

# EZMERELDA'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EVIL





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# CHAPTER ONE:

# ABERRATIONS

*"Some look to the night sky with a sense of wonder, at the harmony of the planar dance with awe. I have seen enough to look at such things with fear. I have seen the horrors that writhe in the void between stars."*

## NOT LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Some aberrations are the freak result of chaotic planar energies or magic gone horribly awry. The oldest and often most dangerous aberrations are lifeforms from worlds far beyond our reach or from the incomprehensible Far Realm. These creatures boast physiologies unlike the creatures of the Material Plane, including psionic powers and horrific means of reproduction.

## MANY FORMS, MANY GOALS

As varied as humanoid races are from one another, aberrations come in many distinct forms and with their own psychological or social drives: mad beholders serve their own volatile ego, star spawn enact the inscrutable will of elder evils or other masters of the Far Realm, tsochar infiltrate societies in search of arcane secrets, while grell seek only to feed.

The following pages will examine a selection of aberrant entities, each with differing anatomies, societies, and goals.

## GRELL

Anyone who has visited or lived in the Underdark long enough has at least one story about their run-in with grell, strange predators with the appearance of a floating brain and hawk-like beak, grasping tentacles dangling below its cranium-like body. Hovering

soundlessly in the darkened tunnels, one touch can be enough to paralyze prey and ensure they are never seen again.

## ALIENS FROM ANOTHER WORLD

The grell hail from an alternate dimension's Material Plane, accounting for their bizarre appearance. Though brainlike in appearance, their heads are toughened and leathery. Grell are immune to magical and natural lightning, and their 'language' includes the manipulation of electrical fields around their bodies that are interpreted by their fellows' eyeless perception.

## SOCIAL OR SOLITARY

Most grell are encountered as lone hunters or opportune predatory pairs. Though scholars refer to them as 'feral,' they are just as intelligent as many other aberrations. In rare cases, numerous grell gather to form a colony of anywhere from a handful to several dozen individuals. Grell don't have formal social hierarchies, making decisions through debate and community consensus.

## DRIVEN BY HUNGER

Alone or together, grell are driven by the desire for food. Colonies don't build structures or engage in diplomacy with other creatures; their concern is with establishing and protecting hunting grounds. Grell are smart enough to avoid obvious threats, and may set an ambush or follow dangerous prey while they wait for other Underdark threats to do the hard work for them.



# PHAERIMM

In the void of a darkened tunnel, a huge lamprey-like creature floats forward. Thin, grasping arms reach forward as it probes the mind of its victim with its telepathy, preparing to seize control with its magical might. This is a phaerimm, a race of ancient Underdark aberrations who would find equal joy in enslaving all life or simply wiping it off the face of the world.

## ARCANE SLAVERS

Phaerimm are born with innate magical ability and can sense magical auras, both of which become more powerful as they mature. They absorb magic directly from the Weave, requiring no components to cast their spells. The phaerimm prefer spells that subjugate opponents, often making slaves of anyone unfortunate enough to cross their path.



## DESTROYERS OF NETHERIL

The ancient magical kingdom of Netheril spanned huge sections of Faerun, from underground conclaves to cities floating among the clouds. Though the flying cities of High Netheril fell when their magical experiments

disrupted the Weave, the ground-level cities were subject to an agonizing death at the hands of the phaerimm. Incensed at the Netherese magic seeping into their underground domain, the phaerimm's retaliatory magic slowly drained the life from Low Netheril until the region became the Anauroch Desert.

## IMPRISONED MALICE

An order of mages-turned-aberrations called the Sharn waged war against the phaerimm after the destruction of Netheril. The Sharn eventually created a magical barrier, the Sharnwall, that trapped the majority of the destructive aberrations below the Anauroch Desert. The barrier is rarely breached by the phaerimm, but nothing prevents adventurers from delving into their subterranean kingdom of Phaerlin. Most never return.

## PHAERIMM SOCIETY

Viewing magic as the pinnacle of power, phaerimm look down on physical combat and revere their talented elders. The phaerimm language consists of subtle changes of air passage through and around their conical bodies, though they communicate readily with other creatures using their telepathy.

Using their stinger to inject eggs into a helpless host is the extent of phaerimm familial bonds; once the young gestate and birth by eating the host creature from the inside out, the newborns are on their own. Even juvenile phaerimm possess innate arcane knowledge and an ability to sense magical auras at will, though their spellcasting is nothing compared to full-grown elders.

The few phaerimm that avoided the Sharnwall and remain free tend to pursue personal goals and petty squabbles among themselves, with one notable exception. Beneath the Anauroch but outside the Sharnwall, phaerimm occupying the underground beholder-made city of Ooltul search for some means of destroying the Sharns' ancient barrier and unleashing the majority of their kind upon the world.



## TSOCHAR

Denizens of the Far Realm, each tsochar is a collection of powerful, coiling 'strands' that unify to create a single being. Individually each strand is a creature of mindless instinct; together, they form a malevolent sentience that invades and inhabits the bodies of others.

### PARASITIC PUPPETEERS

The most horrifying aspect of tsochari biology is their ability to invade humanoid bodies, funneling their aggregate form into a helpless victim and worming their way into the body cavity. Within their host, the tsochar invader can shield itself from harm and use its telepathy to threaten the creature into obeying its commands. Alternatively, the tsochar eats away at the victim's mind until the host dies, at which point the tsochar takes direct control of the body.

### ARCANE ADDICTS

Tsochari were first brought to the Material Plane by evil wizards utilizing arcane *gates* long ago. The tsochari have pursued their own interests in the world, specifically gathering arcane lore. Their insatiable appetite for magical knowledge is not yet fully understood. Whatever their reasons, tsochari target isolated mages for assassination and infiltrate magic-user organizations as their primary targets.

### THE NINE-TONGUED WORM

Little information exists on the tsochari social structure, but one trait that marks them as unusual among alien entities is their deep religious fervor. Tsochar profess the worship of Mak Thuum Ngatha, the Nine-Tongued Worm, some kind of eldritch entity that regards the tsochari as its favored race. The Nine-Tongued Worm calls for 'infinite knowledge' across space and time, and might account for why the tsochar hunger for magical lore.

## TSOCHARI SOCIETY

Due to their biology as an aggregate creature, tsochar do not recognize family structures but do organize themselves into castes of warriors, priests, arcanists, and nobles. The tsochari 'nobles' are the oldest and most powerful tsochar, made up of the most ambitious members of the other castes.

Like most aberrations, the tsochari view humanoids as lesser beings, useful servants or bodies to pilot as part of an assassination or infiltration scheme. Cults around the Nine-Tongued Worm occasionally spring up around worship of the eldritch entity, and might be led by or ally themselves with tsochari as part of its scheme.





# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: ABERRATIONS

## GRELL

### GRELL PHILOSOPHER

Particularly intelligent grell are known as 'philosophers.' Philosophers are particularly violent when defending the colonies they lead, utilizing an array of wizard spells to detect and ambush prey. The oldest grell philosophers are referred to as matriarchs and patriarchs, and are respected for the knowledge they have accumulated over the course of their lives.

The grell philosopher has the statistics of a grell, with the following changes:

Its Intelligence score is 16 (+3).

**Spellcasting.** The grell is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The grell has the following wizard spell prepared, requiring no spellbook or material components:

Cantrips (at will): *control flames, minor illusion, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *alarm, color spray, detect magic, expeditious retreat, fog cloud, magic missile, ray of sickness, snare*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness, hold person, invisibility, ray of enfeeblement*



## PHAERIMM

Floating strangely through the air like a bloated windsock, phaerimm have a large lamprey-like mouth surrounded by four spindly, clawed arms. These bloated aberrations aren't particularly physically hardy, but their forms contain enormous innate magical potential. Even young phaerimm can readily detect magical auras and have mastered dangerous arcane spells; as they grow, phaerimm become more and more attuned to their talents and learn deadly spells that humanoids can only learn through years of study.



**Cruel Slavers.** Phaerimm goals are equally torn between a murderous hatred for all other forms of life, and their sadistic desire to dominate other creatures and force them to serve their whims. Trapped beneath the Anauroch desert, phaerimm aren't quick to kill intruders foolish enough to enter their arcane prison. Newcomers are overwhelmed, magically enslaved, and eventually used as hosts for new phaerimm eggs.

## PHAERIMM, JUVENILE

*Medium aberration, neutral evil*

**Armor Class 11**

**Hit Points 49** (9d8 + 9)

**Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Phaerimm, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge 4** (1,100 XP)

**Limited Arcane Sight.** The phaerimm can cast *detect magic* at will. It doesn't need to use its concentration to maintain the effect.

**Magic Resistance.** The phaerimm has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** The phaerimm is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Its spells require no material components. The phaerimm knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mage hand, message, minor illusion, ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *magic missile, silent image*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur, misty step, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *lightning bolt, major image*

4th level (1 slot): *ice storm*.

## ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

## PHAERIMM, ADULT

*Large aberration, neutral evil*

**Armor Class 11**

**Hit Points 90** (12d10 + 24)

**Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Wis +9, Cha +9

**Skills** Arcana +7, Deception +9, Insight +9

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Phaerimm, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge 9** (5,000 XP)

**Arcane Sight.** The phaerimm always sees magical auras as if under the effects of a *detect magic* spell, and can see invisible objects and creatures. These effects do not require the phaerimm to maintain concentration on the effect.

**Magic Resistance.** The phaerimm has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** The phaerimm is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Its spells require no material components. The phaerimm knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, light, mage hand, message, minor illusion, ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *magic missile, silent image*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur, misty step, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, lightning bolt, major image*

4th level (3 slots): *ice storm*

5th level (2 slots): *dominate person, immolation*

6th level: (1 slot): *chain lightning*

## ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

**Stinger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) poison damage. If the phaerimm hits an incapacitated or willing creature with this attack, it can attempt to implant an egg into the creature's body instead of dealing poison damage. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be implanted with a phaerimm egg. The egg gestates in the creature's body for ninety days, at which point it hatches and bursts out of the host's stomach, killing it instantly. The newborn phaerimm is a noncombatant with a flying speed of 15 feet., AC 10, and 5 hit points. A spell or similar effect that cures diseases destroys the egg.



# TSOCHAR

Parasitic invaders from a distant planet in the Far Realm, tsochari are brought from their home by powerful magical portals. These amalgamations of sentient chords form a single being with a shared intelligence.

**Bodily Invaders.** Tsochari physically invade the bodies of humanoid victims who have been rendered helpless by the tsochar's attacks or are otherwise incapacitated, including in their sleep. The tsochar's component strands spread through the victim's body, allowing the tsochar to communicate telepathically with its host. If it so chooses, the tsochar can torture its victim from the inside with a psychic assault and even use this ability to kill the host's mind, leaving the tsochar open to puppet its host's body directly.

**Seekers of Arcane Lore.** Tsochar are obsessed with arcane magic, and most of their efforts involve securing hosts with access to areas housing magic items, research, and tomes. They are constantly looking for ways to infiltrate wizard schools and magical libraries full of spellbooks and other arcane studies.

## TSOCHAR

*Small aberration, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d6 + 24)

**Speed** 25 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Int +5

**Skills** Athletics +3, Deception +3, Insight +3, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, psychic

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Tsochar, telepathy 60 ft.

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Parasitic Inhabitant.** While the tsochar is inhabiting a creature's body with its wear flesh ability and the host body takes damage from a source other than the tsochar, the tsochar takes half as much damage (before resistances).

## ACTIONS

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw or take 5 (2d4) psychic damage. A creature that fails its saving throw by 5 or more is incapacitated until the end of the tsochar's next turn.

**Wear Flesh.** The tsochar attempts to invade the body of an incapacitated humanoid. The target creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 1d4 piercing damage and be invaded by the tsochar. While inside the host creature the tsochar has total cover from effects outside the host, and the tsochar can communicate telepathically with the host creature. If the host is reduced to 0 hit points from another source, the host body dies and the tsochar must leave the body as an action on its next available turn. The tsochar can be forced out of the body if the body is targeted by an effect that removes disease and the tsochar fails on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw; the tsochar fails this saving throw automatically if the effect uses a spell slot of 3rd level or higher.

**Wrack.** The tsochar deals (5) 2d4 psychic damage to a creature whose body it is currently inhabiting with its wear flesh ability.

## REACTIONS

**Replacement.** The tsochar uses its reaction to take direct control of a body it reduces to 0 hit points with its wrack ability. The host's brain is destroyed and replaced by the tsochar; until it leaves the host body, the tsochar's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores are replaced by those of the host creature. The tsochar gains the ability to speak using the host body and any of the host's innate physical characteristics, such as a dragonborn's breath weapon, but does not gain any of the host's proficiencies or other features.



# CHAPTER TWO:

# CHROMATIC DRAGONS

*"It was beautiful. I know that's terrible to say, but each time the electricity played across the dragon's scales before it unleashed another bolt against the homes of Greenest, I knew exactly why it commanded such worship."*

Monstrous creatures of legend, dragons inspire the best-known songs and stories. The awe they inspire quickly turns to dread where the chromatic dragons are involved: black, blue, green, red, and white varieties use their immense power to kill and dominate others, their shrewdness to fashion plots for control and revenge.

## CHILDREN OF TIAMAT

Tiamat is the Dragon Queen, a goddess with one dragon head of each of the chromatic colors. Though perhaps not the origin of the first chromatic dragons, she has become their principal deity and has birthed many of their number with mortal male consorts. Tiamat is the ultimate expression of chromatic dragons'

worst traits; their greed, selfishness, hatred, and desire for dominance. Though she is trapped in Avernus, the first layer of the Nine Hells, she still commands the awe of chromatic dragons and humanoid worshipers alike.

## TYRANTS AND HOARDERS

Chromatic dragons believe Tiamat is the ultimate deity and that they, as her children, are owed the awe, worship, and riches of all the "lesser" beings. At worst, chromatic types exercise these views in a simple predator-prey relationship by hunting and devouring humanoids the way they would any beast; at best, they domineer those they deem useful or interesting and force them to serve in fear.

Such dragons crave wealth and gather all manner of riches, from magic items to coins and gems. Because of their view of "inferior" creatures, some chromatic dragons gather servants or slain foes and treat them with the same possessiveness as any valuable trinket.





## VARIANT TRAITS

Like any other creature, dragons develop traits that distinguish them from others of their kind. Most often these traits only become apparent in adulthood, lending credence to the old monster slayer's saying, "Fight dragons while you're both young."

## BLACK DRAGONS

### VARIANT TRAITS

**Caustic.** Acid damage dealt by the dragon ignores resistance to acid damage.

**Corroding Acid.** Any acid damage the dragon deals to creatures wearing nonmagical armor or a nonmagical shield causes the armor or shield to corrode, taking a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. If a creature is both wearing nonmagical armor and a nonmagical shield, it chooses which is affected. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed.

### SOCIAL INTERACTION

**Social Weak Points.** These dragons delight in gathering mementos of the people and nations they have outlived, which is reflected in both their hoard and home. Adventurers looking to strike a bargain with a black dragon are most successful when they offer it a trinket, relic, or even corpse from something particularly relevant to the dragon's past, such as a nation it ruled over or the remains of an adventurer who previously defied it. Fearing competition from other dragons, black dragons are easily tempted by offers to kill or otherwise drive off an enemy dragon powerful enough to oust the black dragon from its territory.

**Aggression Triggers.** Black dragons don't have many things that cause them to lose their temper, but their sadism makes them unpredictable. The only thing they enjoy more

than seeing prey beg for mercy is seeing the look on their victims' faces after the dragon pretends to let them go, only to stalk and kill them later. Characters need significant leverage to make the chance of betrayal less likely.

### BLACK DRAGON LAIRS

**Bloated Corpses.** Black dragons enjoy letting the bodies of their victims rot in the swampy waters of their lair. While this is done as a practical means of preparing prey for consumption, black dragons have learned to let toxic gasses ferment in dead bodies until they are little more than bulbous, bloated traps for unwary intruders.

A creature that moves through a bloated corpse's space or that touches the corpse for any reason causes the corpse to burst open, releasing a noxious cloud of acrid gas in a 5-foot radius. Creatures that start their turn in the area or that enter it on their turn must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 2d4 acid damage.

Creatures moving adjacent to these swollen corpses must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity check to avoid disturbing them.

**Hoard Modifiers.** When determining the contents of a black dragon's hoard using the tables in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, roll for 1d6 art objects (any appropriate value for Challenge Rating) in addition to the hoard's normal contents.

Roll 1d3 times on the Creator or Intended User table in the Special Features section or select entries from the list appropriate to the dragon's region or personal history; using these entries, assign aesthetic and history for each one to multiple items in the dragon's hoard to create collections of trophies taken from fallen nations and defeated foes



# BLUE DRAGONS

## VARIANT TRAITS

**Burrow Burst.** The first time the dragon emerges from the ground on its turn, creatures within 10 feet of it must make a Strength saving throw (DC 20 for an adult, DC 24 for an ancient) or be knocked prone.

**Overlord's Command.** The dragon commands one ally within 60 feet of it to attack. The creature can use its reaction to make one weapon attack against another creature within range. They have advantage on the attack roll.

**Legendary Action: Burrow.** The dragon burrows up to its speed.

## SOCIAL INTERACTION

**Social Weak Points.** Blue dragons see themselves as rulers and want to claim the service of talented individuals. Of all the chromatic dragon types, blue dragons are the most likely to strike an equitable bargain with adventurers as long as it thinks they can be useful.

**Aggression Triggers.** Prideful to a fault, blue dragons are quick to attack anyone that doesn't offer the dragon the respect it believes it is owed. Seeing itself as an overlord and cultivator of talent, blues expect their agents to fulfill missions successfully and in the spirit of their master's orders. Failure and disobedience are not taken lightly.

## BLUE DRAGON LAIRS

**Arc Crystal.** As blue dragons shape their lairs with burrowing claws and lightning breath, their electric energies leave rough formations of blue-tinted crystal in their wake. These crystals capture some of the dragon's lightning within their structure, ready to be unleashed at a moment's notice. Blue dragons looking to

bolster their lair's defenses often create formations of these crystals as a warding mechanism, creating a room or passageway full of crackling crystals deadly to creatures that don't share the dragon's immunity to lightning.

An arc crystal occupies a 5-foot square and stands 5 to 10 feet tall. It has an AC of 13 and 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature that touches an arc crystal or hits it with a melee attack must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d8 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once an arc crystal is discharged, it becomes harmless for 1d4 hours.

When a creature walks between two arc crystals that are within 10 feet of each other, there is a 50% chance the crystals form a current between themselves and the creature. If this happens, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 lightning damage. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw takes half as much lightning damage. A creature wearing metal armor has disadvantage on their saving throw.

**Azure Crystal Pane.** Older blue dragons learn to craft blue crystal glass in their lairs, creating shimmering tunnels of mirror-like crystal. Each 5-foot section of crystal has an AC of 14, 11 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to bludgeoning and thunder damage. The blue dragon that occupies the lair can see through these crystals normally; to other creatures, the panes are opaque.

Blue dragons can create a 5-foot crystal pane with 10 minutes of effort. They spend weeks carefully creating large pane formations for both aesthetics and defense, walling off areas of the lair or using the panes to hide side passages from which they can observe and ambush intruders.

**Hoard Modifiers.** Blue dragons value gems, especially blue gems. When creating a blue dragon's treasure hoard, include an additional 1d4 blue gems for each roll resulting in gems or art objects: azurite, blue quartz, lapis lazuli, blue



spinel, and blue sapphire are all blue-colored gemstones of varying values listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## GREEN DRAGONS

### VARIANT TRAITS

**Terrifying Predator.** Creatures that became immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for 24 hours lose their immunity if they witness the dragon reduce an ally to 0 hit points.

**Dreams to Nightmares.** Creatures that became immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for 24 hours lose their immunity if they become charmed by the dragon.

**Overwhelming Fear.** Creatures that fail a saving throw against the dragon's Frightful Presence by 5 or more are incapacitated until the end of their next turn.

### SOCIAL INTERACTION

**Social Weak Points.** While blue dragons look for talented individuals to utilize as agents for its

goals, green dragons want to exert control over their servants and victims by playing on their dreams, and fears. A green dragon is interested in an adventurer's desires as much as it wants to achieve its own. Each task given to a humanoid servant is designed to corrupt and manipulate them over the long term, until the day the green dragon can finally break their victim's will and toy with their mind at will.

**Aggression Triggers.** Green dragons are voracious eaters and notorious liars. Encountered at random, a green dragon is likely to attack humanoids as a food source. Even if it elects to spare intruders, green dragons demand service and have no qualms about killing subordinates as a demonstration of its control.

### GREEN DRAGON LAIRS

**Haunting Visions.** Green dragons relish torturing the minds of their victims, the fear manifesting itself as the clinging mist that pervades the region around a green dragon's lair. Creatures hostile to the dragon that attempt to take a long rest within 1 mile of its lair are visited by hallucinations in the mist;





voices and fleeting visions of loved ones, lost comrades, and so on. A creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fail to gain any benefit from their long rest. Creatures immune to the frightened condition are immune to this effect.

**Deadfall Trap.** Though green dragons are unlikely to stoop to something so ‘humanoid’ as a traditional hunter’s trap, their servants have no such reservations. Heavy logs or large, flat stones are used as the crushing implement of the trap. A tripwire, sometimes made of vine or disguise rope, acts as a trigger to slip the trap’s precarious support of the crushing implement. In the labyrinthian passages of overgrown forest surrounding a green dragon’s lair, the components of a deadfall trap are easily concealed.

A log affects a 5-foot-wide area that is 10 to 15 feet long; the area of a stone slab deadfall is usually around a 10 foot by 10 foot area. When the trap is activated, creatures in the crushing area must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage and become restrained.

Detecting the trap requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, and a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check to identify. Once detected, the trap is easily avoided. The trap is not so much disabled as it is activated without harm, though the noise will carry throughout the surrounding area.

**Hoard Modifiers.** Green dragons favor objects made of wood and sculptures of humanoid subjects. Roll 1d4 additional art objects appropriate for the dragon’s Challenge Rating, favoring statuettes and wooden objects. Mundane or magical treasures in a green dragon’s lair are likely trophies from slain humanoid victims or even servants, left intact after they were overwhelmed by the dragon’s poison breath.

## RED DRAGONS

### VARIANT TRAITS

**Crimson Presence.** Creatures of Challenge Rating 2 or lower that are friendly to the dragon cannot be frightened while the dragon is visible.

**Tyrant’s Terror.** A creature only becomes immune to the dragon’s Frightful Presence if it succeeds on its saving throw by 5 or more.

### SOCIAL INTERACTION

**Social Weak Points.** Where green dragons are possessive and blue dragons want capable servants, red dragons see themselves as emperors over lesser creatures, a category that includes other chromatic dragons. Their arrogance often leaves them susceptible to flattery, and particularly silver-tongued individuals have been known to convince a red dragon that a desired course of action is actually the best way of protecting its perceived sovereignty.

