</b>	
Whenever an attack misses the tiktik while it is attached to a creature, the attack hits the creature the tiktik is attached to.	
<b>STANDARD ACTIONS</b>	
⬇ <b>Nip and Stick</b> ☞ <b>At-will</b>	
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 0; +15 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 8 damage, and until the start of the tiktik's next turn, it is attached to the target. (see page 16 for rules on the attached condition)	
<b>MOVE ACTIONS</b>	
<b>Rush In</b> ☞ <b>At-will</b>	
<i>Effect:</i> The tiktik flies 3 squares without provoking opportunity attacks, but must end its move in a space shared by an opponent.	
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +18	
<b>Str</b> 13 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 27 (+13) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 15 (+7) <b>Cha</b> 18 (+9)
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal

habits. The illusion is so strong that it is able to fool not just the eyes but an observer's other senses as well.

Tales claim that this ability is not without its flaws however. Tiny details are sometimes missing in the illusion, such as a moles, blemishes, birthmarks, or the existence of fingerprints. Even when armed with this knowledge, anyone trying to follow the tracks of a balbal will have a hard time trying to convince people to let them inspect the bodies of the dearly departed.

The balbal also has the ability to use this illusion offensively. When used in this way, it doesn't have such a lasting effect - the illusion does not take on a definite form, and it is perceived by each of its opponents as the corpse of someone dear to them. In addition, the balbal has to be in contact with the object at all times to maintain the effect.

For the most part, the limitation works well enough for the balbal. The instability of the illusion makes it an effective shield should the *asuang*'s survival be uncertain. Adventurers should make no mistake, however: The balbal fights to the death.



From top left, rotating clockwise: Manananggal deathwing, balbal, tiktik, and manananggal creeper.

## Tiktik

To become a full-pledged manananggal, one has to perform a ritual of supplication to a mighty demon lord of elemental air. The climax of this evil ritual involves the binding of one's soul to the tiktik, a black-feathered demonling the size of a chick.

Failure to perform this ritual successfully results in the death of the caster, as the uncontrolled tiktik devours her internal organs. Heads of manananggal families, usually keep a small flock of these demons for the purpose of raising their children as manananggal.

## Tiktik Tactics

Usually encountered in a flock (or "murder") of at least four demonlings, the tiktiks fight as a group. They choose one target, *rush in*, and scuttle about their victim's body rapidly, making any attacks against them endanger the target as well. They keep attacking their target until one of them is taken down, at which point they panic and *rush in* towards a different nearby target.

## Busao

Many dragonborn take any opportunity to manipulate asuang for their own agendas, and from time to time a dragonborn partakes in the debased feeding habits of these creatures. Bakunawa favors these gluttonous children and rewards them with the shapeshifting abilities of the asuang. These favored souls, called Busao, gain the ability to polymorph into an aspect of the primordial. Although miniature for draconic standards, this dragon form is still gigantic.

In its humanoid form, the busao looks like a bulkily muscular dragonborn. Its gluttonous nature has made it larger than its other kin, and it has a peculiar horn jutting out of its forehead that glows red with heat.

In its draconic form, the busao is a beacon of fury. Its horn burns brightly, channeling flames onto all of its attacks and its tongue elongates, terminating in a second snapping maw jutting out at its tip, mimicking the proboscis tongue of some asuang. Its weapons meld with its body, and it walks on all fours. A mighty pair of draconic wings sprouts from its back.

Busao	Level 18 Solo Soldier
<b>Large natural humanoid (dragonborn, shapechanger)</b>	<b>XP 10000</b>
<b>HP</b> 716; <b>Bloodied</b> 358; see also <i>bloodied breath</i>	<b>Initiative</b> +14
<b>AC</b> 34 (30 while in dragon form); <b>Fortitude</b> 32, <b>Reflex</b> 27, <b>Will</b> 31	<b>Perception</b> +13
<b>Speed</b> 6, (fly 8 when in dragon form)	
<b>Resist</b> 10 fire	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +5; <b>Action Points</b> 2	
TRAITS	
<b>Bakunawa's Fury</b>	
While the busao is bloodied, it gains a +1 bonus on all attack rolls and on all rolls to recharge powers.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ <b>Bastard Sword</b> (weapon) ⚡ At-will	
<i>Requirement:</i> Dragonborn form	
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 2; +23 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 3d8 + 14 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the busao's next turn.	
⊕ <b>Towering Shield Slam</b> ⚡ At-will	
<i>Requirement:</i> dragonborn form and wielding a shield	
<i>Attack:</i> +23 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 2d10 + 14 damage, and the busao has cover from the target until the start of its next turn.	
⊕ <b>Bite</b> (acid) ⚡ At-will	
<i>Requirement:</i> Dragon form.	
<i>Attack:</i> Reach 3; +23 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 2d8 + 15 damage plus 2d8 acid damage.	
⊕ <b>Double Strike</b> ⚡ At-will	
The busao makes either a bastard sword attack and a towering shield slam attack, or two bite attacks. The requirements for each attack still apply.	
⚡ <b>Consuming Blast</b> (acid, fire) ⚡ Recharge ☞ ☞	
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 10; +21 vs. Fortitude	
<i>Hit:</i> 2d10 + 15 fire damage, and the target gains vulnerability 10 to acid damage (save ends)	
⚡ <b>Breath Weapon</b> (acid, fire) ⚡ Recharge ☞	
<i>Attack:</i> Close Blast 5; +21 vs. Refkex	
<i>Hit:</i> 3d12 + 15 acid and fire damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).	
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage.	

## MINOR ACTIONS

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ⚡ At-will

*Effect:* A busao alters its form to appear as either a dragon or a unique humanoid dragonborn (see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*). The busao becomes huge, it gains a fly speed of 8, and its AC becomes 30 in dragon form. It otherwise uses the same statistics in either form.

## TRIGGERED ACTIONS

⚡ **Bloodied Breath** (acid, fire) ⚡ Encounter

*Trigger:* The busao is bloodied for the first time in an encounter.

*Effect (Free Action):* *Breath weapon* recharges, and the busao uses it immediately.

**Skills** Athletics +21, History +13, Intimidate +23, Religion +17

**Str** 25 (+16)      **Dex** 16 (+12)      **Wis** 19 (+13)

**Con** 27 (+17)      **Int** 16 (+12)      **Cha** 24 (+16)

**Alignment** Chaotic evil      **Languages** Common, Draconic

**Equipment** Bastard Sword, Heavy Shield

## Busao Tactics

A busao is a veteran of countless battles, and it knows how to adjust its tactics accordingly. When accompanied by allies against a group of opponents, the busao usually transforms straight into dragon form to surprise its opponents. It doesn't wade into the thick of combat, however, preferring to designate a target with its *consuming blast* and then concentrating on it while its allies soften up the rest. When battling alone on the other hand, the busao jumps fearlessly into the thick of things, but maintains its humanoid form in order to maintain its guard for as long as possible. In that case it will only revert to dragon form when two opponents have been taken down, or when it has been bloodied.

In either form, the busao uses its breath weapon to hit as many opponents as it can. A self-serving leader, it does not hesitate to include its allies in the blast if doing so can devastate its enemies.

## Busao Mythos

While the majority of dragonborn dismiss the myth that the first dragonborns crawled out of the flesh of the Bakunawa, the busao are fervent believers of this story. To them, this makes them the rightful rulers of the asuang, for they are the spawn of the dreaded primordial.

The busao share the asuang ability to consume the appearance of all they slay. However, most busao see no need to consume the forms of others, for they believe themselves strong enough to take anything they want without



*Busao*

the need for deception. They still devour their victims like all other asuang, but other than their massive size, they gain no noticeable benefit from this feeding frenzy.

Instead, stories claim that the busao gorge themselves to maintain their ability to take on the aspect of Bakunawa. It is no secret that Bakunawa granted them this power in order to act as its heralds while the primordial dragon heals its wounds. These stories claim the power that was granted to them is fleeting (unlike warlock infernal pacts, see the D&D 4E *Player's Handbook*). Should they stop imitating their gluttonous patron and acting in his best interests, then they will lose the ability to use this power.