**Aggression Triggers.** Reds have by far the shortest tempers of any chromatic dragon. They are known to inflict their rage on innocent parties, burning villages and fields for the transgressions of others. Theft, both the real and rarely imagined, are the surest ways to incite a red dragon’s fiery anger.

### RED DRAGON LAIRS

**The Floor is Lava.** Within the carved-out interior of a red dragon’s lair, natural and magically-encouraged lava flows form streams and pools of molten rock. In some rooms and passageways, the floor is little more than a hardened shell over active lava flows. Creatures moving across these areas or that fall prone there must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid breaking through the shell, immediately taking 11 (2d10) fire damage and an additional 3d10 each round.



they spend in contact with the lava. The space where a creature breaks through the shell remains an open hole to the lava below for 1d4+1 hours before the shell re-forms.

**Vault Access.** Insatiable treasure hoarders, red dragons jealously guard everything from the most exquisite relic to the tiniest coin. While tales of a dragon's gold depict the great red tyrant sleeping atop a mountain of coins and gems, especially judicious red dragons guard their most valuable items in sealed vaults. Though the exact details vary from dragon to dragon and lair to lair, red dragons prefer straightforward mechanisms that incorporate their immunity to fire and tremendous physical strength.

- **Stone Door.** This vault door is often nothing more than an enormous boulder or similarly rounded stone that has been rolled across a vault entrance. Older dragons proof the door against magic that would allow creatures to tunnel through it. Creatures of size Large or smaller who attempt to open the door must have a combined Strength score of 40 or greater to successfully move the stone.

- **Burning Mechanism.** Dragons lock some vault doors with proper internal mechanisms; opening them is a simple matter of pulling or turning a handle located nearby. Unfortunately, red dragons place these handles in pools of lava, next to geysers spurting scalding steam, or next to geothermal vents pumping out overwhelming heat. Whatever form the hazard takes, attempting the lever or handle is often a dangerous or deadly prospect for any creature that doesn't share the dragon's immunity to fire.

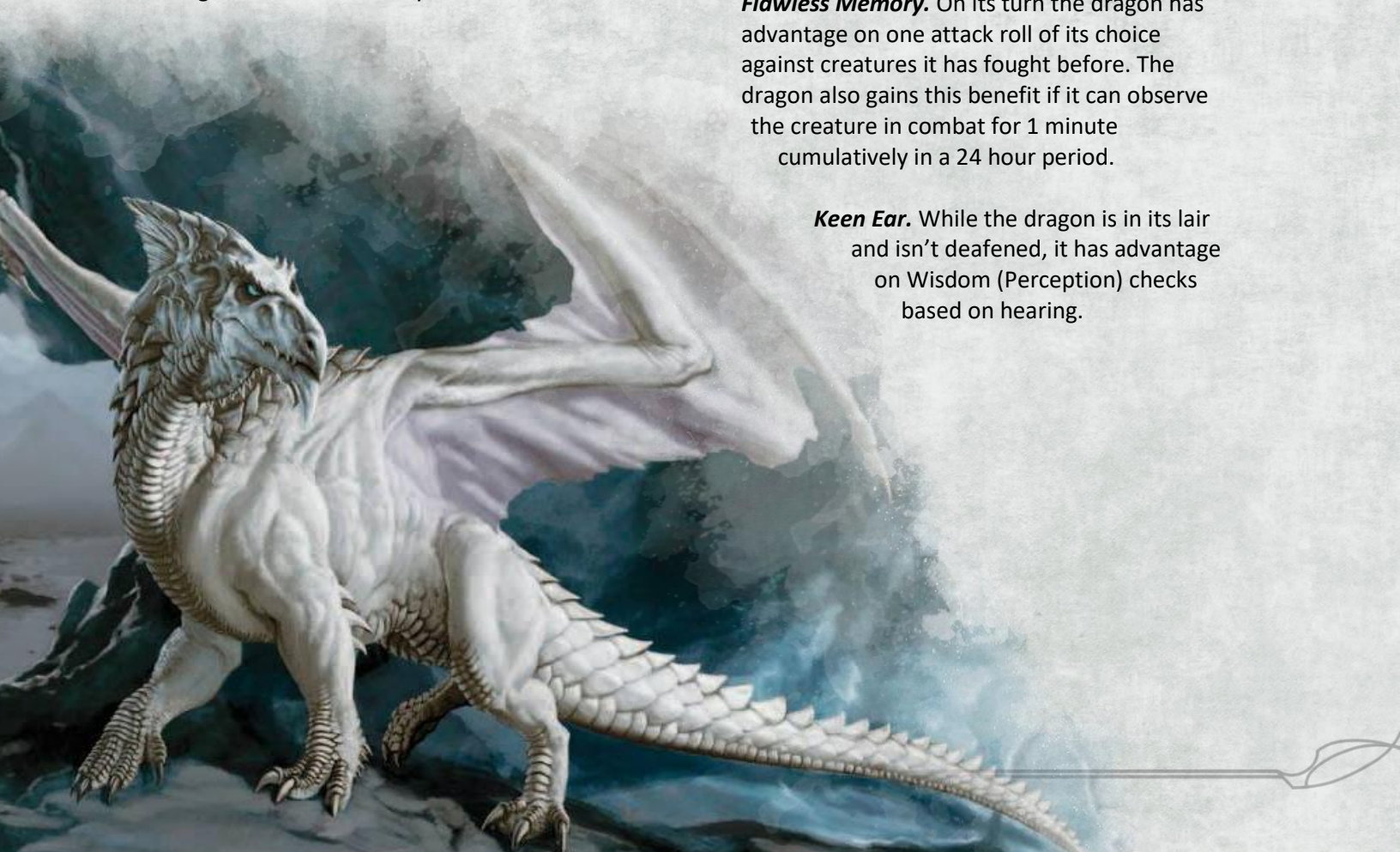
**Hoard Modifiers.** Red dragons aren't particularly picky about their treasure as long as they have a lot of it. When using the tables in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, roll an additional die when rolling for the hoard's coins, gems, and art objects.

## WHITE DRAGONS

### VARIANT TRAITS

**Flawless Memory.** On its turn the dragon has advantage on one attack roll of its choice against creatures it has fought before. The dragon also gains this benefit if it can observe the creature in combat for 1 minute cumulatively in a 24 hour period.

**Keen Ear.** While the dragon is in its lair and isn't deafened, it has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on hearing.





## SOCIAL INTERACTION

**Social Weak Points.** White dragons are often barely more than speech-capable reptiles, driven by instinctual desires to hunt for food and protect their territory. Fortunately, this means that white dragons can be manipulated by more intelligent creatures as long as they can find a way to keep the dragon from eating them first. A dragon with little imagination is unlikely to enlist intelligent humanoids to do its bidding, but is just wily enough to recognize the value of having servants protect its lair, seek treasure, or eliminate a rival on its behalf.

**Aggression Triggers.** Like green dragons, white dragons attack without provocation for the sole purpose of securing a meal. Apart from this, white dragons' excellent memories mean they hold long grudges and cultivate bitter, simpleminded hatred for perceived rivals. A humanoid that harms, slights, fails, or betrays a white dragon won't be trusted again.

## WHITE DRAGON LAIRS

**Frozen Windows.** By separating passages and chambers with walls of ice, white dragons can control the movement of other creatures in their lair. These barriers are usually opaque, but a white dragon can create transparent sections. It uses them to safely observe intruders as they move through the lair, preparing ambushes or watching them fight the dragon's servants to gain the benefit of its Flawless Memory trait.

**Iced Statue.** White dragons love to leave their frozen victims scattered about the lair as trophy statues. Though the statues' features are often obscured below ice and frost, the dragon knows the identity of each and every one.

As with living creatures, the frozen statues of Medium-sized creatures provide half cover during combat. Frozen statues of size Large and larger provide three-quarters cover. Regardless of size, the statues have AC 13, immunity to cold, poison, and psychic damage, and

vulnerability to fire and thunder damage. When a frozen statue is destroyed it shatters into pieces, forcing each creature within 5 feet of it to succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take bludgeoning damage as listed on the Frozen Statue Table below. Creatures that succeed on their saving throw takes half as much damage.

### FROZEN STATUE TABLE

Statue Size	Hit Points	Shatter Damage
Medium	13 (3d8)	2d4
Large	22 (4d10)	2d6
Huge	32 (5d12)	2d8

**Hoard Modifiers.** The remote, frozen places where white dragons make their homes isolates them from accessing more than the treasures of local humanoids and the occasional would-be dragonslayer. As such, their hoards contain objects constructed of materials found in the tundra around their lair. Replace the metal and wood of art objects with bone; finer quality items include scrimshaw patterns or precious metal inlays.



# CHAPTER THREE:

# CULTS

*“When we finally got through all the traps and whatnot, and dealt with the two-headed demon thing they had guarding the door, we finally got to the inner sanctum. That’s when the real fun started.”*

Strange cults with mysterious—and often terrible—goals navigate undercurrents in every land under the sun. At times cults are worldwide organizations seeking domination, other times cults are simply confidence tricks meant to exploit the credulous. From the Ashmadai to the Viperhands to the Blood of Vol, cults and secret societies figure large as antagonists across the worlds and planes of existence.

## SINISTER SECRETS

Nothing is more monstrous than a neighbor harboring a sinister secret identity in which he amasses power in order to murder or enslave you. Cults are even more frightening than mere killers, because a murderer operates alone. When he’s caught, you can with a clear conscience tell your neighbors, “I’m shocked. He was such a good neighbor. He was kind to kittens.” You can leave it at that. But if a cult’s activities come to light, if they have any success at all, lots of people are dead or enslaved and you’ll be too busy slaving away for the cult (or being stone dead) to make banal observations.

## NOT WHAT THEY APPEAR

Even more frightening is a cult that really is normal. Far from the cliché tropes of thoroughly evil demon worshipers (the Fraternity of Tharos or the Ashmadai) or thoroughly evil dragon worshipers (the Cult of the Dragon), a cult need

not be a gang of hooded sycophants chanting around a mystic altar in someone’s basement.

Rather, it can be a band of freedom fighters united by ideology, a group so convinced of the righteousness of their cause that it becomes their driving force. They believe they are good people doing good things. But they remain cults, by and large, because they remain secretive, underground groups united and driven by a cause. More than anything else, members of cults are convinced that everything they do is for the greater good. Even if the cult’s goal is loosing demonic hordes into the Material Plan to cause general mayhem, members rationalize it by convincing themselves that the world *needs* such a thing.

## EMPTY PROMISES—OR ARE THEY?

All cults promise something its members have little or no hope of getting from the culture in which the cult exists, some form of power, knowledge, or salvation. The Fraternity of Tharos seeks power from demons and uses that power to influence affairs in the kingdom of Impiltur.

## COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

### CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

In order to convince people that their message is Truth—or simply to convince cult members to take risks, sell their souls, and sacrifice gnomes—a cult leader must be charismatic. To



recruit and retain members, a cult's leadership must be powerfully magnetic.

## CELLULAR MEMBERSHIP

Cults are most often organized in cells. They *must* be, to protect themselves from infiltration and extermination. One cell of cultists won't know members of other cells. Depending on the size of the population in a given socio-political entity, there may be several cells. In the best case (for the cult), only one or two people will know all the members in that entity. In the worst case, everyone of any status in town is a

member of the Order of Hooded Cobras, and membership is the only way to rise, socially.

## THE CONFIDENCE TRICK

Some cults led by charismatic leaders are nothing more than exercises in exploitation. Sex and money are the main drivers. The mystical consummation, the impartation of immense secret knowledge and power, never *really* happens. The promised messiah never *quite* comes. The leader has no interest in actually completing the prophecy, because that will end the gravy train. In many cases, the leader has just enough magical ability to hoodwink bumpkins long enough to fleece them before moving on to the next village.

## CULT TYPES

There are many different kinds of cults active in the world. Detailed here is a selection of some of the most common, with brief descriptions of their common qualities.

### CULT TYPE TABLE

d6	Cult Type
1	Doomsday
2	Personality
3	Political
4	Mystical
5	Hero
6	Cargo

### CULT TYPE EXPLANATIONS

**Doomsday.** Doomsday cults predict such things as the destruction of the world or the downfall of a civilization. Some do their best to bring it about. Doomsday cults are arguably the most straightforward and iconic.

**Personality.** Cults of personality are centered on a strong, charismatic leader. The leader uses propaganda, the big lie, spectacle, patriotism, demonstrations, and rallies to





create an idealized, heroic, and worshipful image of the leader. A cult of personality is similar to apotheosis, except that it is established by social engineering techniques.

**Political.** Political cults focus on ideology and the realization of that ideology through political action. They're characterized by an unwillingness to question a leader's judgment coupled with a tendency to devalue outsiders and avoid dissent.

**Mystical.** Some cults form around a source of mystical power. A person either calculates or stumbles onto how to tap into that power, and shares that knowledge with others. Alternatively, the source of mystical power sends an emissary to the world, and that emissary is one way or another translated into the cult's leader.

**Hero.** The "hero" in a hero cult is a dead figure, venerated and propitiated at their tomb or at a designated shrine, because their fame during life or their unusual manner of death gave them power to support and protect the living. A hero was more than human but less than a god, and various kinds of supernatural figures came to be assimilated to the class of heroes.

**Cargo.** A cargo cult is a belief system among members of a relatively undeveloped society in which adherents practice superstitious rituals hoping to bring modern goods supplied by a society they perceive as more "advanced," such as potent magic or quality of manufactured goods. Such movements often form under the leadership of a charismatic leader who professes to have a vision of the future thought to be attainable by a return to traditional morality (by their own definition and invariably to their personal benefit). As long as the cultists perform to the leader's standard, the gifts from the "gods" or similar power will continue.

## CULT CHARACTERISTICS

Though they can be generally defined by broad types, no two cults are quite the same in their specific goals and other details. The following tables give some idea about the kind of goals, story, and structural details reported in various investigations of numerous cults.

### CULT GOALS

d6	Goal
1	Political power
2	The death of an enemy
3	Control of an institution
4	Recovery of an artifact or magic item
5	Revenge
6	Personal power or comfort for cult leaders



## CULT RESOURCES

d6	Resource
1	Uses a respectable institution as a front
2	Support from a powerful entity
3	Controls the local legal authorities
4	Access to powerful or unknown magic
5	Can open a portal to other planes or the Far Realm
6	Cult leader is a renegade extraplanar creature who is exiled or on the run



## CULT ORGANIZATION

### d6 Organization

1	<b>Conspiracy.</b> Membership is cellular, uses passwords and blind communication.
2	<b>False Front.</b> The cult puts on an elaborate deception to appear as a harmless civic group.
3	<b>Criminal Enterprise.</b> The cult is organized as a thieves' guild.
4	<b>Network.</b> The cult has infiltrated the lower ranks of every notable organization in the region.
5	<b>Cult of Personality.</b> The cult leader is a publicly beloved figure known for good, benevolent deeds.
6	<b>Entrenched.</b> The cult is part of a tradition established decades ago and is viewed as normal by locals.

## CULT HIERARCHY

Leaders of cults are invariably one of two types: true believers, who legitimately believe what the cult stands for, or confidence tricksters using the cult for all the sex, money, and power they can milk from it.

The motivations of a cult's leadership seldom remain static and the leader's "type" often changes over time. A leader can start as a con artist and, over time, start to believe their own myths. Or they start as true believers but become jaded and disillusioned with the cult's purpose and cynically decide to squeeze it for all it's worth. This is true irrespective of whether the leader is a single person or a cabal. A cabal or council at the helm of the cult merely complicates the timeline, muddies the slide from true believer to con artist or vice versa.

## CULT SIZE

### d6 Cult Size

1	Local
2	Regional
3	National
4	Continental
5	Worldwide
6	Planar



Cults are almost always organized on a cellular level. Even if the cult is so widespread that it covers the entire world, unless it's managed to insinuate itself as a social institution (like a church), it's still underground and cellular.

### CULT LEADERSHIP

d4	Leadership Type
1	Single charismatic leader
2	Pair
3	Small council
4	Large council

Chances are each individual cell is led by a relatively charismatic leader on a small scale, even if the cult overall is governed by a council or committee.

## TRACKING CULT PROGRESS

If you want a cult in the world but don't want to strictly define and pre-determine what they do and what happens to them, use these tables to track their progress. Die rolls on these tables can help turn a cult into a living, breathing thing with surprising results.

Choose a period of time that makes sense—weekly, monthly, seasonally, annually—depending on the type of cult or timeline of events. Roll on the tables, choosing whichever tables seem most relevant to your cult's activities and plans. Keep in mind the cult's established Goals, Resources, and Organization. The closer characters are to engaging with the cult or as the cult comes closer to fulfilling key plans, the more the timeline's scale will compress to shorter periods of time; while the cult is far removed from the characters' attention and goals, it operates on a broader timeline.

The results inform how characters come into contact with a given cult or information about the cult. Some results won't be obvious at all, like a result of 6 on the Infiltration table; some

will be as plain as the horn on a unicorn, like a result of 1 on the Infiltration table (as long as authorities don't conduct a cover-up).

## PROGRESS TABLES

### RECRUITMENT

d6	Result
1	<b>Dismal.</b> Notable loss of membership. -1 on Financing and Infiltration tables.
2	<b>Poor.</b> Loss of membership.
3	No new members recruited.
4	No new members recruited.
5	<b>Good.</b> Gain of membership.
6	<b>Excellent.</b> Notable gain of membership. +1 on Financing table, +1 on Infiltration table.

### FINANCING

d6	Result
1	<b>Dismal.</b> Notable loss of resources.
2	<b>Poor.</b> Slight loss of resources.
3	No change.
4	No change.
5	<b>Good.</b> Slight gain of resources.
6	<b>Excellent.</b> Notable gain of resources.

### INFILTRATION

d6	Result
1	<b>Dismal.</b> Dismal. Cultists outed, potential arrest or collapse of cells. -1 on the result of the next check on the Recruitment and Financing tables.
2	<b>Poor.</b> Some cultists outed or arrested.
3	No change.
4	No change.
5	<b>Good.</b> Limited infiltration of institutions.
6	<b>Excellent.</b> Notable infiltration of numerous institutions or significant infiltration of a powerful institution.

On any table, a roll of 6 automatically advances the cult toward their goal in some way. On a result of 6 on all tables for one time period, the cult makes a significant advancement toward



their goal. On a result of 1 on all tables for one time period, the cult is at risk of collapse.

## CULT BOONS

Some cultists are blessed, or cursed, with powers beyond those of mortal endeavor. Some are gifts from their otherworldly patrons, or mystic secrets unlocked from long-forgotten forbidden rituals. In some worlds the power of belief itself can manifest supernaturally and if one's fervor is strong, one can move mountains. Whatever the source, some cultists have boons which set them apart. Consider adding one of the following boons to an NPC cultist stat block to more specifically tailor the NPC to an adventure.

### BOON OF THE ALL-HEARING

The cultist has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made involving sound.

### BOON OF EVASION

When the cultist takes damage from any source, it can roll a d6 and reduce the damage by that amount. Once the cultist uses this boon, it can't use it again until it finishes a short or long rest.

### BOON OF THE SEEING EYE

The cultist has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made involving sight.

### BOON OF THE EYELESS

The cultist's eyes wither away, and its eye sockets seal themselves shut with scar tissue. They are blind but gain blindsight out to a range of 60 feet.

### BOON OF THE LIAR'S EYE

When the cultist fails a Wisdom (Insight or Perception) check, it can use its reaction to roll 1d6 and add it to the total. Once it uses this boon, it can't use it again until it finishes a short or long rest.

## BOONS AND CHALLENGE RATING

Adding a trait or action to a stat block can easily take the creature out of balance in terms of CR. There are several ways to solve this problem.

The first is to ignore it. CR is so inexact a science that it might as well be an art. If you give a CR 2 **cult fanatic** a Boon of Sorcery, it doesn't really make much of a difference. If you give it to a CR ½ cultist, it might have more of an impact, but not that much.

The second is to simply bump the CR up by one step. For example, a cult fanatic becomes CR 3, and the cultist becomes CR 1/4.

### BOON OF REVENGE

Whenever the cultist suffers a critical hit, it can make one melee weapon attack as a reaction.

### BOON OF SNAP-CASTING

The cultist chooses one 1st-level cleric, sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell that it can cast and that has a casting time of an action. That spell's casting time is now a bonus action for the cultist. Once it uses this boon, it can't use it again until it finishes a short or long rest.

### BOON OF SORCERY

The cultist chooses a cantrip from any spell list. It can cast that cantrip as an action. It can use this boon three times, regaining expended uses when it finishes a long rest.

### BOON OF THE TRACKER

As a bonus action, the cultist magically creates a psychic link with one creature it can see. For the next hour, as a bonus action it knows the current distance and direction to the target if it is on the same plane of existence. The link ends if the cultist is incapacitated or if it uses this ability on a different target.

### BOON OF THE UNDYING SOUL

When the cultist is reduced to 0 hit points, it immediately makes a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a success, it's reduced to 1 hit point instead.



## BOON OF THE VERMIN CLOUD

As an action, the cultist opens its mouth and belch a cloud of flies, which creates an effect equal to a fog cloud spell centered on itself. Once it does so, it can't use this boon again until it finishes a short or long rest.

## BACKGROUND: ELDRITCH CULTIST

You spent part of your life in a cult dedicated to a Great Old One, an ancient horror, or some other being of considerable power. You've seen the fervent devotion of a dark cult to such creatures, seen or participated in rituals, and glimpsed power from beyond normal mortal comprehension. The time spent among these cultists has lingered with you to this day.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, Religion

**Languages:** Two of your choice

**Equipment:** A set of simple robes, a ritual dagger, a wooden mask reminiscent of the entity the cult worshipped, and a pouch containing 15 gp

## FEATURE: STALKED FROM DARKNESS

The echoes of your time in the cult haunt your steps. Those who might intimidate, belittle, or waylay you see something flicker behind your eyes—something terrible. Creatures who don't need to pick a fight with you find something better to do rather quickly. You find this talent useful for avoiding unpleasant scuffles or traveling unmolested, even into areas others find difficult to access.

## SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

An eldritch cultist might be a former or current member of a sect devoted to some dark power. They may be fearful or intrigued by the entity the cult sought to contact. Some cultists are erudite, obsessed with finding further lore about the cult's beloved entity or others like it.

While the sight of eldritch powers inspires fear or worship in some, in others it can spark righteous defiance.

### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I see dark omens in events others find mundane.
- 2 I am convinced some of the people I meet are secret servants of a similar cult.
- 3 My experience with secret cult lairs prompts me to keep a constant eye out for illusory walls.
- 4 I think even the nicest places are hiding some foul secret.
- 5 Time heals all wounds, but it can't fix my nightmare memories of the cult.
- 6 I drown bad memories of the cult in an indulgence of choice—drink, gambling, or company.
- 7 Certain tactile sensations or smells can send my mind reeling back to an occult ritual.
- 8 I obsess over local legends and folklore, finding significance in each story.

### d6 Ideal

- 1 **Madness.** I know what lies beyond this world. Nothing is sacred. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Righteousness.** I saw true, unbridled evil. Only good people stand against it. (Good)
- 3 **Determination.** I must be greater than the madness I came from. (Lawful)
- 4 **Greed.** I've seen real power, and I'd do anything to claim it. (Evil)
- 5 **Detachment.** This universe is doomed; why not enjoy myself while it lasts? (Chaotic)
- 6 **Aspiration.** I've glimpsed forbidden knowledge. I'm determined to do something great with it. (Any)



**d6 Bonds**

- 1 My family raised me in the cult since childhood. They're still out there, serving that dark entity.
- 2 I defied the cult leader when I left the cult. I expect that transgression to catch up to me one day.
- 3 Someone died saving me from the cult. It's my goal to find their next of kin and make reparations for that noble sacrifice.
- 4 The cult I was in hurt people. I feel compelled to make amends for the wrongs I've done.
- 5 My contact with dark magic makes me feel unclean. I seek any sage or priest who can finally make my soul feel whole again.
- 6 I keep in regular contact with someone else from the cult. We try to keep each other accountable and support each other.

**d6 Flaws**

- 1 I push other people away for fear that I'm cursed by some dark power.
- 2 I think the forbidden knowledge I've seen makes me better than 'common' people.
- 3 I can't resist an opportunity to contact otherworldly entities or discover taboo magic.
- 4 I don't believe in even polite conversation with cultists or anyone who would sell themselves blindly to a religious institution.
- 5 I feel detached from the physical world and take unnecessary risks as a result.
- 6 I tend to interrogate people I meet, convinced they have ulterior motives for their actions.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: CULTISTS

## CULT ADHERENT

In the cult hierarchy, adherents are devoted followers whose dedication to the cult's mysteries have earned them particular favor. Stronger than the fanatics leading small groups or rural sects, the adherents are trusted lieutenants who carry out orders requiring a measure of finesse.

### CULT ADHERENT

*Medium humanoid (any race), any evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Skills** Deception +5, Persuasion +5, Religion +3

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Confident Defense.** While the adherent is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

**Dark Devotion.** The adherent has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Spellcasting.** The adherent is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The adherent has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, resistance, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *bless, charm person, command*

2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, hold person, suggestion*

3rd level (2 slots): *hypnotic pattern, vampiric touch*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The adherent makes two attacks with its dagger.

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## CULT PONTIFF

Pontiffs are usually at the peak of all major cult hierarchies, though they may serve below any extraplanar being, Far Realm aberration, or divine envoy more powerful than themselves.

### CULT PONTIFF

*Medium humanoid (any race), any evil*

**Armor Class** 16

**Hit Points** 71 (13d8 + 13)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +7

**Skills** Deception +7, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +7, Religion +7

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Confident Defense.** While the pontiff is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

**Spellcasting.** The pontiff is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15; +7 to hit with spell attacks). The pontiff has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, mage hand, true strike, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, command, comprehend languages, sanctuary*

2nd level (3 slots): *crown of madness, phantasmal force, see invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance, fear, meld into stone*

4th level (3 slots): *confusion, stone shape*

5th level (2 slots): *scrying, telekinesis*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The pontiff makes two shortsword attacks.

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Mind Blast (Recharge 5–6).** The pontiff magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 22 (4d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.



## CULT ZEALOT

Zealots possess more raw strength than adherents, but are rarely given positions more important than assassin or bodyguard. Their fervor fuels their attacks, and they are hopelessly brainwashed into seeing cult leadership as the mouthpieces of the otherworldly power they worship.

### CULT ZEALOT

Medium humanoid (any race), any evil

**Armor Class** 19 (breastplate, shield)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Con +5

**Skills** Athletics +6, Intimidation +5, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Confident Defense.** The adherent's AC includes its Charisma modifier.

**Fanatic Zeal.** The zealot has advantage on attack rolls and saving throws against being charmed or frightened as long as a cult adherent or cult pontiff are within 30 feet of it and aren't incapacitated.

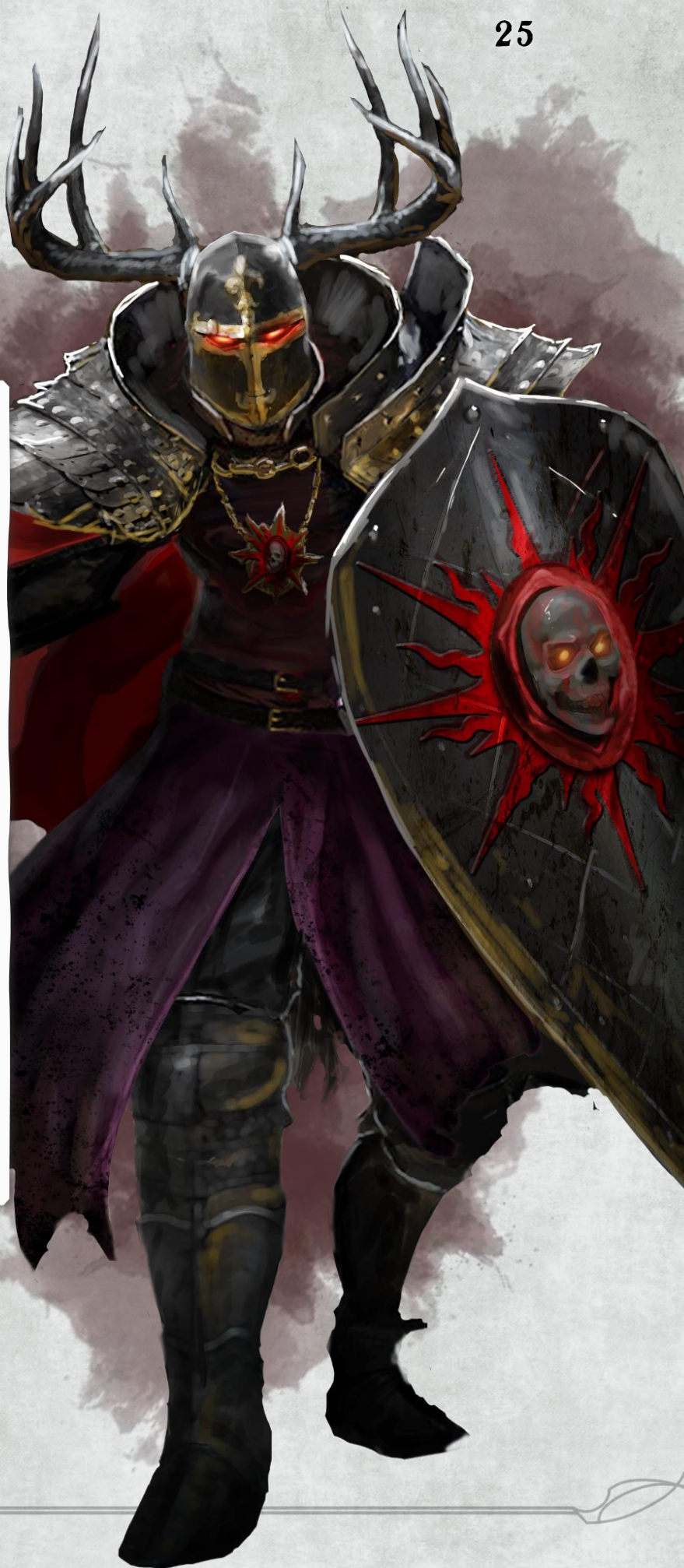
**Action Surge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** On its turn, the zealot can take one additional action.

**Improved Critical.** The zealot's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The zealot attacks twice with its morningstar.

**Morningstar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.





# CHAPTER FOUR:

# ELDER EVILS

*“Cattle born with two heads? A folk-tale curiosity. When the sky took on a purple hue it was an anomaly. Insects and other vermin boiling up from the ground was a warning. By the time the sun began to darken, we realized it was too late.”*

Malevolent, inexorable forces of destruction wait in the fringes of the universe or buried where not even the wisest scholars can find evidence of their existence. These entities are called “Elder Evils,” and each one has the potential to spell doom for entire worlds.

## ANCIENT AND UNEXPLAINED

As their title suggests, Elder Evils are related to ancient power or events beyond recorded history. This doesn’t mean the Elder Evil has always existed in its current form. For example, Kyuss lived as a mortal man who became the Worm that Walks in accordance with his own prophetic visions, a transformation facilitated by an uncovered ancient ritual. Elder Evils often exist in an inexplicable space where evil fate, prophesy, and legend are entangled with one another and come to fruition over immeasurable timelines.

## WAITING TO BE UNLEASHED

Elder Evils aren’t walking free; if they were, the world would be breaking at their presence. They lurk in far-flung edges of reality or remain imprisoned in remote, forgotten places. Some Elder Evils journey to new worlds and new lands as cults perform profane rituals to draw their attention; others wait to be freed from their bonds by depraved followers or bide their time for some long-prophesied event to herald their appearance.

## APOCALYPSE~BRINGERS

The Elder Evils share a penchant for world-ending destruction. Though their methods might differ, the warnings of prophesy and lore invariably state that an Elder Evil, unless somehow stopped, will bring an complete end to life on a given world and replace it with an existence that reflects its nature: perhaps cold and lightless, or a barren place where only undead horrors still linger.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SIGNS

### RARE AND HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

The term “Elder Evil” is not part of the common vernacular. Even lifelong scholars are unlikely to come across the term in their studies, much less the name of any particular Elder Evil or any detailed information about their nature. Too much knowledge of an Elder Evil might attract its attention or the attention of its followers, and therefore the signs of impending doom can be hard to correctly identify until it’s all too late.

### SUPPRESSION AND SUPPORT

As with any evil creature or deity, Elder Evils attract followers in awe of their power. Cults surrounding Elder Evils are rarely as large or proactive as the followers of a deity or powerful fiend, and in fact a surge in such a cult’s membership and activities can be a worrying sign. Cults that worship an Elder Evil either crave their own destruction or believe their



service will exempt them in some manner. The Elder Evils themselves, or their alien heralds, twist the minds of humanoid with delusions and lies for their own ends.

Individuals and groups that are aware of an Elder Evil, but who oppose it, work diligently to bury any knowledge of the entity's existence or prevent such knowledge from being discovered. This is not to suggest anyone opposed to an Elder Evil is necessarily "good." For example, followers of an evil deity would take great pains to prevent the world's destruction at the hands of an Elder Evil if only to see their own deity's apocalyptic vision fulfilled one day.

## IMPENDING DOOM

Not unlike an incursion from the Abyss, the impending release or arrival of an Elder Evil is blasphemous to reality itself. Its approach is heralded by increasingly intense omens, signs, and events unique to which Elder Evil is on the verge of appearing. Early signs are often minor, even seemingly inconsequential events that don't attract much attention. By the time an Elder Evil is on the verge of appearing, the later signs are usually world-affecting events that cause considerable upheaval whether the Elder Evil is ultimately stopped or not.

## ATROPUS: THE WORLD BORN DEAD

This black mass of congealed crag and stone slag hurtles through space, uncaring and unfeeling except for its goal. Atropus is the black planet roiling with creation's sloughed afterbirth or, according to some myths, legends, and songs, Atropus is the decapitated head of an Elder Evil forever rolling on the ground of space and spreading its undying curse.

Atropus senses life from the hallows of space, changing course to dull, dim and extinguish all life. In any campaign setting, Atropus has always existed and moves steadily towards the players, counting down the days in black ichur until its shadow darkens Faerun or Eberron. This dead moon should arrive, a thick black fly on the sky's face, latching onto more than the planet's gravity. As it hurtles closer and slowly sucks on the energy thrumming off the surface, it rustles the dead from their graves, stoking an unending hunger. In an unholy exchange, Atropus always leaves a planet void of life and covered in grayish-black dust, having stripped it of energy to replace the supply it pushed into the undead.

After the dead remnant Atropus finishes sucking life off the planet, it moves onto the next spark of life in the galaxy. Atropus is conscious of only that moment when it called forth the other gods, thus ending its own life.





Should this moonlet wipe out all living things in the galaxy, it may be able to kill the gods and eventually itself.

## ELDER SIGNS

**Undead Awaken (Phase One).** This sign goes unnoticed for a while as a few of the recently dead reanimate, locals, assuming it is perhaps a reckless necromancer flexing their powers. But as the freshly torn up graves spike in number, a lone undead can grow into a grisly march of fetid fiends on the hunt for their friends and kin of their former life. Towns vanish overnight as the cemetery earth churns and roils, the shuffling citizens no longer preoccupied with civics but by muscles, tendons, and bone.

Day (d12)	Night (d12)	
1-2	1-2	2 zombies, including a known NPC
-	3-4	1 ghast
3-4	5-6	1 death knight
5-6	7-8	1d6 ghouls
7-8	9	1d8+2 skeletons wearing the clothes of known NPCs
9-10	10	A horde of 1d10+2 zombies
11	11	1 vampire
12	12	1d4 beholder zombies

**Tome Trouble (Phase Two).** As word passes around that the World Born Dead could be approaching, famed libraries and private collections are robbed of historical tomes. Necromancers and the power-hungry wish to rule the new world unharmed by Atropus' shadow and hope against vain hope they can find the answer. There is a copy of a book, *Wind of the Dark*, that the characters may investigate the whereabouts of, fighting cultists and priests at every turn who want the book for their own dark needs. Deciphering the information will take time and holding onto the tome becomes more of a burden than any of them assume, especially as more and more undead crawl forth from the cold earth.

**Blood Moon Rising (Phase Three).** As the bleak moonlet begins to grow in the sky, the dead and newly dead animate easily and swarms begin to beleaguer the characters. Encounters with undead increase as well, as listed on the table below. Spellcasters have advantage on spell attacks made as part of necromancy spells, while spells that restore hit points are reduced by 1d4 per level of the spell.

**Armored Undead (Phase Four).** With Atropus blotting out most of the sky, the wails of cities die out as the undead wash over them, leaving little but smoke and cinders. Casters and clerics using *destroy undead* find it less effective—targets have advantage on their saving throw against the effect.

If the group is unable to convince local cultists to push away Atropus, they must travel to the moonlet's surface themselves and kill the aspect before Atropus reaches the planet's surface.

## ON THE DEAD MOON

Atropus looms large in space. As the moonlet approaches, it swings into planetary orbit (possibly with the planet's other moons, if they exist). It picks up speed in tandem with the pace of the campaign or at your behest.

**Moonlet Surface:** On this cragged and tar-speckled surface, detritus from unknown planets blow around or are half-buried in the desolate ground. Twisting spires like thorns protrude out into space while deep ravines hide many undead from view. Huddling between the planet and the sun, Atropus is always shrouded in darkness giving all creatures advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.





## FATHER LLYMIC: ALIEN THOUGHT GIVEN FLESH

*You are old, Father Llymic, the young man said  
And your hair has become very white  
And yet you incessantly eat from my head  
Are you sure at your age, this is right?*

Father Llymic is an alien creature from beyond the known worlds, which crept into the Material Plane after an elven ritual gone wrong opened a doorway to the Far Realm. Before Father Llymic entered the world it had no shape, no form, and no conception of linear time. It emerged into the world looking for a source of strength and food, and it found one: the sun. It reveled in the madness around it, and sucked forth the light from the world, unheeding the tides of magic rippling around it.

It was this distraction which allowed the Archmage Wena to trap it under a mountain of ice and snow, perishing in the process. By

keeping the abomination away from the light, she saved the world and faded into obscurity. The elves sealed the breach with great and terrible magic, at a cost still kept in the ledgers of the Nine Hells today, and the world returned to normal order. The catastrophic ritual was never spoken of again.

Over thousands of years, Father Llymic's resting place was forgotten, and it waited. For long centuries, it yearned for the light of the sun to quench its unspeakable appetite, and so it extended its influence over the mountain, seeding its influence in the minds of any mortal foolish enough to stray close. Father Llymic sometimes appears near its mountain prison as the projected image of an old man, asking travelers for their help.

### SIGNS OF GROWING DOOM

All around the known world, the signs of Father Llymic's ascendancy are etched into the sky, sand, and stars. In the lead up to Father Llymic's return, the surrounding environs are affected



by several signs of the coming doom, and become progressively worse over time.

**Stage One.** When the Dead Sun sign first manifests, light sources only shed half of their normal illumination, either dim or bright. Animals act strangely, and shy away from the sun. Sages and astrologers say that some far-off stars seem to be flickering and vanishing. Spells that summon light fail 20% of the time, and the reason is not clear. Cultists who worship ice, elemental evil and other sources of primal cold begin to act abnormally, many of them exhibiting signs of brood infection.

**Stage Two.** As the Dead Sun sign progresses, the radius of light sources recedes to a maximum of 5 feet of bright or dim light, and the sunlight seems weak. Warm days no longer occur, and crops fail as a result. Creatures vulnerable to sunlight no longer suffer ill effects when exposed to it, precipitating a flood of threats from underworld creatures usually kept at bay by their fear of the sunlight. Cold, mountainous regions begin to expand outwards, drowning surrounding villages in snow and ice. Brood spawn appear frequently near these locations, usually animals or monstrosities. Stargazers begin to go mad at the vanishing stars. The moon fades, and eventually ceases to appear at night.

**Stage Three.** Natural light sources, such as open flames, produce no helpful light at all, shedding only a faint dim light out to 1 foot. Creatures who cast spells that conjure light must succeed on a DC 15 concentration check after expending the spell slot. If they fail the check, the spell fails and the spell slot is wasted. A shroud falls over the sun, and it sheds only dim light on the world even at midday. Villages near the tomb are subsumed by the brood sickness and head afield to infect others. The world grows colder, entering a permanent harsh winter.

**Stage Four.** The sun is eclipsed by a dark shadow, and can be seen flickering only faintly behind it in a gloomy red sky. The entire world

falls to below freezing levels, and creatures die in droves. Plants sicken and perish. Light sources of all kinds fail entirely, leaving creatures to rely on blindsight, darkvision and other means of sensing their surroundings. Powerful creatures like dragons fall prey to the brood sickness, as do entire towns of people.

## BROOD SPAWN SICKNESS

Father Llymic's presence instills a dark infection in those he chooses to spread his gospel, turning them into brood spawn. A creature that is hit by a melee attack from any brood spawn is exposed to the disease at the end of the encounter. A creature that strikes a brood spawn with a melee attack is also exposed to the disease at the end of the encounter. A creature exposed to the disease must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected. A creature under the effects of a *mind blank* spell or similar magic has advantage on the saving throw. It takes 1d4 hours for symptoms to develop, after which the infected creature enters stage one of the illness (see Brood Spawn Symptoms below). At the end of each long rest thereafter, an infected creature must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or the infection stage increases by one.

## BROOD SPAWN SYMPTOMS

Stage	Effect
1	One level of exhaustion. Skin begins to exhibit symptoms of frostbite.
2	One additional level of exhaustion. Light hurts eyes. Fits of anger.
3	One additional level of exhaustion. Skin develops blue, icy scales. Teeth sharpen.
4	One additional level of exhaustion. Hunger to touch living creatures. Pupils turn red.
5	One additional level of exhaustion. Fear of fire. Nocturnal sleeping patterns. Loses some ability to speak.
6	Transforms fully into a brood spawn NPC under the DM's control.



## DIAGNOSIS

This disease is unique to Father Llymic, and records of it can only be found by researching secret and lost elven texts from Father Llymic's first appearance. Otherwise, conventional wisdom has no ability to discern the nature of the disease or its origin. Talented medics might be able to deduce the existence of a 'patient zero' or a 'prime vector' from whence the disease has spread.

## CURE

Brood spawn sickness, originating from an Elder Evil, cannot be cured by any known spells or the lay on hands feature of paladins. Instead, features that can eject supernatural influence such as the *banishment* spell can exorcise the disease if the caster succeeds on an opposed Charisma check against Father Llymic. If successful, the disease is banished from the affected character. Characters cured of the disease do not automatically recover from levels of exhaustion gained from the sickness, but the physical mutations vanish.

## BROOD SPAWN TEMPLATE

Brood spawn have several advantages over their previous forms, as Father Llymic's influence spreads through and warps their physiques.

- The brood spawn gains immunity to cold, poison, and psychic damage, and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.
- The brood spawn gains tremorsense out to 60 feet, and loses all other senses.
- The brood spawn's alignment is chaotic evil.
- The brood spawn gains advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects.
- The brood spawn gains vulnerability to radiant, fire and thunder damage.
- The brood spawn gains sunlight sensitivity.
- Brood spawn are immune to the blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, paralysed, and petrified conditions.

- Brood spawn cannot be telepathically contacted, and their minds cannot be read. A creature that attempts this instead becomes visible to Father Llymic's Creature Sense trait.

## CULTS OF FATHER LLYMIC

Those foolish enough to deliberately draw the attention of Father Llymic rarely live long. Those mad cultists who follow the alien thought given flesh are beyond hope of light and redemption. Those who would join the cult are brought to the mountain peak where Father Llymic lies, and told to stare into its slumbering form deep down inside the ice. They are tied there for several days, until Llymic has wormed its insidious ways inside their head. From then on, those who have not died and become brood spawn receive the "blessing" of Father Llymic.

***Llymic's Lens (1/Day)*** As a bonus action, the cultist opens its eyes to the darkness and gains blindsight out to 120 feet. The cultist's weapons and spells deal cold damage instead of any other type, and expose creatures to Brood Spawn Sickness. The cultist also becomes immune to cold and psychic damage. Whilst in this state, the cultist gibbers nonsense and seemed possessed or crazed. Cultists and servants touched by Father Llymic in this way are immune to the effects of Brood Spawn Sickness.

## KYUSS: THE WORM THAT WALKS

In a long-forgotten time Kyuss was a favored priest of Orcus, Demon Prince of Undeath. In service to his master, Kyuss created many undead abominations and is best known for the worm-infested spawn of Kyuss that still bear his name. However, his foreboding prophecies about the coming age of destruction proved too radical even for the Demon Prince's faithful, and Kyuss was exiled. The disgraced priest continued his prophesying, gathering a massive



cult of zealous followers who believed their leader would save his chosen from the coming woe.

## ASCENSION

They were right, to a point. Kyuss led his followers to an ancient ruined city, where they rebuilt its glory and unearthed a great obelisk. Obsessed with amassing enough power to stave off the future of his prophecies, Kyuss studied the writings of the ruins where his cult had made their home. There he found the ritual necessary to attain the godlike power he sought, a ritual that called for the mass sacrifice of the followers he'd obtained. Bathed in his followers' blood, he fused with the obelisk and became simultaneously divine, an abomination—and trapped.

## KYUSS BOUND

To this day, Kyuss remains trapped in the pillar that transformed him into a godlike being. Maddened and twisted, Kyuss now understands that its release would mean ushering in the very apocalyptic age it saw in its visions, the Age of Worms. Far from dreading that knowledge, Kyuss seeks to be free from its prison and rule as master in the Age of Worms as an aberrant god.

The exact circumstances that will unleash the Worm that Walks are unknown. It might be a ritual, a certain series of events, or simply the passage of time. Even after centuries, Kyuss has faithful followers who have touched the aberrant mind of their god and hope to bring about the Age of Worms.