Busao are infamous for not getting along with the manananggal, for both types of asuang see themselves as the pinnacle of their kin. A busao possess more raw power than an individual manananggal, but the latter have whole families backing them. In contrast, busao rarely cooperate with other busao. As a result conflicts between both asuang breeds usually become a deadlock.

Busao enjoy coercing the dim-witted balbal to their service. Besides serving as useful muscle, the balbal are an unobvious reminder to the manananggal that if they are not careful, they too might be subjugated by the mighty sons of the dragon.

## Asuang Lore

Characters can learn more about the asuang with a successful skill check.

**Arcana DC 7:** Asuangs are otherworldly shapechangers that feast on the flesh and innards of the living.

A malakat is a skinstealing elemental that has total control over her whole body and anything that spews forth from it. Her hair and even her acidic spittle springs to life as she feeds. She prefers to choke her victims to death before feeding.

The most numerous of the asuangs are the sigbin, who possess the ability to assume canine form. It is said that these aso-asohan (or dog-pretenders) are the source of the “asuang” name.

**Arcana DC 16:** Manananggals are mortal arcanists who have turned into asuang by fusing their souls with that of an air demon. In exchange for immunity to the ravages of age, they need to feed on a living creature's viscera, segmenting their bodies painfully into a winged torso and grotesque trunk when hungry or threatened.

**Arcana DC 21:** Heroes who face a manananggal often seek to destroy the lower half of the demon. Without it, the winged upper half is left vulnerable to radiant energies, and will presumably be destroyed when sunrise comes.

While unpleasant, sunlight does not destroy the manananggal. It survives with only the human form destroyed. The demon aspect takes over, and the creature turns into a horrifying monstrosity known as a balbal.

Powerful dragonborns who devote their lives to the Bakunawa are sometimes transformed into its exarchs as a reward. Gifted with the unholy ability to turn into huge dragons at a moment's notice, these Busao stand at the apex of asuang hordes.

## GM Toolkit

Asuangs fit well in many games, whether as occasional monsters or as a prevailing monster theme. Individually, they can make for an interesting change of pace, similar to other shapechangers but having traits that could well be unknown to your players. They can also be used as a themed threat that can be a challenge all the way through heroic level, starting from a singular tianak threat and going all the way through the machinations of the demonic manananggal. Both the busao and the balbal, may appear in the mid-paragon levels. While pursuing a different storyline, these powerful asuangs can appear to remind the players that their actions at the heroic tier (fighting asuangs on a regular basis) have long-term implications, drawing the ire of powerful busao warlords or forcing them to face the balbal form of a manananggal that they thought they had defeated.

### Condition: Attached

While creatures of tiny size are too small to grab its opponents, they will still have reasons to hang onto their opponents. To reflect this, the two tiny creatures presented in this supplement make use of the attached condition, below. When under the effect of the attached condition, the following rules apply:

- ✔ The attached creature cannot take move actions.
- ✔ Attached to a target: The target suffers no ill effects from the attached condition, although other powers that involve the attached condition still apply.
- ✔ Whenever the target moves willingly, is pushed, pulled, or slid, the attached creature moves with the target.
- ✔ Ending the condition: The attached condition ends if the target teleports, or makes a successful escape attempt as if the attached creature is grabbing it. An attached creature can end the effect as a minor action.

### Theme: Reflections

One way for an asuang to be incorporated into the game is for it to be mistaken for something else. The manananggal is sometimes mistaken for a vampire, while sigbins have often been described as werewolves. Most townsfolk would have trouble telling these creatures apart, so a party of adventurers could easily be misinformed.

But the theme of distorted reflections can manifest in other ways as well. Looking at asuangs in disguise closely will sometimes reveal details that show up in reverse. A few examples include seeing one's reflection upside-down when staring at an asuang's eyes, hair swaying slightly towards the other direction of the wind, or a sigbin's paws in canine form jutting backward rather than forward. Use these tidbits of information sparingly, however: With conscious thought, asuangs can suppress this imperfection with their disguise. If they believe that they are being watched, they put a greater focus on their shapechanging. Insightful observers might note that a suspected asuang might appear distracted as it maintains its disguise.

### Theme: Terrors of the Night

While only the sigbin and the tianak are actual shadow creatures, asuangs are monsters beholden to the darkness. They typically assume their monstrous forms during the night, while preferring to maintain their disguises during the day. They will seek to avoid combat in broad daylight as much as possible, only attacking in self-defense. In contrast, tunder the blanket of night and the light of the moons the asuangs are some of the most aggressive monsters in Kalupaan.

### Theme: The Family That Eats Together

Sigbins have very strong family ties. Any individual asuang of this type is likely able to recite the names, assumed whereabouts, and current well-being of their grandmother, her cousin's son, and even that son's daughter-in-laws. As such, when adventurers slay a sigbin, they will surely be the subject of the rest of family's ire. They will attempt to exact vengeance on the adventurers, directly or indirectly. Although depending on how well-liked the fallen sigbin is, such attempts may be half-hearted or unusually aggressive.

Like the sigbins, manananggals have a tendency to form tight-knit families. However, only two or three members will usually be actual manananggals - the other members are too young or inexperienced to survive the Bond of Disjointment ritual. Many, however, are trained in the arcane arts in preparation for their eventual bonding to a tiktik. You can represent these younger family members by making NPCs with the arcane power source.

An interesting option is to allow a player character with the arcane power source to come from a manananggal family. If the player so chooses, you may allow the character to take the following background (see the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANBOOK 2 for rules on backgrounds).

### Background: Manananggal Scion

You come from a family of manananggals, shapeshifters who fuse their souls with demons to achieve immortality. Before you were deemed worthy to perform the ritual that would transform you, however, you ran away from your household. Perhaps you witnessed the debased feeding methods of your elders. Maybe an older sibling might have performed the ritual, only to be consumed from inside by the tiktik he or she was supposed to bond with. Is your family actively looking for you? Does the promise of immortality lure you still?

*Associated Skills:* Arcana, Bluff

### Thematic Element: Proboscis Tongue

Existing creatures, especially shapechanger brutes, can be given this ability to effectively give them an asuang feel. Alternatively, this thematic element can be added to a corporeal undead to represent an asuang that rose from the grave. The feature reinforces the asuangs' hunger for flesh, while allowing them to last a little longer in combat:



### STANDARD ACTION

#### † Proboscis Tongue ☞ At-will

*Requirement:* Target is bloodied.

*Attack:* Reach 2; Level + 3 vs. Fortitude

*Hit:* 1d10 + 3 + Constitution modifier damage, and the asuang gains 5 temporary hit points.

*11th level:* Increase damage to 2d10 + 5 + Constitution modifier.

*21st level:* Increase damage to 3d10 + 9 + Constitution modifier, and increase the amount of temporary hit points gained to 10.

### Thematic Element: Consume Appearance

This thematic element works well on shapechangers with a limited form of Change Shape (that is, those who cannot use Change Shape to assume the form of any creature they see; see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*). This power has no effect on combat, and is mainly used as a roleplaying power:

### TRIGGERED ACTION

#### Consume Appearance (polymorph) ☞ At-Will

*Trigger:* The asuang kills a humanoid creature.

*Effect (Free Action):* The asuang alters its form to appear as the slain creature, and can now use its *change shape* power to assume the shape of the target.

### Fantastic Terrain: Banana Grove

Asuangs are commonly associated with banana trees. Some believe that their spirits reside there when the sun is out, while others think that they favor banana groves as the their preferred place for ritual casting. Mananangals are believed to use the cover of banana trees to protect their lower halves as they feed. A few whisper of the arcane properties of the so-called banana heart, believing it to contain the souls of an asuang's victims. Whatever the reason, asuangs find benefit in banana groves, and wild growths of such plants are common in asuang lairs in the deep forest.