## SIGNS OF GROWING DOOM

As the time of Kyuss's release approaches, certain signs begin to appear in the world that herald the coming of the Age of Worms. These events can grow in frequency and intensity as time goes on.

**Swarming Crawlers.** Mundane worms and centipedes begin to form **swarms of insects**, which rapidly manifest to clog waterways,

attack humanoids and animals, and infest both civilized and natural spaces alike. Joining them are similar creatures including **giant centipedes** and **swarms of rot grubs** (VGtM).

**Restless Spawn.** Undead in general may become more active as the Worm that Walks nears its escape, but none more so than the eponymous **spawn of Kyuss** (VGtM). Spawn of Kyuss are driven to attack living creatures they come across, infecting them with worms that turn the target into a new spawn. Normally wandering and directionless, spawn of Kyuss have begun appearing with more frequency and attacking with a targeted precision that belies their intelligence.

**Resurgent Cult.** Followers of Kyuss begin establishing centers of operation in key areas. Some might be related directly to the events that ultimately free Kyuss from its imprisonment; acquiring certain magic items, completing certain rituals, or performing sacrifices. In general, the cultists of Kyuss summon undead and turn victims into fresh spawn of Kyuss under their control.

**Full Scale Assault.** Settlements and small towns begin falling silent as the scourge of Kyuss's creatures assails them. Even large cities see more and more citizens go missing as the infestations become overwhelming. At this stage, cults of Kyuss operate openly under the belief that the release of the Worm that Walks is imminent.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: ELDER EVILS

## ASPECT OF ATROPUS

As the World Born Dead approaches, undead stir across its barren surface. This unholy presence ultimately manifests as an aspect of Atropus, an extension of the World Born Dead's horrendous will. It's said that if the aspect is defeated, the moonlet can be driven away from its meal and the world can be saved.

### ASPECT OF ATROPUS

*Gargantuan undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 346 (21d20+126)

**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	8 (-1)	23 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)

**Saving Throws** Str +15, Con +14, Wis +12, Cha +14

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from magical weapons.

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned.

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 26 (90,000 XP)

**Unliving Apex.** The aspect is immune to effects that turn undead, and any critical hit against it becomes a normal hit.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The aspect's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 22, +14 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *blight*, *negative energy flood*

3/day: *finger of death*

**Quickened Mortality (3/Day).** The aspect casts one of its at-will spells as a bonus action. It can't cast another spell on the same turn that it uses this feature.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the aspect fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** The aspect has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Aura of Atropus.** Other undead within 60 feet of the aspect regain 1d8 hit points at the start of each of their turns. In addition, when undead in this aura must make a saving throw against an effect that turns undead, they can use the aspect's bonus to the saving throw in place of their own.

**Regeneration.** The aspect regains 20 hit points at the start of each of its turns if it has at least 1 hit point. If the aspect takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the aspect's next turn. The aspect dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Immutable Form.** The aspect is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aspect makes two Slam attacks. It can replace one Slam attack with its Apocalypse Glimpse.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (3d12+6) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

**Apocalypse Glimpse (Recharge 5-6).** The aspect targets one creature it can see within 120 feet of it, filling its mind with visions of worlds Atropus has consumed. The creature must succeed on a DC X Intelligence saving throw or take 18 (4d8) psychic damage and gain vulnerability to necrotic damage until the end of the aspect's next turn. On a success, the target takes half as much damage and suffers no other effects.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The aspect can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. It can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The aspect regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Slam.** The aspect makes one Slam attack.

**Necrotic Rebirth (Costs 2 Actions).** The aspect targets one undead creature it can see within 90 feet of it. The target creature dies, and the aspect teleports to its space by disintegrating and growing out of the undead creature's corpse.

**Impending Doom.** Up to 3 creatures of the aspect's choice within 90 feet of it must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or be unable to regain hit points until the end of the aspect's next turn.





## FATHER LLYMIC

In ages long past, elven mages sought to enact a great work of sorcery. They thought they could tap a new source of magic—a Far Realm distant from the Material Plane. They opened a portal to the other side, and through it poured madness incarnate. The most terrible of these creatures was the Thing in the Ice, which was sealed beneath a glacier in the hope it would never find a way out. But of course, one day, it will.

**An Innocent Traveler?** The portal to the Far Realm was sealed, and the Thing in the Ice was forgotten, existing only in folk tales as rumours of a kindly old man called Father Llymic, who asks travelers to help him find a way down the mountain. You must never do so, warn the legends, lest he find his way back home and we all come to ruin.

**Light-Eater.** Father Llymic is from a dark place in the Far Realm and doesn't understand light. Though it is alien and inimical to him, he craves it and greedily consumes it. As his power grows and approach to full freedom nears, the sun and all other light in the world slowly fades.

## FATHER LLYMIC'S LAIR

The mountains have become wreathed in a deadly cold, which intensifies closer to the mountain where Father Llymic lies sleeping. The unnatural cold snap has driven away most normal beasts from the mountain, leaving behind only Father Llymic's corrupted brood, wasteland predators, and supernatural creatures.

### LAIR ACTIONS

While Father Llymic is within 1 mile of his tomb, he can take lair actions as long as he isn't incapacitated. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Father Llymic can take one of the

following lair action options, or forgo using any of them in that round:

- Father Llymic casts the darkness spell four times at its lowest level, targeting different areas. He doesn't need to concentrate on the spells, which end on initiative count 20 of the next round.
- Father Llymic projects knowledge from the Far Realm around him, out to a radius of 100 feet. Creatures in the radius must succeed on a DC23 Wisdom saving throw or gain a short term madness (see *DMG*) that lasts until the end of their next turn.
- Father Llymic's presence is anathema to all living things. The closest living creature to Father Llymic is subject to the effects of a power word kill spell. On a tie, the DM chooses which creature is closest.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

Father Llymic has been engineering an escape for some time before anyone becomes aware of it. His alien infection has disturbed the Weave, and for miles around the flow of magic is disrupted in several ways.

- **Teleportation.** Effects that allow long-range teleportation, such as the *teleport* spell, on, into or away from the mountain fail. Spells that allow short-distance travel such as *misty step* or *dimension door* function normally.
- **Divination.** Spells or abilities that allow the user to scry, ask questions concerning, or project images onto the mountains fail.
- **Wish.** Casting the *wish* spell only causes the spell to twist uncontrollably in the caster's mind, and cause havoc. Roll three times on the Wild Magic Surge table (see *PHB*) instead of resolving the *wish* spell.
- **Telepathy.** Telepathic messages sent anywhere near the mountains fail utterly, only resulting in a brief and painful static feedback for the sender. Aberrations of any kind are the sole exception to this rule.



## FATHER LLYMIC

*Gargantuan aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 24 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 676 (33d20 + 330)

**Speed** 50 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	8 (-1)	30 (+10)	26 (+8)	27 (+8)	30 (+10)

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Int +18, Wis +18, Cha +20

**Skills** Athletics +18, Intimidation +20, Perception +18

**Damage Resistances** fire, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Vulnerabilities** cold, thunder

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 28

**Languages** telepathy 5 miles, understands all languages but can't speak

**Challenge** 30 (155,000 XP)

**Creature Sense.** Father Llymic is aware of the presence of creatures within 5 miles of it that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. It knows the distance and direction to each creature, as well as each one's Intelligence score, but can't sense anything else about it. A creature protected by a mind blank spell, a nondetection spell, or similar magic can't be perceived in this manner. Father Llymic can cast spells on any creature it can sense with this trait as if it could see them and they were within 30 feet of it.

**Innate Spellcasting** (Psionics). Father Llymic's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 25). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *dream*, *project image*, *scrying*  
3/day each: *dominate person*, *maddening darkness*, *weird*  
1/day each: *feeblemind*, *power word kill*, *psychic scream*

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Father Llymic fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Father Llymic has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Aura of Madness.** Creatures within 100 feet of Father Llymic that aren't aberrations have disadvantage on saving throws.

**Elder Evil.** Father Llymic is immune to magic that would change its form, and divination spells cast on it or concerning it automatically fail. It is immune to the Divine Intervention and Channel Divinity features of clerics, the wish spell and cannot be affected by spells of 5th level or lower unless it wishes to be.

**Light Torpor.** While exposed to sunlight, Father Llymic acts as if affected by a slow spell. If Father Llymic reaches 0 hit points while in an area of bright light,

it freezes solid. Father Llymic remains frozen solid for 24 hours, during which time it is incapacitated. After 24 hours, it regains all its hit points.

**Regeneration.** Father Llymic regains 40 hit points at the end of its turn. If exposed to bright light, Father Llymic loses this ability until the start of its next turn.

**Deadly Chill.** Creatures within 30 feet of Father Llymic take a cumulative 1d6 cold damage at the start of their turns from the chill. Creatures resistant to cold damage are immune to this effect.

**Lord of the Damned.** Creatures infected with Brood Spawn sickness that can see Father Llymic must succeed on a DC21 Constitution saving throw at the start of their turns or advance a stage further in their sickness.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Father Llymic makes two attacks with its Crystalline Claw, one attack with Never-ending Hunger and uses Deadlight Aurora if available.

**Crystalline Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (4d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and takes 9 (1d8 + 5) cold damage at the start of each of its turns until the grapple ends. Father Llymic can have up to two targets grappled at a time. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw when it is grappled or become affected by Brood Spawn sickness.

**Never-ending Hunger.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +17 to hit, one grappled target. *Hit:* 20 (4d8) psychic damage and the target gains a level of exhaustion. A creature killed by this attack cannot be raised from the dead, and their soul is obliterated.

**Deadlight Aurora (Recharge 4-6).** Father Llymic exhales a blast of lethally cold gas in a 120 foot cone. Creatures within the blast must succeed on a DC 27 Dexterity saving throw or take 132 (24d10 + 5) cold damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A target who succeeds on their saving throw is not stunned. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the stunned condition on itself on a success.

**Corrupt.** Father Llymic targets a creature infected with brood spawn sickness. Father Llymic gains insight into the target's reasoning, its emotional state, and thoughts that loom large in its mind (including things the target worries about, loves, or hates). Father Llymic can also make a Charisma (Deception) check with advantage to deceive the target's mind into thinking it believes one idea or feels a particular emotion. The target contests this attempt with a Wisdom (Insight) check. If Father Llymic succeeds, the target believes the deception for 1 hour or until evidence of the lie is presented to the target.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Father Llymic can take 5 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. It can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Father Llymic regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Move.** Father Llymic moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Attack.** Father Llymic attacks with its Crystalline Claw.

**Cast a Spell (costs 3 actions).** Father Llymic casts one of its innate spells.



# KYUSS

When unleashed from its imprisonment, Kyuss walks the world in the form of a swarming mass of worms, assembling themselves into the vague shape of a giant humanoid and unified by Kyuss's malevolent consciousness.



## KYUSS

*Huge aberration (shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 21 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 406 (28d12 + 224)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	16 (+3)	26 (+8)	23 (+6)	24 (+7)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +11, Con +16, Cha +12

**Skills** Arcana +20, History +15, Perception +22, Religion +15

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical

**Condition Immunities** charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 32

**Languages** all, telepathy 300 ft.

**Challenge** 27 (105,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Kyuss fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Kyuss has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Regeneration.** Kyuss regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

**Subsume.** Kyuss can move into or through a hostile Medium creature's space. When it does so, the creature must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or become contained in Kyuss's form. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw is pushed to an adjacent unoccupied space of its choice and can't be affected by this trait again this turn. While contained inside Kyuss a creature is blinded and carried with Kyuss without penalty to Kyuss's movement. A creature inside Kyuss is treated as choking as worms flood its mouth and nose and can survive a number of rounds without air equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum 1). A creature inside Kyuss can use its action to attempt to escape with its choice of a DC 19 Strength or Dexterity saving throw.

**Plague of Kyuss.** A humanoid that dies within 60 feet of Kyuss rises as a spawn of Kyuss within 1d4 +1 rounds if it is not restored to life before then. Spells like gentle repose or other magic that prevents the creation of undead prevent this effect.

**Return to Worms.** When Kyuss is reduced to 0 hit points, it breaks apart into a swarm of insects in the same space with 27 (6d8) hit points, a burrowing speed of 20 ft., and immunity to all damage except radiant and thunder. Unless the swarm is destroyed, Kyuss reforms from it within 2d6+1 days.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Kyuss makes three crush or Writhing Mass attacks in any combination and uses Wormflood, or uses its Discorporate and then uses Wormflood.

**Crush.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (2d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 24 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Writhing Mass.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 90/300 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) acid damage, and a 15-foot cube centered on the target is covered with worms until the end of Kyuss's next turn. A covered area is considered difficult terrain. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 1d8 acid damage for every 5 feet it travels.

**Discorporate.** Kyuss's form collapses into a circular mass with a radius of 30 feet, spreading around corners. Creatures in the area that weren't already in Kyuss's space must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, getting pushed to the nearest unoccupied space on the nearest edge of the circle on a success. Creatures that fail their saving throw take 19 (2d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage and are considered to be sharing Kyuss's space. At the end of its turn, Kyuss returns to its normal form at any point within the area. Creatures that were sharing Kyuss's space are not pulled to its new location.

**Wormflood.** Each creature sharing Kyuss's space makes a DC 24 Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) slashing damage and 35 (10d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this damage immediately suffers two failed death saving throws.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Kyuss can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Kyuss regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Crush.** Kyuss makes one Crush attack.

**Crawler's Call.** Kyuss targets up to three spawn of Kyuss that have taken damage or died within the past minute. Those spawn regain all of their missing hit points, or are revived with all of their hit points.

**Whirlworm (Costs 2 Actions).** Kyuss transforms into a Huge whirlwind of wriggling worms, moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and reverts to its normal form. While Kyuss is in whirlwind form it leaves subsumed creatures behind and doesn't subsume creatures as it moves. Creatures in the area where it reverts to its normal form are affected by its subsume trait as normal.



# CHAPTER FIVE:

# FORMORIANS

*"Volti's skin looked like the bubbles on a boiling pot, her skin blossoming with roiling growths that spread rapidly across her arms and torso. Looking about for the source of this curse, we saw the white of a single, bulging eye glowing in the darkness some twenty feet from the ground, and heard the thing laugh a deep, wet chuckle as if through a throat full of clodded mud."*

## FOMORIGINS

The fomorians were once strong, intelligent, and beautiful giants. However, they possess a covetous nature that drove them to assail the Feywild and seize its magic for themselves, a quest that would ultimately prove to be their downfall. As the denizens of the Feywild repelled the fomorians' invasion, the giants were struck with a horrendous curse.

## CURSED AND TWISTED

To this day, the fomorians are forever changed into wretched things. Though still physically powerful, the fomorians have lost their beauty, much of their intelligence, and a good deal of their sanity to the curse that warps them. Their bodies reflect their evil natures in the ironic way suited for children's stories, but the danger of these creatures is very real. What the fomorians lost in graceful spell-weaving they gained back in the ability to inflict misery on others, including the "evil eye" that twists a creature unfortunate to fall under the fomorian's gaze.

## CRUELTY IN THE UNDERDARK

Fomorians live in Underdark caverns, marking their territory with smeared blood and broken bodies of creatures that have fallen at their hands. Fomorians enslave other creatures, working them until they collapse and devouring the fallen. They don't leave their underground territory often or for very long, but are always on the lookout for an unwary traveler to capture and add to their short-lived workforce.

## PLOTS AND MOTIVES

The curse has left these giants both simple-and-single-minded; thoughts of revenge, petty ambition, and cruelty dominate their thoughts at almost all times. When interacting with fomorians, adventurers will find these giants' goals tend to fall into one of a few categories.





## ENSLAVEMENT AND MURDER

Travelers in or near fomorian territory are targeted for capture with only rare exceptions. Those that refuse to be captured are killed; captives are forced to perform hard labor until they collapse. Creatures that can't work any longer are killed and eaten, and the fomorians keep a keen eye on surrounding tunnels for fresh replacements.

## HATRED OF FEY

Fomorians reserve a special loathing for the fey, who denied them the magic they thought they were owed, and then cursed the giants to boot. Though they rarely leave their homes in the Underdark, fomorians are apt to make an exception if it means attacking fey creatures near their territory. They show exceptional vitriol to elves and relish targeting them with their evil eye.

## PETTY POLITICS

The fomorians' hatred and cruelty extends to other fomorians as much as any other creature. Groups of fomorians living in the same area are organized into an uneasy hierarchy where strength and vicious cunning determine one's status, and cooperation between fomorians lasts only until one of them sees a way to benefit itself over the others. Adventurers who find themselves on the wrong end of a fomorian's club can make themselves seem appealing by promising to hurt rivals or enact revenge for perceived slights. These promises can stay a fomorian's hand, at least for a short while.

## FOMORIAN MUTATIONS

The bodies of fomorians are twisted and misshapen in a number of ways, effectively ensuring no two fomorians' anatomies are alike. Some recorded mutations are listed below.

### FOMORIAN MUTATIONS TABLE

d6	Mutation Description
1	<b>Wheezing.</b> The fomorian's breath howls or whistles through their mouth when they breathe, giving them disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.
2	<b>Extra Eyes.</b> Tumorous masses on the fomorian's head and body contain a mixture of functional and vestigial eyes. This fomorian is immune to the blinded condition.
3	<b>Cancerous Feet.</b> The fomorian's feet are heavy, bulbous masses. The fomorian's speed is reduced by 5 feet but it has advantage on ability checks and saving throws to avoid being shoved, pushed, and knocked prone.
4	<b>Cauliflower Ear.</b> The fomorian's ears are closed off with growths and clotted blood vessels. It has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.
5	<b>Mismatched Arms.</b> One of the fomorian's arms is abnormally long and muscular, the other abnormally short and weak. The fomorian has advantage and disadvantage, respectively, to grapple a creature with its long and short arm.
6	<b>Wart-Thickened Hide.</b> The fomorian can use its reaction to reduce incoming damage from an attack or spell by an amount equal to its Constitution modifier. It cannot use this feature to reduce incoming psychic damage.

## THE EVIL EYE

The last remnants of the fomorians' magical prowess is as corrupted as their bodies, manifesting now as a curse known colloquially as the 'evil eye.' The sheer malice of the fomorian's gaze wracks its enemy with agonizing pain, but the true horror comes when the fomorian pushes the curse further, inflicting a measure of its own malformation onto its target. This usually expresses itself as physical weakness and clumsiness, but other examples of the curse's effects have been recorded.



## ALTERNATIVE CURSES

When the fomorian uses its Curse of the Evil Eye action, select one of the alternate curses from the table below or roll one at random.

### EVIL EYE CURSE TABLE

#### d6 Curse Effect

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The cursed creature's hands wither and weaken. While cursed, the creature is unable to grapple another creature, carry an object requiring two hands, or climb. In addition, when casting a spell of 1st level or higher that requires material or somatic components, the cursed creature must succeed on a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check with a DC of 10 + the spell's level. On a failed save, the spell isn't cast and the action and spell slot are wasted. |
| 2 | The cursed creature's mind is filled with a maddening fog. While cursed, the creature has disadvantage on Intelligence and Wisdom ability checks and saving throws, as well as disadvantage on saving throws to maintain concentration.  |
| 3 | The cursed creature's face warps and twists. While cursed, the creature's speech can't be understood and it has disadvantage on ability checks based on Charisma. The creature's bulbous eyes give it advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on sight.  |
| 4 | The cursed creature's arms become lopsided. While cursed, the creature has disadvantage on attack rolls using two-handed weapons. One of the creature's arms gains 5 feet of reach, while the other has a reach of 0 feet. The arm with a 0-foot reach can't effectively wear a shield.  |
| 5 | The cursed creature's skin becomes a mass of boils, warts, and aberrant growth. The creature immediately gains temporary hit points equal to its level. While cursed, the creature's speed is halved and it can only take an action or   |

bonus action on its turn, not both. A cursed creature can only make one weapon attack when it takes the Attack action.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 6 | The cursed creature's legs become powerful, but bowed and ungainly. While cursed, the creature must move in a straight line and can't change direction while moving unless it jumps at least 10 feet to do so. If a creature's long jump was less than 15 feet, its long jump becomes 15 feet while the curse lasts. |
|---|--|

## EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: FOMORIANS

### FOMORIAN CURSEMONGER

In fomorian society, those with the greatest strength and cruelest cunning rule. In most fomorian communities this refers only to physical prowess and a ruthless disposition; the spellcasters known as cursemongers are the exception. Though only marginally more intelligent than others of their kind, cursemongers often maintain lifelong rulership thanks to the magic at their disposal.

**Cursed Arcanum.** Like their bodies, even the magic wielded by the fomorian cursemonger is a twisted mockery of the artful skill they once displayed. Cursemongers effectively harness the fey magic that warped their kind, expressing it in explosive bursts of hate-fueled magic.



## FOMORIAN CURSEMONGER

*Huge giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 187 (15d12 + 90)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21

**Languages** Giant, Undercommon

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The fomorian is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Constitution (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It regains expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. The fomorian knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *infestation*, *poison spray*, *toll the dead*

1-5th level (3 5th-level spell slots): *arms of Hadar*, *blight*, *cause fear*, *crown of madness*, *dispel magic*, *negative energy flood*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shadow of moil*, *sickening radiance*, *vampiric touch*, *witch bolt*

6th level (recharges after a long rest): *eyebite*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fomorian makes two attacks with its greatclub or makes one greatclub attack and uses Evil Eye once.

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

**Evil Eye.** The fomorian magically forces a creature it can see within 60 feet of it to make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. The creature takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Curse of the Evil Eye (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).**

With a stare, the fomorian uses Evil Eye, but on a failed save, the creature is also cursed with magical deformities. While deformed, the creature has its speed halved and has disadvantage on all ability checks, saving throws, and attacks based on Strength or Dexterity.

The transformed creature can repeat the saving throw whenever it finishes a long rest, ending the effect on a success.





# CHAPTER SIX:

# LAMIAS

*"The first time it made the two of us fight, it forced us with its magic. Once we learned that the loser became the thing's dinner...it didn't have to force us to fight after that."*

Making their home in ruined places, lamia are ageless monstrosities that disguise ruinous spaces as homes of decadence and wealth. Usually living just within arm's reach of trade routes and travel destinations, lamias are always on watch for unwary travelers that can provide it with further riches, entertaining slaves, or a satisfying meal.

## CREATED BY GRAZ'ZT

Lamia and jackalweres aren't demons, but they were created by demonic powers. Lamia were created by the demon lord Graz'zt, and the jackalweres act as their servants. Like their Abyssal progenitor, lamia are egotistical creatures who see themselves as cultured tyrants and manipulative corrupters.

## SLAVERS AND FLESH-EATERS

Lamias subsist on humanoid flesh; hunger is one of their primary motivations for capturing travelers and foolhardy adventurers. Those that are not immediately devoured are enslaved to serve at the lamia's pleasure. Though a lamia's jackalwere servants capture victims through brute force, lamia prefer to use their magic. They seek to control lesser creatures with their spells or ply them into committing evil with their talent for charm and deception.

## LAMIA FORMS AND POWERS

Monstrous centaurian creatures, lamia have the upper body of a humanoid that merges with a quadrupedal animal body. Lamia are commonly depicted with lower halves of big cats, especially lions. However, lamia can have animal bodies of many different creatures, even aquatic animals, as shown below on the Uncommon Lamia Forms table. These animal forms often dictate the kind of environment where the lamia chooses to make its lair, or modifies its lair as necessary to make use of its natural needs or advantages. Uninformed





adventurers encountering a deer-bodied lamia in its decadent forest ruins often mistake the creature for a noble fey, realizing their error only when it is far too late.

## UNCOMMON LAMIA FORMS

### d8 Animal Body

1	<b>Deer.</b> * The lamia's long jump covers a number of feet equal to 5 + its Strength score, and its high jump is 6 + its Strength modifier. Both its high jump and long jump require it to move at least 5 feet before the jump.
2	<b>Goat.</b> * The lamia ignores difficult terrain caused by rocky or similarly mountainous terrain.
3	<b>Camel.</b> * The lamia ignores difficult terrain caused by sand and earth.
4	<b>Crocodile.</b> The lamia gains a swim speed equal to its walking speed.
5	<b>Lizard.</b> The lamia gains a climb speed equal to its walking speed.
6	<b>Crab.</b> The lamia can breathe air and water.
7	<b>Octopus.</b> * The lamia gains a swim speed equal to its walking speed, and can hold its breath for up to 1 hour.
8	<b>Weasel.</b> The lamia's speed increases by 5 feet.

\*The lamia's claw attack is replaced by hooves (or tentacles for the octopus form). The attack's damage type is bludgeoning.

## SPELLS AND POWERS

Lamia have an innate talent for domination and manipulation magic. They survey areas of their domain with *scrying*, dispatching jackalweres and other servants to strike targets of opportunity: adventurers, caravans, and so on. Lamia seek riches and humanoids to enslave or devour in equal measure, using innate spells like *charm person* and *geas* to impose their will on others.

## THE LAIR

Lamia are drawn to ruined and forgotten places. Areas of crumbling decay, the stone skeleton of forgotten civilizations or monuments to lost emperors, are ripe for the lamia to move into and 'improve' with their magic. Over time, the lamia's presence passively creates illusions to match the desired aesthetic for its home, and it can use its innate spellcasting to actively disguise features at key moments.

## LAIR LOCATIONS

Palaces of forgotten kings or a long-dead wizard's tower are potential sites for a lamia's lair. In general, lamia are drawn to ruins with an impressive skeletal structure that it can effectively decorate with its grandiose illusions, taking advantage of impressive spaces and masking any signs of decay that displease it.

### LAIR LOCATIONS TABLE

#### d8 This lamia lairs in...

1	The ruins of an ancient town, made to look like a vibrant oasis of civilization in the wilderness.
2	A moving caravan that becomes a decadent tent city when it makes camp.
3	The catacombs of a lost civilization whose original macabre nature has been disguised.
4	An open-air forum once used as a public meeting-place.
5	The ruins of a palace whose original owner is lost to history.
6	An abandoned building in a city, given the appearance of a wealthy and attractive house of vice.
7	A looming step pyramid with all the appearance of its former glory.
8	An enormous, previously abandoned hunting lodge



## LAIR ILLUSIONS

When a lamia makes its home in a decrepit place, it layers the area with its illusion magic until it matches the aesthetic of elegance and nobility the lamia believes it deserves. This magic is generally cosmetic, but can intentionally or unintentionally disguise hazards or valuable discoveries within the lair. These

passive illusions can usually be surpassed with a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. For illusions you think the lamia has intentionally used to disguise particular areas, such as a doorway it could use as an escape route, the DC to identify the illusion is 15, or 8 + double the lamia's proficiency bonus + its Charisma modifier.

**Hidden Alcoves.** Shelves, niches, and small hollows are easily missed when the lamia's magic masks them with the appearance of a solid wall. These alcoves can contain old relics, bones, and other objects the lamia didn't concern itself with; if the lamia is intentionally hiding such a niche from view, it could contain treasure, documents, or the lever to disable a trap or open a door.

**Hidden Doors.** Like a *guards and wards* spell, the lamia can make a door look like a plain section of wall with simple illusion magic. A lamia is unlikely to create this effect on more than a small number of doors, namely those that are infrequently used or that it wishes to keep hidden even from its servants. Doors to escape routes, treasure rooms, or private sanctums are the most likely entryways to be hidden in this manner.

**Hidden Hazards.** Beautifying illusions on walls or a ceiling could hide the deadly molds and slimes that grow there. The appearance of a mundane wall could hide the mechanisms ready to fire poison darts at an intruder. Seemingly pristine floors could be pit traps or broken pavers that slow a foolish adventurer's charge.

**Fake Hazards.** A particularly devious lamia might give certain walls, floors, and ceilings the appearance of traps and similar dangers. Confident explorers will quickly determine these as illusions by interacting with them, but their caution could give the lamia extra time to muster its forces or escape the lair.





**Peepholes.** A lamia that wants to spy on areas of its lair without using its innate spellcasting will use more traditional methods: it can ignore its own illusions if it desires, and can peer through a peephole into another room with the room's occupants none the wiser. A lamia can even apply this concept to larger viewing portals, such as a window, and mimic one-way glass.

## LAIR ACTIONS

Some lamia have access to lair actions, most often as a result of long-term occupancy in the same lair for several decades.

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the lamia can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the lamia can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The lamia targets any number of creatures within 60 feet of it, up to its Charisma modifier (minimum 1). Targets must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed by the lamia.
- Up to three creatures charmed by the lamia must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. Each creature that fails must use its reaction to Dash to an unoccupied space of the lamia's choice. The lamia can't use this lair action to force a creature to move through hazardous terrain.
- The lamia and up to three creatures within 60 feet who are willing or charmed by the lamia vanish momentarily. When they reappear, the lamia and all target creatures share the same illusory appearance of a Medium humanoid as chosen by the lamia. In addition, all affected creatures have swapped places with one another in a manner of the lamia's choosing. The illusory appearance ends for a specific creature when it takes damage, and ends for all creatures on initiative count 20 of the following round.
- Illusory flames spring up in the shape of either a circle with a 10-foot radius or a 20-

foot-long wall, centered on a point of the lamia's choice. The flames give off heat but aren't actually harmful, and they vanish on initiative count 20 of the following round. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check to determine the flames are illusions. When a creature moves through the flames, the lamia can use its reaction to deal 7 (2d4) fire damage to it.

## JACKALWERES: EVIL SERVANTS

Though lamia can pay, attract, or dominate many different types of creatures to carry out its will, it is most closely associated with the jackalwere; a lycanthrope-like creature created by Graz'zt just like their centaurian masters. Jackalweres transform between a common jackal, the form of a haggard humanoid form, and a jackal-humanoid hybrid.

## TWISTED LIARS

Talented in deception, a jackalwere make an effort to weave lies and half-truths into almost any conversation. Most accounts suggest that telling the truth is uncomfortable, even painful, to a jackalwere. Given their obsession with lies and odd humanoid form, jackalweres avoid prolonged social interaction in favor of a ruse to lure in the unsuspecting.

## HANDS AND FEET

Lamia are covetous creatures but detest performing any physical labor necessary to get what they want. The jackalwere are a lamia's most devoted underlings that act out the lamia's will to the best of their ability. What a lamia observes through a *scrying* spell and desires, a jackalwere will devoutly attempt to take possession of and deliver to its master.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: LAMIA

## JACKALWERE SLAVER

The first jackalweres were created by Graz'zt's twisted power. Though the jackalwere and lamia are not demons themselves, they show a fiendish delight in inflicting misery on others. Jackalweres that distinguish themselves, or that live long enough, are blessed with a selection of spells that make them more proficient at hunting and capturing other humanoids.

### JACKALWERE SLAVER

*Medium humanoid (shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Deception +4, Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common (can't speak in jackal form)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The jackalwere's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *alarm*, *hunter's mark*, *snare*

1/day: *hold person*

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The jackalwere has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The jackalwere has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the jackalwere's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Shapechanger.** The jackalwere can use its action to polymorph into a specific Medium human or jackal-humanoid hybrid, or into its true form (that of a Small jackal). Other than its size, its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The jackalwere makes two scimitar attacks.

**Bite (Jackal or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

**Scimitar (Human or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Sleep Gaze.** The jackalwere gazes at one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target succumbs to a magical slumber, falling unconscious for 10 minutes or until someone uses an action to shake the target awake. A creature that successfully saves against the effect is immune to this jackalwere's gaze for the next 24 hours. Undead and creatures immune to being charmed aren't affected by it.



# LAMIA TYRANT

Over their immortal lifespans, a handful of lamias accrue greater magical power by either honing their talents or earning the blessing of Graz'zt. These 'tyrants' are deceptively strong, capable of draining a victim's willpower with a touch. These lamia constantly surround themselves with a retinue of enchanted servants and bodyguards, letting mortal thralls do most of their fighting for them.

## LAMIA TYRANT

*Large monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 161 (19d10 + 57)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Wis +6, Cha +7

**Skills** Deception +10, Insight +6, Stealth +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** The lamia has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The lamia's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *disguise self* (any humanoid form), *dissonant whispers*, *major image*

3/day each: *charm person*, *mirror image*, *screaming*, *suggestion*

1/day each: *compulsion*, *dominate person*, *geas*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The lamia makes two attacks with its claws, one of which can be its Sapping Claw attack.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

**Sapping Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the lamia chooses one of the following effects:

- The target has disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws and ability checks for 1 hour.
- The target's Wisdom score is reduced by 1d4 for 1 hour. If this reduces a target's Wisdom to 0, the target becomes stunned for 1 hour or until it regains at least 1 point of Wisdom. While stunned in this manner, an affected creature automatically fails Wisdom saving throws against a lamia's spells. An affected creature ignores the stunned condition when compelled to act by a lamia's spells, such as movement prompted by *dissonant whispers* or obeying commands while affected by *dominate person*.



# CHAPTER SEVEN:

# LICHES

*"It raised one hand and told the encroaching mass of undead to stop. The figure stood, and I could see spiders scattering angrily from disrupted webs. 'It has been thirty years since a mortal has visited my tomb,' the lich confided to us in an ash-dry voice. 'I want to make this last a moment longer.'"*

## UNDEAD BY RITE

A lich was once mortal, one who has undergone a complex ritual to house their ever-living soul in an object, while their body and mind become a functionally immortal undead. The process of becoming a lich usually requires years of searching and study to discover and tasks that are unquestionably evil.

## SOUL-FED

As a vampire feeds on blood, a lich feeds on souls. A lich can directly trap a mortal's soul with its phylactery, but older and more knowledgeable lichs like Acererak can create lairs and traps that feed them souls from across the very planes of existence.

## THE PHYLACTERY

Iconic to the lich is their phylactery, an object containing the lich's soul. Creating a phylactery requires knowledge of the most advanced necromantic rituals and the necessary resources and power to practice them.

The creation of the phylactery is a one-time occurrence for a lich; once its soul is bound to an object and its transition to undeath is complete, the lich cannot change its phylactery or replace it in the event the object is destroyed.

## EXAMPLE PHYLACTERIES

An aspiring spellcaster seeking the transformation to lichdom chooses its phylactery with care. The chosen object is often one of great personal significance, one that demonstrates the spellcaster's accumulated wealth and arcane knowledge over their long career, or both. It need only contain a form of interior space where the silvery runes that bind the lich's soul to the object are inscribed.

## EXAMPLE PHYLACTERIES TABLE

d6	Phylactery Description
1	An oddly elongated crystal skull
2	A battered journal, written during the lich's time as a mortal
3	A smooth metal orb with ever-changing arcane inscriptions on its surface
4	A gold ring with fiery writing sometimes that appears around the band
5	Human bone warped into an unnatural shape and covered with scrimshaw carvings and symbols.
6	An old brass key, its corresponding lock lost to time.





## PHYLACTERY SENTIENCE

Because it contains the very soul of the lich that created it, phylacteries can exhibit some form of sentience. Examples of this can be found on the Phylactery Sentience table below.

### PHYLACTERY SENTIENCE

#### d6 This phylactery...

1	Isn't sentient.
2	Is sentient with an Intelligence score of 12 (+1) an alignment identical to the lich that created it.
3	Is sentient with an Intelligence score and alignment identical to the lich that created it.
4	Is sentient with an Intelligence score, Intelligence-based skill proficiencies, and alignment identical to the lich that created it.
5	Is sentient with an Intelligence score and alignment identical to the lich that created it, and has all of the lich's memories up until the last time the lich regenerated from the phylactery.
6	Is a <b>grisgol</b> (see Expanded Encyclopedia for this chapter).

In most cases, a sentient phylactery can attempt to communicate verbally or telepathically with a creature holding it or that it can sense nearby. In addition, it can attempt to command or take control of a creature in contact with it, using its creator's Charisma score as its own. See the section on sentient items in Chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on how these items work.

Some liches enchant their phylacteries to form a magic-item amalgamation known as a grisgol, or the phylactery's malevolent will causes a grisgol to form around it on its own. The grisgol is a golem-like construct made of treasure, designed to defend the phylactery at its heart. Once the grisgol is defeated, the phylactery can be safely retrieved.

## DESTROYING A PHYLACTERY

A lich doesn't entrust its immortal livelihood to a mundane object at the mercy of damage and decay. Phylacteries are nigh-indestructible, vulnerable only under certain circumstances that can be remarkably difficult to replicate. A particularly cautious future lich will try to design or discover a lichdom ritual that results in a phylactery that is fiendishly difficult to destroy. Recorded examples of phylactery vulnerabilities are detailed in the Phylactery Destruction table below.

### PHYLACTERY DESTRUCTION

#### d10 This phylactery is harmed by...

1	Immersing it in lava.
2	Feeding it through each gullet of a living hydra under a new moon.
3	Striking it with a sentient, good-aligned weapon on the anniversary of its creation.
4	An archdevil of the Nine Hells singing a hymn while holding it aloft.
5	Holding it in the antimagic cone of a beholder that thinks of itself as inferior to the lich.
6	Pickling it in the vat of a living elder brain for a week.
7	Immersing it in a basin filled with a chromatic dragon's tears.
8	Throwing it at the wall really, really hard.
9	Feeding it the soul of the lich's nearest living blood relative.
10	Baptizing it in the blood, ichor, or similar of one creature native to each of the Planes of Existence.

To say nothing of the difficulty inherent in destroying the lich's vessel, merely finding the object can be a difficult task in and of itself. Lich phylacteries are often carefully hidden and magically warded with spells of *nondetection* and similar magic. They may be zealously guarded in a lich's lair or kept in a dungeon on another plane entirely. Most famously, the



phylactery of the lich Acererak has never been discovered by deity or mortal.

## A LICH'S GOALS

What motivates a creature that expects to live forever? A lich is not a mindless zombie, nor is it driven by a need to feed like a ghast or vampire. What drives a spellcaster to seek out an endless existence as a lich is unique to the individual, and it's this motivation that tends to define how a lich continues to conduct itself for untold centuries as an undead creature. Some recorded examples of these are recorded in the Lich Motivations table below.

### LICH MOTIVATIONS

**d8 This lich desires...**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | To sustain its existence with a steady supply of souls.    |
| 2 | To track down and acquire a specific magic item of legend. |
| 3 | To survive to see a prophecy or future event come to pass. |
| 4 | To maintain control over a region.                         |
| 5 | To conquer a region, nation, or the world.                 |
| 6 | To serve a deity of undeath.                               |
| 7 | To become a new deity of undeath.                          |
| 8 | To accumulate or discover magical knowledge.               |

## THE LAIR

A powerful undead creature needs a suitable place to carry out its work, house the treasure it's accumulated over several lifetimes, and usually protect its phylactery to boot. A lich doesn't choose or construct its lair lightly—after all, it's meant to last an eternity.

### LAIR LOCATIONS

A lich tends to seclude itself from society and populated areas, and could go generations without speaking to another living being as it devotes its solitary existence to arcane studies. These undead don't need to prey on living

beings in quite the same way that vampires do, and if they require souls for their phylactery they can usually secure them by sending out minions or ensnaring an unfortunate traveler with their magic. There are exceptions to every rule, however, and some prefer to lair close to populated areas. This is especially true of a lich with ambitions of conquest or those that serve faction interests, such as Valindra Shadowmantle and other liches among the Red Wizards of Thay.





## LAIR LOCATIONS

### d8 This lair is...

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | A cavern system in the Underdark that even its most vicious predators avoid.            |
| 2 | An isolated castle or summer palace fallen into decay.                                  |
| 3 | A tower keep perched precariously near a mountain precipice.                            |
| 4 | The forgotten catacombs beneath a bustling town or city.                                |
| 5 | A remote and seemingly humble farmstead.  |
| 6 | A temple complex, now defiled.  |
| 7 | A darkened forest where undergrowth is shaped into labyrinthine pathways and clearings. |
| 8 | An unstable demiplane where various planar energies seep throughout the lair.           |

## COMMON LAIR DEFENSES

Other than the creatures that populate it (see below), most lich lairs share certain defensive features that discourage casual explorers and adventuring parties searching for the lich's phylactery.

**Inhospitable.** Less a result of design and more one of apathy, the lair is inimical to living beings as a result of its owner's undead nature. The lich has no need for food or water, no consideration for freezing cold or exhausting heat, not even a concern for sufficient, breathable air. In short, the lair rarely has most or any of the things living intruders need to survive unless the lich has living servants of their own.

**Soul Trapping.** Pervasive magic throughout the lair can trap the soul of anyone who dies within its confines, holding it captive for a time before feeding it to the lich's phylactery unless the creature is magically restored to life in time. This is advanced arcana, even for a lich, made more difficult if the phylactery is located outside the lair or on another plane entirely.

**Magical Defenses.** As masters of the arcane, a lich will carefully layer magical energies within their lair to prevent unwanted spells from intrusive enemy spellcasters. At the most basic level they prevent creatures from teleporting into the lair, scrying or locating it from elsewhere, or circumventing areas with tunneling or shaping spells. A lich is more likely to use magical traps than mechanical ones, unless they have a personal proclivity for traditional traps or skilled minions to maintain them.

**Confounding Complexity.** Unless the lich underwent its transformation very recently, it's lived long enough to see many adventurers seek out its lair. With the benefit of magic and experience, a lich reshapes its home to include more illusions, fake sanctums, and exhausting dead-ends over time. Even the positioning of its guards and traps can be a trick used to suggest adventurers are on the right path, forcing them to battle through a gauntlet of foes just to end up in an unremarkable, empty chamber.

## THE LIBRARY

Just as the undead gather around a lich as if by some unconscious affinity, the lich gathers knowledge and magic to itself seemingly by happenstance. Even a lich whose primary drive is not magical study often finds itself with a considerable selection of books, scrolls, and similar material over centuries. A lich's library, whether a single shelf of functional materials or a sprawling maze of dust-choked stacks, is a coveted and archetypal feature of the lair.

**Spellbooks and Scrolls.** Liches spent a lifetime as a mortal connected to the arcane, and now spend an endless span of lifetimes pursuing that study further. Copies of the lich's spellbook, the spellbooks of wizards on the fringes of theoretical magic, and even spellbooks taken as trophies and mementos from rivals or acolytes



## EVIL BOOK GENERATOR TABLE

d10	First Part	Second Part	Third Part (Optional)
1	Beyond the Fantasmagoric	Poisoned Knitting Needles	& Almanac
2	Melting Like Some	Moon Shadow	& Useful Hauntings
3	Lasting Evidence with	Orbital Sockets	& The Daily Gos
4	Deeper in the	Crystalline Mind Caves	& Daily Planner
5	Living Forever with	Cannibal Foci	& Other Wicked Wiles
6	A Beginner's Guide to	Celestial Cavities	& Other Likely Stories
7	Brewing Trouble with	Quivering Lips	& How to Bury Them All
8	Just Add	Cursed Nothings	& Other Undeadly Remedies
9	Newer Spine-Removing Spells,	Psychotropic Drugs	& Other Long-Forgotten Cases
10	Like Daughter, Like	Sobbing Sistren	& Other Soul-Reaping Stories

populate the library shelves. Scrolls lie unused on dusty shelves or scattered across writing desks.

**Books of Esoteric Evil.** Tomes collected from lich libraries include works discussing the most random, taboo, or downright bizarre subjects. The Evil Book Generator Table can be used to create titles that represent the stranger titles on a lich's shelves. Either roll 2d10 and create a title from the first two title columns, or 3d10 to create a three-part title with an entry from each column.

Make sure the book is more than a title: it should appear unique, even haunting. It may be the last thing an unwary adventurer ever sees. Examples include:

***The Taste of Blood Still Lingers:*** this mottled leather book is a deep maroon that turns bright burning red when held by human hands. The

flaking gold debossed title catches the light and makes characters' blood pump a little hard.

***Twisted Clumps of Your Hair:*** a Faerunian-flapped thin book that comes complete with a plaited bookmark. The memoirs of a wizard watching their partner become a lich years before they can join them in undeath.

## SERVANTS AND ALLIES

With centuries of knowledge or more at their disposal, a lich has little trouble gathering creatures to serve its will and defend its lair.

### UNDEAD

A lich has more necromantic magic at its disposal than *finger of death* or other recorded undead-creating spells. Their very nature demands the fealty of zombies, skeletons, and other unintelligent undead by the hundreds where a living necromancer could only hope to control a handful at a time. Many liches discover and even invent dark necromantic rituals that create even more powerful undead, like wights and wraiths. These intelligent undead aren't obedient by nature, but usually serve the lich out of self-preservation, shared goals, or evil desire.





## CONSTRUCTS

Animating weapons, armor, and statues with simple instructions are scarcely above a parlor trick for a lich with endless time on its hands. More powerful constructs, namely golems, are usually difficult to create due to the enormous expense of time and materials required. A lich can essentially ignore these barriers, and at least one area of its lair is likely protected by one or more golems. Flesh golems, though not as powerful as other types, are popular for their aesthetic.

## PLANAR CREATURES

Fiends, elementals, and other extraplanar beings could feasibly align themselves with a lich if they are convinced of mutual benefit. It's just as likely that the lich uses a *planar binding* spell to force such a creature to obey its will. A 9th-level *planar binding* keeps such a creature obedient for a year and a day, meaning even one lich can keep a number of extraplanar entities under its control. Some liches develop items or area binding effects that maintain the binding without the need for the lich to personally maintain it further, though these can be vulnerable to attack.

## HUMANOID SERVANTS

A lich's lair isn't usually safe for humanoids, much less livable. Unless it specifically craves the worship and fealty of humanoid servants, a lich won't do much, if anything, to make its lair hospitable. Those that manage to live in a lich's service are most often necromancers who one day hope to become liches themselves.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: LICHES

## DRACODEMILICH

Like any lich, on rare occasions a dracolich tires of its repetitive existence of feeding souls to the gem that acts as its phylactery, or simply forget to do so in the endless stretch of immortal time. These dracoliches become dracodemiliches, their already-rotted forms crumbling until only their skull remains. Like a humanoid lich, the dracodemilich can endure for eternity in this empty slumber, animating only to destroy those foolish enough to disturb its rest.