**Effect:** A banana grove is a cluster of trees (see Outdoor Terrain, from the D&D 4E *Dungeon Master's Guide*) that occupy a space of 2x2 to 4x4 squares. In addition to the effects of the tree terrain, asuangs can become hidden in the banana grove. In addition, the following attack is usable:

### Falling Tree

At-will

*"You hack at the soft trunk of a banana tree and with a swift kick, send it crashing down on your foes"*

#### Standard Action

**Requirement:** You must be adjacent or sharing the space of a banana grove, and you must be wielding a heavy blade or an axe.

**Check:** Athletics check (hard DC) to shove the banana trunk

**Success:** The trunk collapses, and you can make an attack.

**Target:** One creature within 3 squares of the banana grove.

**Attack:** Level + 3 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 2d6 + one-half level damage, and the target is knocked prone.

**Miss:** Half damage.

**Effect:** All squares between the target and the banana grove become difficult terrain.

### Encounter Groups

Asuangs are commonly found with other shapechangers, with corpse-devouring undead, or with a plethora of demonic beings.

#### Four Play (Level 2 Encounter, 650 xp)

A young, newlywed witch from a manananggal family attempted to control two malakats. But as a novice, she and her husband fell victim to the hunger of the malakats. Her family's arcane lineage gave her the power to rise as an undead, and she did in death what she could not do in life. She reanimated her dead husband, and with her two malakat slaves posing as their living selves, she now travels in search of more power.

☞ 2 malakats (level 4 skirmisher)

☞ 1 deathlock wight (level 4 controller, see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*)

☞ 1 zombie (level 2 brute, see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*)

#### Tagging Along (Level 6 Encounter, 1250xp)

A lycanthrope with a particularly aggressive appetite joins a couple of sigbin and their shadow hound pets, who always seem to find prey stumbling onto them. For the asuang's part, they find the lycanthrope's aggressive nature as the perfect complement to their hit and run feeding habits.

☞ 2 sigbins (level 6 lurker)

☞ 2 shadow hounds (level 6 skirmisher, see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*)

☞ 1 wereboar (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL 2. *Note:* Make sure to check out the latest updates to see changes made to the wereboar)

### **Brood Mothers (Level 11 Encounter, 3225xp)**

In the quest to find and destroy the source of the manananggals' power, the adventurers find the hatchery of tiktiks. Located at a shrine dedicated to a demon lord of elemental air, the unhatched eggs are guarded by two protectors. In addition, five tiktiks have already hatched. A character destroying one of the active tiktiks enrages the protectors.

☞ 1 lamia (level 12 elite controller, see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*)

☞ 1 manananggal (level 11 elite controller)

☞ 5 tiktiks (level 10 minion skirmisher)

### **Backed to a Corner (Level 19 Encounter, 13000xp)**

Bagwis was at the peak of his power. Finding himself revered by a group of sigbin, he joined the asuang as their leader and lead them through many victories. In time, he grew to believe in the Bakunawa, and styled himself as the dragon's favored son. For this, he was blessed by the Bakunawa with the power of a busao. Under his leadership, the asuangs became a devastating force, devouring island after island.

But now, things are not going well for Bagwis. A band of adventurers have defeated his forces time and again, and in his rage, he ripped out the hearts of his war council and consumed them. A confrontation with the adventurers will occur soon, and Bagwis vows to devour the petty upstarts whole. With his advisers spontaneously rising as undead, he knows that his chances are good.

*Note.* This encounter works best as the final fight for the day of a party of level 16-18 adventurers.

☞ 1 busao (level 18 solo soldier)

☞ 6 abyssal ghouls (level 18 minion, see the D&D 4E *Monster Manual*) ☞☞

For use with the 4th Edition

**DUNGEONS  
&  
DRAGONS**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME

Requires the use of the D&D *Player's Handbook*,<sup>®</sup> *Monster Manual*,<sup>®</sup> and *Dungeon Master's Guide*,<sup>®</sup> *Player's Handbook 2*, *Monster Manual 2*, *Adventurer's Vault*<sup>™</sup> core rulebooks, available from Wizards of the Coast, LLC