The dracodemilich is a deadlier opponent than a common demilich, as it can utilize the sheer size of its immense skull to harry foes. In addition, some instinctual memories of the dragon manifest as a necrotic breath weapon that pours forth from the mouth of the animated skull.

If a dracolich has chosen to become a dracodemilich of its own accord, it will often embed one or more gems into its skull, often doing so in the forehead and eye sockets, or replacing its teeth or horns with gemstone versions. It can choose to use these gems to capture souls of slain foes if it so chooses, restoring its form to that of a full dracolich once more.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing a legendary dracolich or dracodemilich's lair is warped by its magic, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Corpses within 6 miles of the lair slowly crawl up from graves or towards living creatures. They are not fully animated creatures and their movements can take hours to cover even short distances.

- Non-dragons within 1 mile of the lair must succeed on a saving throw against any dragon's Frightful Presence on sight, even if the dragon is not hostile towards it. If a dragon doesn't normally have the Frightful Presence trait, the DC for the saving throw is 14.
- Dragons must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw when finishing a long rest within 1 mile of the lair. On a failed save, the dragon gains one level of Exhaustion and is unable to travel further than 1 mile from the lair until it finishes its next long rest.
- Creatures that sleep within 1 mile of a dracodemilich's lair experience dreams that are vague memories from the creature's life as a living dragon.

## LAIR ACTIONS

A dracodemilich has access to the same lair actions as a **demilich**. A dracodemilich in its lair has a challenge rating of 22 (41,000 XP).



## DRACODEMILICH

Large undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 22 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 209 (22d10 + 88)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Con +11 Int +13 Wis +10 Cha +12

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Condition Immunities** charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 21 (33,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dracodemilich fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Turn Immunity.** The dracodemilich is immune to effects that turn undead.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10+6) piercing damage, plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

**Necrotic Breath (Recharge 6).** The dracodemilich exhales a necrotic shroud in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 63 (18d6) necrotic damage and gain one level of exhaustion. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw takes half as much damage and doesn't gain a level of exhaustion.

**Agonizing Roar (Recharge 6).** The dracodemilich emits a bloodcurdling howl. Each creature within 30 feet of the dracodemilich that can hear the howl must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or drop to 0 hit points. On a successful save, the creature is frightened until the end of its next turn.

**Life Drain.** The dracodemilich targets up to three creatures that it can see within 10 feet. Each target must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) necrotic damage, and the dracodemilich regains hit points equal to the total damage dealt to all targets.

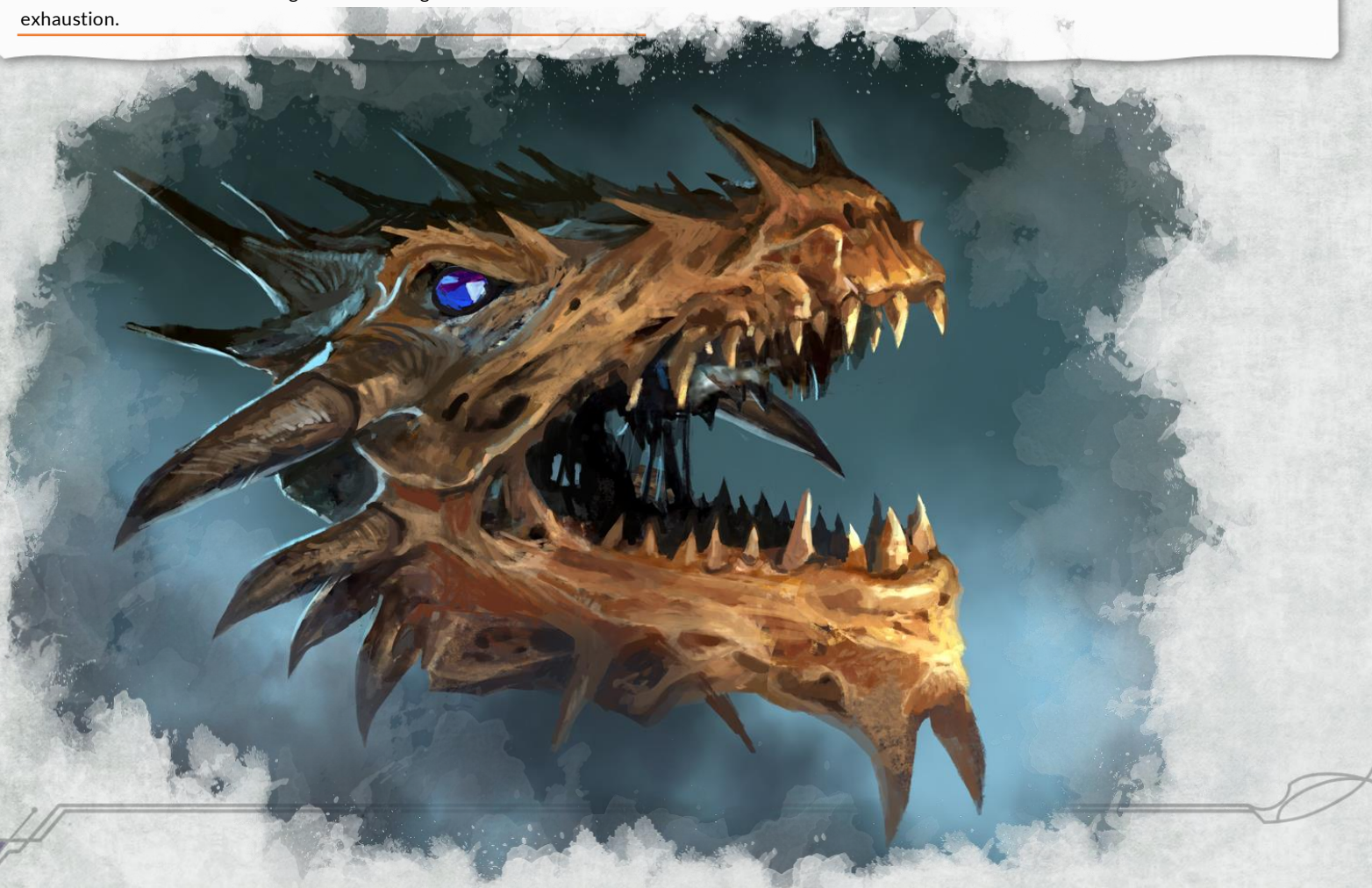
### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dracodemilich can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dracodemilich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Flight.** The dracodemilich flies up to its speed. It can choose to end this movement early by slamming into another creature of size Large or smaller; that creature must make a successful DC 21 Strength saving throw or take 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.

**Energy Drain (Costs 2 Actions).** Each creature within 20 feet of the dracodemilich must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's hit point maximum is reduced by 10 (3d6). If a creature's hit point maximum is reduced to 0 by this effect, the creature dies. A creature's hit point maximum can be restored with the greater restoration spell or similar magic.

**Shadow of the Wurm (Costs 3 Actions).** Each creature of the dracodemilich's choice within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become paralyzed until the end of its next turn.





# GRISGOL

To most, a grisgol looks like a magical freak accident from the depths of a wizard's library or a dragon's hoard. It is a shambling humanoid with bones of old staves and fingers made from broken wands; sometimes they lack hands entirely, their arms ending in the vicious blade or hefty head of a magical weapon. Its skin is a collage of scrolls and spellbook pages, its insides a roiling soup of coins and trinkets.

The grisgol's secret is that among its faded arcane objects and seemingly diminished trinkets hides the deadly source of its animation; a lich's phylactery. The phylactery hides amidst the other objects, controlling the grisgol's form. Grisgols are rarely found running rampant across the countryside; more often,

the phylactery's lich has enabled the object's ability to form a grisgol as a means of self-defense. It will house the phylactery in a sufficiently stocked vault, surrounded by scrolls, books, and items that the phylactery can summon to form its grisgol body.



## GRISGOL

Large construct, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 204 (24d10 + 72)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +8 Int +8 Wis +4 Cha +3

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from all weapons

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison, psychic

**Condition Immunities** charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Avoidance.** If the grisgol is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

**Lesser Antimagic Susceptibility.** If the grisgol starts its turn in the area of an antimagic field, it must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious until the start of its next turn. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the grisgol must make a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or take 2d10 force damage, plus an additional 1d10 force damage for each spell slot level above 3rd used to cast the spell.

**Magic Resistance.** The grisgol has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Scrollskin.** The grisgol can cast spells (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks) using the scrolls and spellbook pages covering its body. It can cast each spell once, requiring no spell slots or components to do so. Each spell can only be cast at its listed level. The grisgol has one 7th level spell, which is either forcecage or plane shift (self- only).

1st level: *color spray*, *detect magic*, *expeditious retreat*

2nd level: *levitate*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*, *ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level: *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *stinking cloud*

4th level: *banishment*, *dimension door*, *storm sphere*

5th level: *hold monster*

6th level: *disintegrate*, *Otiluke's freezing sphere*

7th level: random chance between *forcecage* or *plane shift* (self only)

## ACTIONS

**Flametongue Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

**Wand Hand.** The grisgol's body contains numerous broken and near-useless wands. It uses one of the following wand effects at random, rerolling the result if that selection has no charges remaining:

**Command (5 Charges).** The grisgol can expend one charge to *command* one creature within range to flee or grovel.

**Lightning Bolt (2 Charges).** The grisgol can expend one charge to cast *lightning bolt* as a 3rd-level spell.

**Magic Missile (6 Charges).** The grisgol can expend one charge to cast *magic missile* as a 1st-level spell.

**Polymorph (1 Charge).** The grisgol can expend 1 charge to cast *polymorph*.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The grisgol can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The grisgol regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Attack.** The grisgol makes one Flametongue Sword Attack against a target within reach.

**Scrollskin.** The grisgol casts one spell of 3rd level or lower using its Scrollskin feature.

**Sprayonnaise.** The grisgol targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC X Dexterity saving throw or be blinded by a torrent of mayonnaise. This blindness lasts until the end of the grisgol's next turn.

**Teleport.** The grisgol teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.







# CHAPTER EIGHT:

# LYCANTHROPE

*"The family was torn to pieces, I tell you. Bellies ripped open, entrails strewn about and gnawed upon. Bites upon their bodies leave no doubt it was a wolf...but the door was unlatched, not forced. What manner of wolf could open a door?"*

Were-creatures come in many strains, from hulking werebears to the savage werewolf. Those afflicted by lycanthropy find themselves compelled to act in accordance with their were-form's alignment. While some forms of lycanthropy actually trend towards neutral or good alignments, this section focuses its discussion to the strains that are driven by evil intent.

## CURSED

Lycanthropes are cursed individuals, a condition either inherited from a lycanthrope parent or inflicted on them by an inflicted creature's bite. Folk tale ensures that the lycanthropic affliction's relationship to the full moon is well-known, but the lycanthropes that embrace their curse learn to transform at will. Those that resist or are unaware of their condition rarely remember the bloody violence they inflict during the full moon as anything more than savage dreams.

## MALEVOLENT

Wereboar, wererat, and werewolf lycanthropy are the most widespread 'evil' types of lycanthropy. These strains don't simply reduce their cursed bearers to beast-like states: while transformed, these lycanthropes seek to

maximize the violence and cruelty they inflict on others with a gleeful depravity.

Those that fight against their curse only exhibit this malevolence when they're transformed, while those that embrace their condition possess this trait in all forms. Fledgeling monster hunters might ask what the difference is between the two: an experienced hunter knows that when a lycanthrope is killing innocents, there isn't one.

## SHAPECHANGER

Lycanthropes traditionally appear in three forms: their 'normal' humanoid form, the form of the beast associated with their lycanthropic type, and the twisted hybrid form that blends humanoid with beast. Most transformations from humanoid to either beast or hybrid form are reactive, occurring most often as a result of lunar cycles and occasionally in moments of great distress or the threat of physical harm. Lycanthropes who embrace their condition usually learn to change from humanoid to were-form at will, and to resist reactionary transformations.

## LYCANTHROPE PATHOLOGY

Many mistake lycanthropy for a disease, and many ill-informed adventurers have fallen prey to the affliction after confidently filling their packs with potions designed to battle sickness and toxins. Lycanthropy occupies a fairly unique niche as a magical curse that mimics a disease.



The three main means of contracting this curse are detailed below.

## INHERITED LYCANTHROPY

A child of one or more lycanthrope parents is likely to manifest the curse themselves, though it might not appear until adolescence or adulthood. Inherited lycanthropy is tenacious and can only be removed by a *wish* spell; those who seek to resist the evil of their curse are doomed to a lifetime struggle against the affliction or a lifelong quest to find magic powerful enough to remove it permanently.

Inherited lycanthropes who surrender to evil are usually those who have given up hope of fighting or removing their curse and have chosen to embrace it instead. Within a lycanthrope pack, children are taught to embrace their lycanthropy when it manifests and surrender themselves to the curse; they are not born evil but have been raised under a warped worldview.

## LYCANTHROPY FROM VIOLENCE

The best-known transference of lycanthropy is through violence, and specifically via a lycanthrope's bite. Most bite-induced lycanthropy is incidental and the result of instinctual fighting using the lycanthrope's natural weapons; some individuals and entire packs are cognizant enough to either refrain from biting victims or intentionally doing so.

Lycanthropes following deities such as Malar or other primal entities might spread their affliction as much as possible or only induct those victims they deem 'worthy.'

Fortunately, this most common means of spreading

lycanthropy is also the most readily cured. In almost all cases, the *remove curse* spell purges lycanthropy from a victim. In remote corners of the world where such magic isn't readily available, folk traditions suggest numerous rituals and potion remedies to remove the affliction, but the efficacy of these solutions are variable at best.

## MAGICAL LYCANTHROPY

The rites and spells necessary to spontaneously afflict creatures with lycanthropy are thankfully not common knowledge. Various rituals or incantations are still tucked away in ancient tomes, granted by evil deities, or passed on by oral tradition among lycanthrope pacts and cults. As with lycanthropy from bites, some seek to maliciously inflict lycanthropy on unsuspecting innocents, while others treat it as a gift that must be earned through devotion and service.

## LYCANTHROPIC TRAITS

Though werewolves, wereboars, and wererats have distinct traits, their lycanthropy share specific commonalities.

**Harmed by Silver.** Lycanthropes in general are immune to physical weapons unless those weapons are silvered; even powerful martial fighters will be unable to inflict lasting injury on these creatures unless they come adequately prepared.

**Retained Proficiencies.** Regardless of the origin of a creature's lycanthropy, they retain their existing knowledge and skills while in human form. Lycanthropes tend to retain these same proficiencies in hybrid form if they have embraced their lycanthropy, which is why some choose to arm and armor themselves; creatures in hybrid form that resist their change have been observed to use weapons on occasion, but it's





unclear how much of this is instinct from training as opposed to conscious use.

**Memory Loss.** Creatures unaware of their lycanthropy or who refuse to embrace it don't remember their transformations or actions while transformed as anything more than violent nightmares. Note that this memory loss is one-way; transformed lycanthropes retain all of their humanoid memories, albeit tainted by the bloodlust and rage of their current form. It's for this reason that lycanthropes have a tendency to hunt down personal enemies and loved ones with a level of cunning that belies their bestial appearance.

## IDENTIFYING A LYCANTHROPE

Lycanthrope attacks often go overlooked or poorly explained, especially in remote and underpopulated areas. Regardless of specific subtype, active lycanthropes tend to share common characteristics, from behaviors to physical signs.

### PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

Lycanthrope attacks demonstrate certain hallmarks:

**Bestial Savagery, Humanoid Intelligence.** The corpses a lycanthrope leaves behind appear to be the victims of animal attacks, especially when the lycanthrope hunts in its beast form. A closer inspection usually indicates some level of intelligence beyond that of a common beast, however. Lycanthropes display an instinctive shrewdness to access their victims or avoid detection, such as knowing the best door to enter or the least-guarded part of a town wall.

**Close to Home.** Lycanthropes in beast or hybrid form are driven to target loved ones and rivals. Over time, an evil were-beast leaves itself at the nexus of numerous attacks,

their position at the center of a web of victims making them easier and easier to identify. This pattern can be a false lead, as lycanthropes who embrace their condition intentionally target a pool of victims that will implicate others.

### PHYSICAL IDENTIFIERS

While a were-beast's hybrid form is fairly obvious, its other forms sometimes show certain characteristics indicative of the creature's cursed nature.

**Humanoid Signs, Folklore Suspensions.** A lycanthrope in humanoid form might display certain unusual characteristics, such as excessive body hair, exaggerated toenails or fingernails, or pronounced





canines (or similar dental changes relevant to wereboar or wererat forms). While these physical traits can be suggestive they are hardly conclusive, and many a poor soul with overly-thick eyebrows or unkempt nails have found themselves swept up in a town's paranoid attempts to oust a lycanthrope from their midst.

**Not Quite Beasts.** Lycanthropes in beast form sometimes display characteristics unusual for their type. In some cases, they're slightly larger than most beasts of their kind. They might possess features similar to their humanoid form, such as eye color, fully humanoid eyes, or hair reminiscent of the humanoid form's style or color.

## LYCANTHROPE PACKS

The tendency for lycanthropes to embrace violence and antisocial traits would suggest lycanthropes remain solitary creatures, but this is not the case. Lycanthropes of a shared type often feel an affinity for one another within the scope of a pack structure or a kind of family group.

### PACK STRUCTURE

Packs tend to follow certain organizational patterns, where an individual or small group command the other members. The details of pack structure tend to vary; it might be comprised of one or more types of lycanthrope, and may or may not incorporate beasts and non-lycanthrope creatures into their ranks.

### PACK LEADERSHIP

#### d4 This pack is led by a...

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | <b>Sole leader.</b> By brute force or cunning, there is one undisputed leader.  |
| 2 | <b>Duo.</b> Like the "alpha pair" in wolf packs, the group has two leaders. They don't always agree, but their unified word is law. |

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 3 | <b>Inner Circle.</b> A small group of three or more makes major decisions for the group.                              |
| 4 | <b>Specific Strain.</b> One type of lycanthrope dominates others; this pack will have at least two lycanthrope types. |

### PRIMARY LYCANTHROPE TYPE

#### d3 This pack's core lycanthropes are...

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1 | Werewolves. |
| 2 | Wererats.   |
| 3 | Wereboars.  |

### OTHER PACK MEMBERS

#### d6 The pack's other members include...

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Common Beasts.</b> Wolves, swarms of rats, or boars as appropriate.         |
| 2 | <b>Giant Beasts.</b> Dire wolves, giant rats, or giant boars as appropriate.   |
| 3 | <b>Other Lycanthropes.</b> Roll again on the d3 table for the secondary group. |
| 4 | <b>Humanoid Enforcers.</b> Bandits, thugs, knights, or veterans.               |
| 5 | <b>Cultists.</b> Cultists, fanatics, priests, etc.                             |
| 6 | <b>Multiple.</b> Roll 1d4 times on this table, ignoring results of 6.          |

### STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

#### d6 This pack also includes a...

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | <b>Hag.</b> A green hag, night hag, or annis hag lives with this pack.                                      |
| 2 | <b>Gnoll.</b> One or more gnolls live with the pack and share its savagery.                                 |
| 3 | <b>Minotaur.</b> A likely follower of Baphomet lives with this pack.  |
| 4 | <b>Warlock.</b> A warlock serving a fiend or Great Old One are likely.                                      |
| 5 | <b>Revenant.</b> A vengeful undead has aligned itself with this pack.                                       |
| 6 | <b>Monstrosity.</b> A monstrosity such as a chimera or mantichore lives with the pack in exchange for food. |



## PACK GOALS

Regardless of membership, packs that remain together in the long term are joined by shared goals and belief in to the pack's purpose. Examples of such goals are found below.

### PACK GOALS TABLE

#### d8 This pack's goals are...

- 1 **Survival.** The pack is actively hunted or expects to be hunted. They want to maintain their secrecy within society or remain undiscovered in the wilderness.
- 2 **Spread.** The pack wants to spread lycanthropy, to as many people as possible or anyone they deem worthy.
- 3 **Murder.** The pack delights in killing other living creatures for the sake of wanton violence.
- 4 **Hunting.** The pack wants to hunt dangerous beasts and monstrosities or conduct ritual hunts of intelligent humanoids.
- 5 **Crime.** The pack has criminal goals such as smuggling, robbery, and so on.
- 6 **Dominion.** The pack wants to formally control the surrounding area.
- 7 **Worship.** The pack worships Malar, Yeenoghu, or a similar entity and seeks to please them.
- 8 **Multiple.** The pack has multiple core goals; roll at least twice again on the table, ignoring a result of 8.

## PACK TROPHIES

Lycanthrope packs use the bodies of their victims to create grisly decorations and trinkets. In some cases these are nothing more than an expression of psychotic joy. For packs centered around deity or patron worship, they are displays meant to honor their chosen deity.

### PACK TROPHIES

#### d8 Gruesome Pack Trophy

- 1 **Lover's Wishbone.** The skeletal hands of two lovers now glued together in an eternal clasp.

- 2 **Lanterned Cave.** Their cave is lit by rainbowed organs of the dead, blown up and lit from the inside with fat candles made from... the same dead.
- 3 **Grotto Band.** The rib cages of the dead are used for stringing lyres and xylabones.
- 4 **Eyed Balls.** The eyeballs of the deceased are shellacked to prevent decomposition and used for in-door fetch.
- 5 **Sneaky Wall.** Shoes are hung by laces or hooks along a long wall for use as needed by the lycanthropes in human form.
- 6 **Coated.** Hair from victims is rethreaded into a big shaggy coat that the lycanthropes love to wear around town, it's threatening, it's sexy, humans can't quite put their finger on it...
- 7 **Menagerie Puppets.** Not only do some of the lycanthropes practice taxidermy, they are amateur puppeteers who string the fine limbs of all sorts of animals for pack entertainment.
- 8 **Spinal Tap.** The bones of the dead (especially the hands) are affixed and strong to a long leather strap worn down the spine. It makes the lycanthrope look a bit like a stegosaurus but much, much more sadistic.

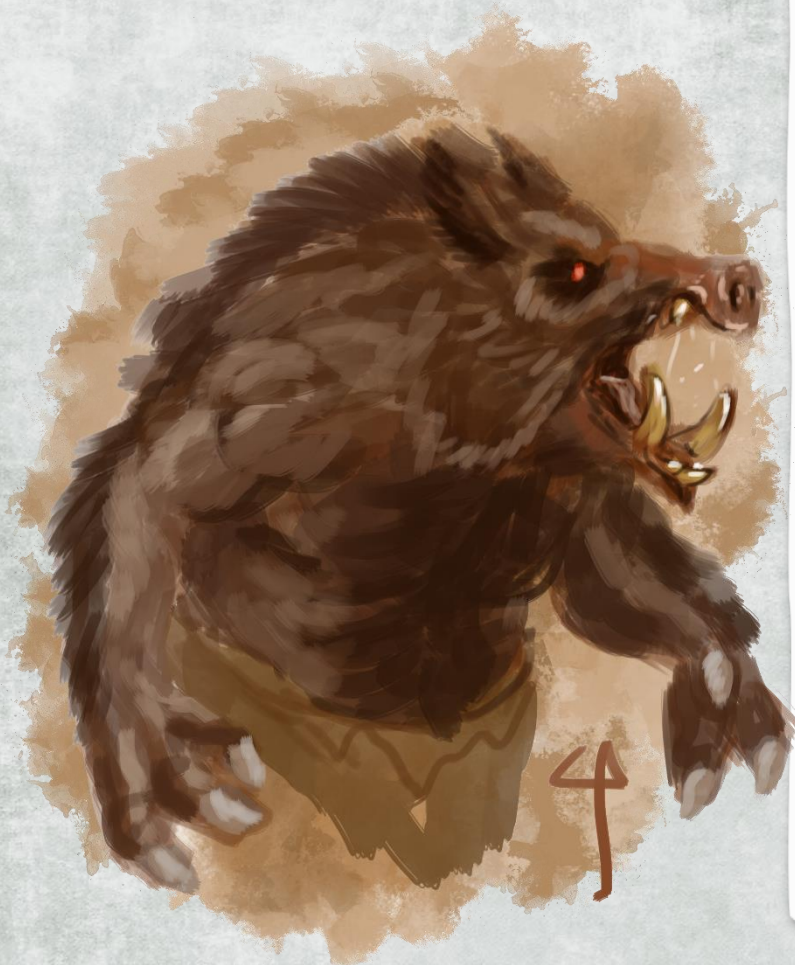




# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: LYCANTHROPE

## WEREBOAR BERSERKER

More powerful and aggressive than most of their kind, these wereboars fully embrace the stubborn anger that drives them to deadly feats of strength. They can usually be found living alone or as the head of a wereboar gang. In some cases they are valued bodyguards and enforcers within an organization containing multiple lycanthrope types, though these wereboars difficult to control once their blood is drawn.



### WEREBOAR BERSERKER

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 10 in Humanoid Form, 14 in Boar or Hybrid Form

**Hit Points** 97 (13d8 + 39)

**Speed** 30 ft., 40 ft. in boar form

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Damage Immunities** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common (can't speak in boar form)

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The wereboar can use its action to polymorph into a boar-humanoid hybrid or into a boar, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Charge (Boar or Hybrid Form Only).** If the wereboar moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with its tusks on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Hog Wild.** While the wereboar is below half its hit point maximum (48), it can attempt to shove a creature as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Relentless** (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the wereboar takes 21 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the wereboar can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** The wereboar makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its tusks.

**Maul.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Tusk.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereboar lycanthropy.



## WERERAT SLINKER

Medium humanoid (human, shapchanger), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 13 in humanoid form, 14 in rat or hybrid form

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8+10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Deception +2, Perception +3, Stealth +8

**Damage Immunities** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft. (rat or hybrid form only), passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common (can't speak in rat form)

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The wererat slinker can use its action to polymorph into a rat-humanoid hybrid or into a giant rat, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Assassinate.** During its first turn, the wererat slinker has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the wererat slinker scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

**Keen Smell.** The wererat slinker has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Relentless** (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the wereboar takes 21 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

**Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, the wererat slinker deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the wererat slinker that isn't incapacitated and the wererat slinker doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** The wererat makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

**Bite (Rat or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wererat lycanthropy.

**Shortsword (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

## WERERAT SLINKER

Among wererats, the slinkers are both the ones to watch out for and those hardest to keep an eye on. Wererat slinkers have mastered movement in the shadows and prefer to strike from hidden places against unsuspecting foes. They have a patience unusual for lycanthropes; they can remain still in place for hours, waiting for the most opportune moment to strike.





## WEREWOLF MOON SHAMAN

Medium humanoid (human, shapchanger), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 11 in humanoid form, 14 in wolf or hybrid form

**Hit Points** 91 (14d8 + 28)

**Speed** 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.

**Senses** passive Perception 19

**Languages** Common (can't speak in wolf form)

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The werewolf can use its action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Spellcasting.** The werewolf is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can only cast spells in its humanoid or hybrid form. The werewolf has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *infestation*, *primal savagery*, *thorn whip*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *entangle*, *longstrider*

2nd level (3 slots): *beast sense*, *heat metal*, *hold person*, *spike growth*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals* (wolves or dire wolves only), *dispel magic*

4th level (1 slot): *blight*

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The werewolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

### ACTIONS

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

## WEREWOLF MOON SHAMAN

As a werewolf embraces its bloody and primal urges, a handful discover this corrupted connection to nature grants them significant magical talent. Those that nurture it become known as moon shamans, carving out a powerful niche in a lycanthrope pack where they command the amount of respect and fear they seek.

**Druidic Power.** Werewolf shamans cast spells from the druid spell list. A number of these shamans were burgeoning druids before being afflicted with lycanthropy. Some were turned to evil by their werewolf transformation and retained their spells, while others became lycanthropes as part of their dedicated path to evil.

**Advisors and Spiritual Leaders.** Within the structure of a pack, shamans are usually the leaders, valued seconds, or part of a small controlling group. Packs that worship evil deities or similar entities are more likely to elevate shamans to a position of status. In larger groups a shaman can be the pack leader's greatest rival as they use magic and faith to gather support.



# WEREWOLF PACK LEADER

In cases where packs of werewolves have joined together, the pack often succumb to infighting or savagery as the chaotic nature of the wolves clash with one another. Sometimes, this infighting is enough to cause the pack to split apart, forcing the werewolves to spread far and wide in search for their own territory. In other cases, where one member of the pack beats the rival werewolves for dominance, they take on the mantle of alpha among the pack of lupine lycanthropes.

**Organized Destruction.** Under the leadership of an alpha, the pack becomes even more dangerous than it was previously. Though the individual werewolf is still mostly unable to control their urges, the pack leader's presence forces them to accept a certain amount of order. Under the rule of the alpha, the werewolves can turn from savage beasts to a union of obedient, savage killers.

## WEREWOLF PACK LEADER

Medium humanoid (human, shapchanger), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 in humanoid form, 14 in wolf or hybrid form

**Hit Points** 78 (12d8 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Con +5

**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common (can't speak in wolf form)

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The werewolf can use its action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Control of the Pack.** As a bonus action, the werewolf pack leader targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see or hear the werewolf pack leader, the target can use its reaction to move up to half its movement speed without provoking opportunity attacks and make one melee attack.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The werewolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** The werewolf pack leader makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or spear.

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Alpha's Howl (Recharges on a short or long rest) (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only).** The werewolf pack leader lets out a long howl which is audible out to a range of 3 miles if you are a werewolf and 500 feet if you are not. Any werewolf that can hear the howl and who is an ally of the werewolf pack leader is frenzied for the next minute. While frenzied, a werewolf gains 1d6 temporary hit points at the beginning of each of their turns and adds a 1d4 to any attack it makes. The frenzy ends early on a creature if it is subjected to the *calm emotions* spell or if the werewolf pack leader is killed or incapacitated.



# CHAPTER NINE:

# MALEVOLENT SPIRITS

*"Did you hear something? No, there's no one else in the house. Look, if you chalk up every slamming door to a supernatural appearance you'll never have a moment's pea—oh wait, no, that's definitely a ghost, it's rearranged all the cutlery into a frowny face."*

Memories. This is all one really needs to keep in mind when tackling spirits, geists and other ethereal remnants of mortality: ghosts are pure memory, unable to release their hold on the world and pass on to the next life. Ghosts congregate in populated areas, as any living creature may produce a ghost upon their death. This is most likely in cases where the dead creature has unfinished business on the Material Plane.

## TRAPPED

Creatures that produce ghosts are united by a single salient trait - they are tied to the world by emotion. The majority of the time, this is a negative emotion such as hate, grief or revenge, but in some fringe cases spirits have been said to linger out of love, duty or sacrifice. Either way, a ghost that becomes tethered to the material world is often unable to leave without the intercession of the living in some fashion. This intervention could take the form of resolving their earthly ties, or simply in banishing them with steel and magic.

Ghosts trapped on the Material Plane are often confined to a small area around the site of their death - the size of this area varies with the power of the ghost, and how heavily the influence of the Shadowfell lies over the location. As the continued presence of a ghost aligns a place more closely with the Shadowfell by osmosis, a ghost's area of influence often becomes larger the longer they remain.

## VOLATILE

As a ghost lingers on the Material Plane, several slow changes begin to affect them. It is not nature's intent for a spirit to cling to the Material Plane without a body, and soon enough the fringe memories and nuance of the ghost's personality begin to fade. In contrast, the ghost's emotional bond or tie that keeps them bound to the world of the living intensifies in nature. This results in a slow but steady increase in the ghosts irrationality, eventually reducing it to a creature of pure id, unable to vocalize the source of its distress and resulting in attacks on living creatures unfortunate enough to encounter it. It is often the case that ghosts grow more powerful as they age, but it is impossible to say whether this is a result of their increasing emotional ties to their location, or simply the result of acclimatization to the power of their new form.

## ELUSIVE

Ghosts are perhaps (despite their ubiquity) one of the most elusive foes a monster hunter might have to face. Their ability to travel into the Border Ethereal at will makes it difficult to pin them down long enough to resolve their tether or exorcise them. In addition, their ability to fly and travel through solid objects in the material plane makes them troublesome prey even at the best of times.



## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Central to a ghost's existence is the duty, calling or vengeful impulse that traps them in the material plane. Some ghosts have more than other tether, but for the most part all lesser ghosts are driven a singular need. This need always relates to the ghost's life, usually in the lead up to their death.

### MOVING ON

Though is it possible to banish with violence or magic the same way one might exorcise any other creature of the night, it is just as possible (and sometimes easier) to help a ghost drift off to the next life without destroying them, usually by helping them reach closure on their unfinished business. A ghost that has its emotional tether disposed of in this manner often simply passes on to the next life between one moment and the next, freed from the shackles that bound them to the earth.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS TABLE

**d8 The ghost's unfinished business is...**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | <b>Revenge.</b> I was wronged, and I want justice.  |
| 2 | <b>Question.</b> There is a question burning in my soul and I cannot rest until I know the answer.  |
| 3 | <b>Desecration.</b> My mortal remains have been tampered with. Until they are restored to their tomb, I cannot leave.                         |
| 4 | <b>Secret.</b> I had a dreadful secret in life, and I am doomed to remain here until I can pass it on to someone worthy.                      |
| 5 | <b>Fear.</b> I was a bad person in life, and I genuinely fear what awaits me in the afterlife. I can only pass on if this fear is alleviated. |
| 6 | <b>Family.</b> I have friends or family who don't know what happened to me. I   |

can't pass on until I know they've been informed.

7 **Magic.** I am bound here by a spell, or perhaps a curse. Only breaking it can set me free.

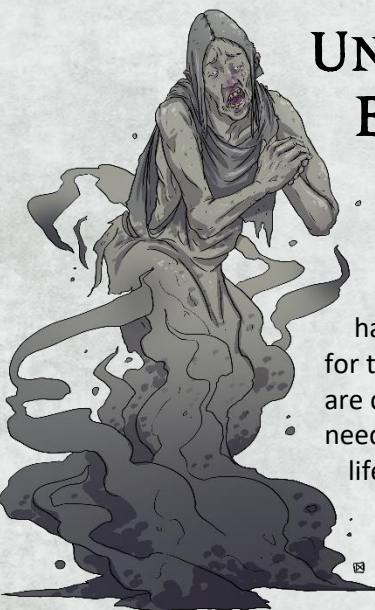
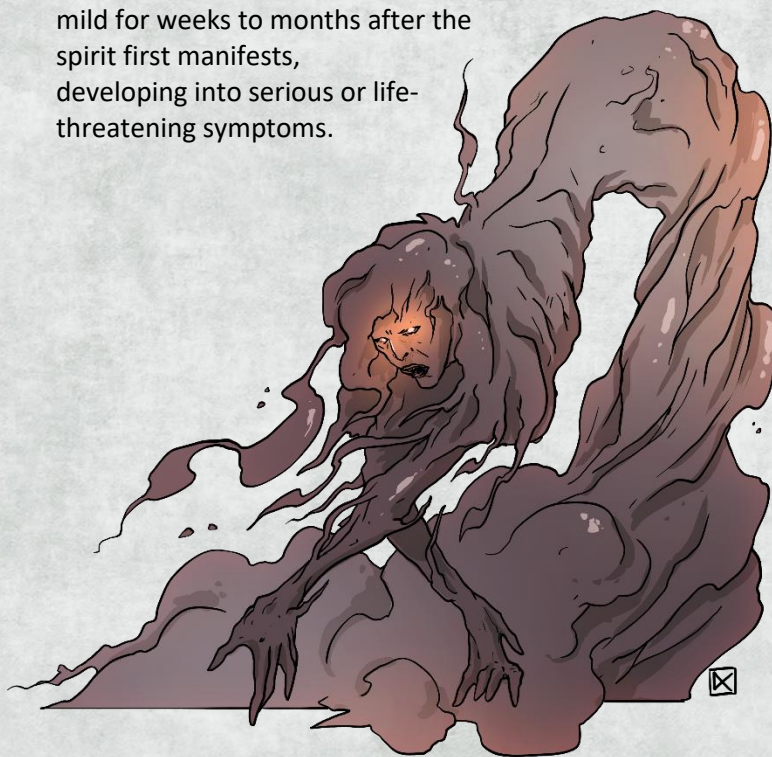
8 **Legacy.** There's a person, institution or object I must protect. I can only pass on when I know it is in safe hands.

## BOUND

A ghost usually manifests between one and seven days after the death of the individual, and the location in which they died becomes their prison. A ghost can travel farther away from the location of their death depending on their strength, presuming that they are not confined by magic.

## SPECTRAL PHENOMENA

When a ghost manifests, strange phenomena are often witnessed around the location in which they reside. These phenomena are often strange or unwelcome, but in their early stages can be mistaken for hallucinations, bizarre weather or sickness. Phenomena can remain mild for weeks to months after the spirit first manifests, developing into serious or life-threatening symptoms.







SPECTRAL PHENOMENA TABLE

D6 (choose two)	Early Stages	Median Stages	Late Stages
1	<i>Chill.</i> The location has odd cold spots regardless of the weather.	The chill is ever-present throughout the location, and makes the elderly sick.	The chill is biting, and unseen winds blow through corridors and through stone.
2	<i>Voices.</i> Sometimes, faint babbling can be heard in quiet moments at the edge of your hearing.	Voices chatter to each other at night, indistinct burbling that vanishes when approached.	A voice speaks to creatures who enter the area, mocking and tormenting anyone who dares come near.
3	<i>Tampering.</i> Small objects move themselves around and become lost.	Important objects disappear at pivotal moments. Doors slam and open by themselves.	Rooms seem to switch places and space contracts and expands randomly.
4	<i>Reflections.</i> Sometimes people catch sight of something odd in mirrors, paintings or other artwork.	The eyes on portraits follow onlookers around the room. Mirrors show reflections that quickly fade and reappear.	Reflections are accompanied by images of the dead. Portraits and statues move whenever no one is looking at them.
5	<i>Dreams.</i> Creatures nearby don't sleep well, and often wake up feeling tired.	Creatures nearby have frequent nightmares featuring the dead.	Creatures that sleep nearby are terrorized and often possessed in their sleep.
6	<i>Ambience.</i> Lights flicker often, and candles sometimes go out for no reason.	Light sources give out dim light, and it seems to get darker here an hour before it does elsewhere.	Light sources last half as long and snuff themselves out randomly.



# HAUNTED OBJECTS

Spirits often connect with physical objects to create haunted phenomena. These effects can be temporary, but sometimes certain objects

become iconic to a ghost's haunting. The nature of a haunted object phenomenon can be clues to a ghost's driving emotion or the unfinished business that keeps it on this plane.

## HAUNTED OBJECTS TABLE

### d8 Haunted Object

- 1 **Death's Lady Music Box.** A glimmering wooden box with ribboning splits in it filled with bone and gold. When opened, a small dark-winged hooded figure stands erect and spins slowly flapping its wings.  
  
**Effect:** The music box plays the macabre (or delightful!) last few minutes of audio and noise from the spirit's former life. Useful in an investigation, devastating in others.
- 2 **A Chipped Champagne Glass.** No one remembers ordering champagne but it's here, crisp and cold and begging to be toasted.  
  
**Effect:** People who pick up the champagne glass think they see a jewel or engagement ring inside, drinking the champagne reveals nothing and slowly turns to hot blood in their mouth.
- 3 **Creaky Ladder.** This cherry wood ladder with metal efreeti silhouette inlay in the steps.  
  
**Effect:** When the third step is hit with the foot, the ladder starts to shake, moan and the slats flatten so the climber slides down. The efreeti silhouettes begin to heat up so the climber cannot hold in either.
- 4 **Dress of Ages.** This lace dress is crimson and black with gold floral accents for a pop of color. The length is perfect, whatever the wearer feels is best.  
  
**Effect:** When worn, the dress begins to age, wither and unravel over the course of eight hours. The person wearing it feels as if they have lost a bit of the spark of life, when in fact they have lost a day of their lifespan for each hour the dress is worn.
- 5 **Bedazzled Beehive:** Glinting in the sunlight, this shimmering beehive nearly draws in the whole party. Inside there is no honey, merely empty honeycombs and dead drones awakened by the presence of new people.  
  
**Effect:** If stung by one of these spectral bees, the victim can see a vision of their future death.
- 6 **The Barren Book:** A weighty navy leather-bound tome that catches the eye whether it is on a shelf or piled atop a desk.  
  
**Effect:** If the character flips past the first page, they slowly get absorbed in the book, unable to move on their own accord. To anyone else, the pages appear empty. The character will stand there forever, wasting away unless the group can figure out a way to properly distract the cursed character. A successful DC 15 Wisdom check would sort it out as well.
- 7 **Borek of Despair (aka Spanakopita, Pastel, Meatpie, Empanada etc):** This flaky pastry looks so delicious and smells so enticing... everyone must want a bite!  
  
**Effect:** What appears to be a most delicious pastry ends up being an amalgam for the beefiest member of the living party. If a character bites off a third of this pastry, the member with the highest total hit points loses a third of their hit points and so on, until hopefully someone notices. The character partaking enjoys 10 temporary hit points.
- 8 **Hat of Misgiving:** This straw and ribbon number is perfect for keeping the sun out of your face... forever.  
  
**Effect:** Once affixed on someone's head, this hat is very hard to remove. It would take a Dexterity DC 18 to remove the hat or Wisdom DC 18 to trick it off by other means.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: SPIRITS

## HAUNTER

The undead known as haunters are particularly dangerous to mortal creatures. Unlike common ghosts, haunters will possess any nearby creature multiple times in rapid succession for only a few moments at a time, stealing more and more of their victims' life force until they're surrounded by lifeless husks.



### HAUNTER

Medium undead, any alignment

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 81 (18d8)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Wis +5, Cha +8

**Damage Resistances** acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** any languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Ethereal Sight.** The ghost can see 120 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

**Incorporeal Movement.** The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Momentary Possession.** As a bonus action, the haunter forces each creature within 30 feet of it to make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. The haunter then selects any one creature that failed its saving throw, if any, to possess; the haunter then disappears. On the possessed creature's turn, the haunter can use its reaction to incapacitate the possessed creature and take control of its body. The haunter now controls the target's body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The haunter can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access

to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies. The haunter gains access to its withering touch attack while it possesses a creature.

The possession lasts for 1 minute or until the haunter ends it as a bonus action. The possession ends early if the body drops to 0 hit points or the haunter is turned or forced out by an effect like the dispel evil and good spell. When the possession ends, the haunter reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 ft. of the body.

**Life Eater.** When the haunter's possession of a creature ends, it chooses one of the following effects:

- The haunter gains 3d10 temporary hit points.
- The possessed creature takes 11 (2d10) psychic damage as the possession ends.
- The possessed creature must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

If the haunter's possession of a creature is ended against the haunter's will, the number of temporary hit points gained or psychic damage inflicted is halved, and a creature's saving throw to prevent exhaustion is made with advantage.

### ACTIONS

**Withering Touch.** *Melee weapon attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) necrotic damage. The haunter can only use this attack through the body of a possessed creature.

**Etherealness.** The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The haunter can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The haunter regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Etherealness.** The haunter uses its Etherealness ability.

**Puppeted Action.** The haunter moves its possessed creature up to half its speed and makes one Withering Touch attack.

**Momentary Possession (Costs 2 Actions).** The haunter uses its Momentary Possession ability.



# KERES

Horrendous humanoid spirits that plague battlefields and anywhere else where the dying can be found, keres are predatory, life-eating ghosts from the Ethereal Plane.

**Eaters of the Dying.** Keres feast upon the energy of creatures on the brink of death, sustained by stealing the final breaths of those still clinging to life. When already-dying victims aren't forthcoming, keres are happy to create them with their sharp claws and gnashing teeth.

**Vassals and Parasites.** Though spectral creatures, keres can be found in service to both gods and devils alike. Deities of war send forth keres to feast upon the lives of dying enemy combatants; fiends send them to sow terror in battle. Unbound keres are scavengers, attacking unwary mortals in the dark or lurking in places of death and darkness, ever-hungry for a new meal.



## KERES

Medium undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 16 (breastplate)

**Hit Points** 31 (7d8)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The keres can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Consume Life.** As a bonus action, the keres can target one creature it can see within 5 feet of it that has 0 hit points and is still alive. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against this magic or die. If the target dies, the keres regains 13 (3d8) hit points.

**Bloodthirsty.** The keres deals an additional 1d4 damage each attack made against a creature below its hit point maximum (included in the attack).

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The keres makes two attacks with its claws. If both attacks hit the same target, the keres can make one bite attack against the same target as a bonus action.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 9 (1d6+1d4+3) piercing damage if the target is below its hit point maximum.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (2d4+3)







# CHAPTER TEN:

# MUMMIES

*"The treasure clattered to the ground as it slid between Rennaut's rapidly withering fingers. As the wrapped, rotted thing threw his corpse to the ground I understood: this was no mindlessly violent zombie driven to wander and kill, or a predatory vampire seeking fresh blood. This place was its home and we the transgressors."*

Bound. Buried. Cursed. There is a unique quality to mummies not found among other corporeal undead, something that grants them a particular niche in the undead ranks. Base undead are feral, vampires a kind of intelligent predator; mummies align most closely with the lich, sharing a kind of undead immortality brought on by magic. However, what separates the mummy from the lich is the fact that a lich's transformation is generally a long, intentional process executed by the lich themselves; mummies are created by other actors who often seek to impose cursed undeath for their own reasons.

## UNENDING

Most mummies are destroyed when their bodies are sufficiently damaged, the rotted vessel unable to house their comparatively weak curse any longer. More powerful mummies are more tenacious, reforming as part of a tomb's defensive magic or more often due to the survival of their phylactery-esque canopic jars. Unlike a lich, these mummies don't need souls to maintain their strength; they remain as potent from the day they rise to the end of the world.

## UNCHANGING

Though mummies can retain vestiges of their former intelligence, they do not continue to learn the way liches do. The full extent of their powers, including their access to any spells, is almost always cemented at their creation and is partially defined by the nature of the curse that created them. Mummies who are turned willingly are more likely to retain remnants of their intelligence, former knowledge, and personality.

## ROTTED

Mummies are creatures of a magical disease; most carry "mummy rot," a withering effect that slowly drains victims of their vitality. Many victims have survived their initial encounter with the cursed undead only to die days later as the lasting effects of the curse continue to plague them. Powerful mummies, or those with some measure of spellcasting, often exhibit powers associated with blight, decay, and plague.

## THE MUMMY'S CURSE

Central to a mummy's existence is their curse, the necromantic enchantment that animates them and often defines their behavior. Though the reason for the curse, the way it comes to inhabit a particular corpse, and the parameters of autonomy or programmed behavior vary greatly, the end result is always similar.



## THE PUNISHED

The traditional mummy is a criminal of some kind, an individual punished beyond death for breaking a law or violating an ancient taboo. Powerful mummies are sometimes created from creatures in this category, though they are usually the absolute worst offenders or were prominent figures in life—the society’s way of making an example to dissuade others from making the same violations. When a notable figure is subjected to a mummy’s curse, a particularly cruel or unforgiving society might turn their associates, servants, or co-conspirators into these less potent undead.

### MUMMY ORIGIN TABLE

**d8 The creature became a mummy because of...**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Murder.</b> They killed an important political or religious figure.   |
| 2 | <b>Heresy.</b> They mistakenly or intentionally espoused sacrilegious beliefs.   |
| 3 | <b>Adultery.</b> They were involved in an affair and were cursed at the behest of a jealous lover or spouse.   |
| 4 | <b>Dark Magic.</b> They practiced evil magic and were either entombed as a punishment or as part of their own designs.   |
| 5 | <b>Mistaken Identity.</b> The curse was intended for someone else; the victim took the place of the real culprit (Roll again for the intended target’s crime). |
| 6 | <b>Innocence.</b> Their body was conveniently available or they were sacrificed as part of a ritual requiring an innocent victim.                              |
| 7 | <b>Importance.</b> They were an important figure who now rise to defend the peace of their tomb or some notable site.  |
| 8 | <b>Betrayal.</b> They committed treason or were the victim of betrayal.  |

## THE WILLING

As horrifying a punishment being turned into a mummy might be for some, others welcome the transformation. The cults of death gods or masters of undeath, such as Kiaransalee, Shar, and Orcus sometimes welcome the mummy’s curse as a ‘transcendence’ in service to their dark master. Their transformation serves their cause by protecting important tombs and other unholy places, or preserves their accumulated knowledge in a new undead form.





## CANOPIC JARS

A mummy's organs are usually removed as part of the mummification process. The jar containing a mummy lord's heart is particularly important, as the mummy continues to reform as long as its heart is intact.

### CANOPIC JAR TABLE

#### d8 This container is...

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | A tapered rectangle of limestone, finely etched with lettering that describes the mummy's transgressions.   |
| 2 | A jar of transparent crystal. The mummy's withered heart can be seen slowly beating inside.   |
| 3 | A vessel of sandstone. It constantly yields and seems to crumble in the grasp of anyone holding it, but never breaks.   |
| 4 | A canvas bag that pulses and shifts in place. Tiny insect or arachnid legs are constantly probing out of the bag through the weave of the canvas material, though the bag only contains the mummy's heart.  |
| 5 | The vessel is made from the mummy's stomach and bound closed with its intestines. The organs are still slick and warm to the touch.   |
| 6 | A stoneware jar. Its lid has a painted head depicting the mummy's appearance in life.   |
| 7 | The vessel's body is in the form of a humanoid, the face depicting an impression of agony. The vessel has two handles depicting an angelic celestial and a devilish fiend seemingly pulling at the humanoid between them.   |
| 8 | The jar is made of pale opal and in the shape of an egg. A dragon statuette is curled protectively around the egg-shaped body of the jar. The dragon's material changes every 24 hours between various metals and precious stones to resemble different dragon types. |



## CURSED TRANSGRESSORS

The magic that animates the mummy and affects the environment of its tomb also lashes out at those foolish enough to violate its resting place. Mummy Rot is shared by most of these withered undead, but “the mummy’s curse” is a broad term for the various afflictions that haunt tomb-robbers long after they have left the mummy’s domain. Oftentimes these curses manifest as direct afflictions of the body and are dismissed by skeptics as paranoia; in other instances, the ‘curses’ are true supernatural events or improbable twists of fate that plague the bearer until stolen treasure is returned, a wrong made right, or the victim is destroyed.



**Curse of Insects.** One recorded script of this curse reads in part: "...Velsharoon will bring rot to their table, and food brought to their lips will become writhing worms in their mouth." After the bearer of this curse leaves the mummy's tomb, there is a 10 percent chance that the food they prepare during a short or long rest becomes a **swarm of insects**, and any food they attempt to consume for the rest of that day becomes inedible writhing worms. This chance increases by an additional 10 percent each day.

**Curse of Nightmares.** When the bearer of this curse takes a long rest they are gripped by horrifying visions of the mummy. The curse-bearer regains no expended Hit Dice and has only a 50 percent chance of recovering class-related features like spell slots and abilities. While the cursed creature is sleeping or in a trance as part of the long rest, they cannot be roused unless they take damage or another creature uses an action to shake or slap them awake.

**Curse of Paranoia.** The bearer of this curse becomes suspicious of everyone and everything around them. They feel compelled to make Wisdom (Insight) checks when conversing with others; regardless of the result, they are usually convinced that the target of their suspicions is withholding the truth or even actively plotting against them. Creatures afflicted by this curse also feel a need to search even familiar areas for traps and are constantly under the belief that they are being watched or followed.

**Curse of Pursuit.** An avatar of the mummy manifests to relentlessly attack the bearer of this curse, often seen as glimpses in crowded streets and shadowy corners leading up to an attack. The avatar has the statistics of the mummy that created the curse, but destroying the avatar has no effect on the mummy's actual body. The avatar can appear at any time. After the avatar is destroyed, it reappears within 2d4 days-1 day for each time it has manifested. Eventually the curse-bearer is relentlessly

pursued by an avatar that takes 1d4 hours to regenerate when destroyed.

## COMBATTING THE CURSE

In some cases, the *remove curse* spell can end minor curses from the tombs of lesser mummies. More often the evil magic of the curse is so potent that the *remove curse* spell provides only temporary relief or has no effect at all. According to the stories and testimony surrounding confirmed curses, there are certain avenues to end mummy curses for good:

**Return Stolen Treasure.** The most common mummy curse results from the theft of the interred's valued hoard. However, returning the goods can be a challenge for greedy tomb-robbers who have already sold pieces to one or more vendors. Some treasure-curses revolve around a specific prized item, and the most powerful and malevolent of these hexes continue to plague the owner of plundered items even after they fence the artifacts.

**Re-seal and Repair.** The act of breaching the tomb or damaging aspects of its internal structure can bring the mummy's wrath. Finding a way to repair damaged areas and seal the tomb back up can, in rare instances, be enough to satisfy its denizen.

**Destroy the Mummy.** An obvious, if not easy, solution. Clearing the tomb entirely of its mummified undead is usually less straightforward than it seems, as these locations will incorporate hidden chambers and cleverly-hidden secondary tombs as a result, and accessing the canopic jars of more powerful mummies will be a deadly challenge in and of itself.

**Die.** Most, but not all, mummy curses are satisfied with the transgressor's death. The worst curses from the most powerful mummy lords aren't 'fooled' by the plans of clever adventurers, and will resume if the curse-bearer is magically returned to life.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: MUMMIES

## BOG MUMMY

Lights dance across the misty moor, leading lost travelers further astray. Through the veil of fog emerges a withered humanoid form, its skin shrunk to blackened leather. Putrid water seeps from ancient wounds on the creature's body as it lurches forward, weapon in hand.

These are the bog mummies, undead preserved by the peat bogs and swamps they inhabit. Instead of being bathed in precious oils, wrapped in ensorcelled cloth, and sealed in a sarcophagus within a laboriously-constructed tomb, bog mummies are interred by the marshland.



### BOG MUMMY

Medium undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural arm or)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d8 + 44)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Int +6, Wis +3

**Skills** Athletics +7, History +6, Perception +3, Religion +6

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** Truesight darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Moor Walker.** The bog mummy ignores difficult terrain, and creatures of the bog mummy's choice that it can see treat the area within 10 feet of the bog mummy as magical difficult terrain.

**Witch's Strike.** When the bog mummy hits a creature with a weapon attack on its turn and that creature is affected by the bog mummy's *witch bolt* spell, the bog mummy can inflict its *witch bolt* spell against it as part of the same action.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The bog mummy's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*, *thorn whip*, *true strike*

3/day each: *command*, *faerie fire*, *witch bolt*

1/day each: *branding smite*, *wrathful smite*

**Magic Resistance.** The bog mummy has advantage on saving throws made against spells and other magical effects.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The bog mummy makes two attacks with its claymore.

**Claymore.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Faerie Lights (Recharges After a Short or Long Rest).** The bog mummy summons 1d4 *will-o'-wisps*, which appear in unoccupied spaces of its choice within 30 feet of it. The wisps act on the bog mummy's turn.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The bog mummy can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The bog mummy regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Attack.** The bog mummy makes one claymore attack.

**Shamble.** The bog mummy moves up to its speed. If it moves no more than half its speed, it doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

**Dead Regent's Challenge.** The bog mummy casts *true strike* against a target within range. The attack roll that consumes this cantrip scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. If the target is affected by the bog mummy's *witch bolt* spell, the attack scores a critical hit on a roll of 18, 19, or 20.



**Warrior-Kings and Sacrifices.** Many bog mummies bear open wounds from their deaths; they are created when killed as part of a ritual sacrifice. Great conquering kings seeking life beyond death subject themselves to these rituals, or communities choose sacrifices to sate some fey or eldritch power pervading the region. These sacrifices can rise or become unearthed centuries later, ready to claim dominion over the lands where they've slumbered in undeath.

Bog-mummies don't always have canopic jars, or any organs removed at all; killing them permanently might require sanctifying the region where they were sacrificed or slaying them with the same kind of ritual weapon that was used to create them.

**Creatures of the Bog.** Bog mummies are found in the moors and marshes of the world, and sometimes ally themselves with other creatures in these regions for their own schemes. They have a natural affinity for will-o'-wisp and can even summon these spirits to do their bidding; they can also be found commanding skeletons, zombies, and 'lesser' undead found in these environs.

## MUMMY LORD (VARIANTS)

The dreaded mummy lord as presented in the *Monster Manual* is an example of one created through a divine lens; the curse's victim or its creators are likely high priests and powerful clerics, imparting similarly divine spells to their cursed creation. A number of equally powerful varieties have been recorded, some of them with different magical abilities or an emphasis on martial prowess.

### MUMMY LORD SORCERER

Individuals that manifest significant arcane talent often find themselves the subject of curiosity. Among the lineage of rulers, ruling families, and selective priesthoods, it can be used as a means and justification for retaining

power. Those interred with such honor or damnation retain those powers in death, wielding the power that manifested in their blood long after their blood has dried to dust.

This mummy lord variant has a Wisdom score of 16 (+3) and a Charisma score of 18 (+4).

**Spellcasting.** The mummy lord is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *control flames, dancing lights, fire bolt, infestation, mage hand, minor illusion*  
 1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, chaos bolt, disguise self*  
 2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, levitate*  
 3rd level (3 slots): *erupting earth, lightning bolt*  
 4th level (3 slots): *dimension door, polymorph*  
 5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold*  
 6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*





## MUMMY LORD (WARLOCK)

Other than fallen priests, some mummy lords are former living servants of powerful patron entities. These mummy lords are members of doomsday cults or similar evil organizations, cursed and imprisoned for their service to scheming fiends or alien creatures from the Far Realm, or willingly interred by eldritch magic to serve their patron beyond death.

This mummy lord variant has a Wisdom score of 16 (+3) and a Charisma score of 18 (+4).

**Spellcasting.** The mummy lord is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast* (2 beams, +4 to each damage roll), *mage hand* 1st-5th level (2 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys*, *arms of Hadar*, *banishment*, *blight*, *dimension door*, *hex*, *hold monster*, *hunger of Hadar*, *scrying*, *vampiric touch*

**Patron Spells.** If the former warlock served a particular kind of entity, you can replace any of its known spells with spells granted by its patron type, as shown on that patron's expanded spell list in either the *Player's Handbook* or *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

## MUMMY LORD (WARRIOR)

In rare instances, a powerful mummy doesn't exhibit the same degree of magical aptitude as others. These mummies were likely

legendary warriors in their day, or conquering kings interred with binding curses that would allow them to one day rise and do battle once again.

A mummy lord warrior wields a sickle and has a challenge rating of 13 (10,000 XP) and the following changes to its statistics:

**Spellcasting.** The mummy lord warrior loses the mummy lord's spellcasting trait.

**Multiattack.** The mummy lord can use its Dreadful Glare and makes three attacks, only one of which can be a rotting fist attack.

**Sickle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

The mummy lord warrior gains access to the following legendary action:

**Charging Slash.** The mummy lord moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks. At the end of its movement, it can make one sickle attack against a target within range.





# CHAPTER ELEVEN:

# OBYRITH

*"If demons ever get their way, the universe will become such a wretched, twisted thing that it collapses upon itself and dies. We know this because the obyrith did it to their own universe, and even knowing the end result they're here to do the same to ours."*

Across the unending layers and sub-domains of the Abyss, something lurks in wait. Hidden among the endlessly mutating fiends and tumultuous rule of demon lords are the obyrith, a kind of fiend that predates the mortal races and the Abyss itself.

## OLDER THAN TIME

The obyrith are all that remains of a dead universe, drained of life by their reign of evil. Their cosmos was already in its dying twilight when this multiverse was newly formed; the obyrith became aware of the young universe and looked hungrily at a new realm, a place where they could escape the death of their own universe and begin the cycle anew.

## THE FIRST DEMONS

The obyrith were the first demonic entities in the multiverse, and over time the few of them that remain became grouped in with the younger tanar'ri demons by mortal scholars. Notable examples include powerful unique obyrith who survive as demon lords of their own layers in the Abyss, and the sibriex--flesh-warping horrors with eons of accumulated knowledge.

## NEAR-EXTINCT

Whether they are a generic form or a unique demon lord, there are very few obyrith

remaining. Though obyrith demon lords covet power, seek control, and even foster cults as much as any other Abyssal ruler, most obyriths are reclusive and choose to hide in their domains. Some, such as the notorious Queen of Chaos, have not been seen in recorded history.

## THE RISE AND FALL OF THE OBYRITH

### BIRTH OF THE ABYSS

Piercing the barrier between worlds with a shard of pure evil, the obyrith waited for a denizen of this fledgling universe to fall under its sway. When the god Tharizdun became corrupted by the shard's malevolence and planted it in the plane of Elemental Chaos, the Abyss was created in an explosion of power, an energy that simultaneously drew the obyrith from their dying universe into our own.

### THE NEW PRINCE

The first demon lords, a mixture of newly-corrupted demonic beings and the original obyrith, sought the shard of evil in the Abyss and fought one another for the right to claim it. As Demogorgon, Dagon, and others warred, the obyrith Obox-Ob snuck forward and claimed the shard, becoming the monstrosly powerful Prince of Demons. Fearing Obox-Ob's ascension to complete omnipotence, the other demon lords cast the new Prince and the shard down into the deepest, unfathomable pits of the newborn Abyss.

Meanwhile, Tharizdun had formed an alliance with the primordial residents of the



sundered Elemental Chaos, promising to claim the fallen shard and claim victory over both gods and the new demons. An alliance of gods defeated Tharizdun and locked him away, though many of his followers remained loyal.

## CHAOS REIGNS

One such follower of Tharizdun was a primordial named Miska the Wolf-Spider, who continued to seek Obox-Ob in hopes of claiming the powerful shard and freeing his master. It's this opportune weakness that attracted the attention of the Queen of Chaos, the most powerful of obyrith. As Obox-Ob was finally cornered by Miska's forces, the Queen of Chaos killed Obox-Ob and offered Miska the powerful title of Prince of Demons. Miska accepted, and in one fell stroke the Queen of Chaos gained control of combined demonic and elemental forces.

Eventually, the Queen of Chaos was defeated by the air-elemental Wind Dukes of Aaqa and their *Rod of Law*, which broke and became the mythical *Rod of Seven Parts*. The Queen of Chaos retreated to her layer of the Abyss and hasn't been seen since.

## PRESENT-DAY OBYRITH

### SCATTERED AND ISOLATED

After the Queen of Chaos was defeated, the obyrith fell back to the Abyss. The obyrith do their best to blend into the tapestry of Abyssal demons; even well-educated scholars are unaware of the distinction between them and the tanar'ri. Among the countless layers of the Abyss and innumerable fiends calling themselves demon lords, some obyrith have done their best to hide their true nature with obfuscation and the long passage of time.

### BIDING THEIR TIME?

The obyrith still alive today are the strongest and most cunning of their kind, having survived the ire of gods, primordials, and demons alike. These unique fiends corrupted and drained and entire universe before entering our own; their plans operate on timelines greater than most mortal beings can comprehend. Those that know the history of the obyrith assume they're waiting for the Queen of Chaos to return or some other event as a sign to seize power once more.

### OBYRITHS, OLD ONES, AND ELDER EVILS

**Obyriths** are the first fiends, creatures who fled from another universe after they wholly destroyed it with their evil dominion. They invaded our reality and created (either intentionally or by mistake) the first demons of our universe and the Abyss itself.

**Great Old Ones** are alien entities from the Far Realm, areas of remote lifelessness in the coldest, furthest reaches of our multiverse. They hail from distant worlds and empty reaches of space where their very concepts of life and existence are unrecognizable to us.

**Elder Evils** are a category that can include all manner of entities, including obyrith and Great Old Ones. It can also include gods and beings ascended to levels of incredible power that don't quite fit into any category. Their unifying quality is that they are wholly antithetical to life as we know it; whether by design or as an unavoidable aspect of their existence, Elder Evils leave madness and death in their wake on an apocalyptic scale.





# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: OBYRITH

## DAGON

In the watery depths of the 89th layer of the Abyss lives Dagon, an obyrith horror with an affinity for the dark, crushing depths of the sea. When the Queen of Chaos called upon the obyrith to join her in battle against the Wind Dukes, one of the oldest and most powerful obyrith, Dagon, refused. Dagon was too powerful for the Queen of Chaos to punish, and its decision not to join the battle might have allowed it to survive.

**Prince of the Depths.** Dagon is feared and venerated by many aquatic entities, not just demons. Krakens worship the Prince of the Depths, as do covens of sea-hags and mad sea-cults seeking forbidden knowledge. Dagon carries eons of knowledge as old as the universe itself (and older), and even other demon lords make offerings to Dagon's lair in exchange for its considerable knowledge.

**Ruler of Shadowsea.** Dagon lairs in Shadowsea, the 89th layer of the Abyss. In this aquatic layer Dagon is attended by demons with an affinity for water, primarily wastriliths. The Prince of the Depths lurks in deepest underwater trenches, waiting with infinite patience for supplicant cultists reckless enough to contact it or rivals foolish enough to challenge it.

## DAGON'S LAIR

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Dagon can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; it can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- A whirlpool surrounds Dagon. Creatures within 60 feet of Dagon must expend an extra foot of movement for each foot they move while swimming.
- A shockwave ripples from Dagon throughout the lair. Each creature holding its breath must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw or have the air forced from its lungs (see suffocation rules, *PHB*).
- Filth and putrescence stir up from the depths to pervade the waters of the lair. Each creature other than Dagon treats anything further than 30 feet away as heavily obscured.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Dagon's lair is warped by its magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- Spells and other magical effects that allow a creature to breathe water do not function within Dagon's lair unless it allows them to.
- Creatures in or near bodies of water see fleeting hallucinations of watching eyes, writhing tentacles, or jaws full of razor-sharp teeth in the depths.
- If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour within 1 mile of the lair, it must succeed on a DC 19





Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness determined by the Madness of Dagon table. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw can't be affected by this regional effect for 24 hours.

If Dagon dies, the effect preventing magical water breathing ends immediately. The other effects fade over the course of 1d10 days.

## MADNESS OF DAGON

If a creature goes mad in Dagon's lair or within line of sight of the obyrith, roll on the Madness of Dagon table to determine the nature of the madness, which is a character flaw that lasts until cured. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more on madness.

### MADNESS OF DAGON TABLE

d100	Madness Effect
01-20	"The only way to be safe is to be alone."
21-40	"I'll do anything to protect myself, even abandon my companions in their time of need."
41-60	"I don't feel sane unless I'm immersed in water."
61-80	"I see eyes watching me in the water. They can see my thoughts!"
81-100	"Whispers in the water tell me ancient secrets. I have to hear what they're saying!"



## DAGON

Gargantuan fiend (obyrith), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18

**Hit Points** 277 (15d20 + 120)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	16 (+3)	26 (+8)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Str +17, Dex +10, Wis +13, Cha +11

**Skills** Arcana +19, Deception +11, Perception +13, Religion +12

**Damage Resistances** acid, fire, lightning

**Damage Immunities** cold, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 23

**Languages** all, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 22 (41,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** Dagon can breathe both air and water.

**Magic Resistance.** Dagon has advantage on saving throws made against spells and other magical effects.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Dagon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Form of Madness.** Any non-demon that looks upon Dagon must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness as determined by the Madness of Dagon table. Any creature that succeeds on its saving throw against this effect can't be affected by this feature again for 24 hours. A creature that already has one of these forms of madness from another source retains its current madness and does not make a new saving throw.

**Aquatic Awareness.** When Dagon is in a body of water, it knows the precise location of any creature within 120 feet of it that is in the same body of water.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Dagon makes five attacks: one with its bite or swallow and four with its tentacles. It can replace up to two tentacle attacks with claw attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d8 + 10) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d8 + 10) slashing damage.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (2d10 + 10) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 25) if it is a Huge or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, Dagon can't use this tentacle on another target. Dagon has four such tentacles.

**Swallow.** Dagon makes one bite attack against a Large or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is also swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside Dagon, and it takes 27 (6d8) acid damage at the start of each of Dagon's turns. Dagon can only have one creature swallowed at a time.

**Doomsong (1/Day).** Dagon creates a rumbling, hypnotizing melody. Every humanoid within 300 ft. of Dagon that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 19 Charisma saving throw or become charmed. Dagon can continue the song on each subsequent turn as a bonus action, up to 1 minute total. Creatures charmed by the doomsong must spend its turn moving towards Dagon, using its action to Dash if possible. Charmed creatures move in the most direct route possible, even through hazards. When a charmed creature takes damage it can use its reaction to repeat the saving throw. While a creature is charmed by Dagon's doomsong, it is immune to Dagon's Form of Madness trait.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Dagon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Dagon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Swim.** Dagon swims up to half its speed.

**Tentacle (Costs 2 Actions).** Dagon makes one tentacle attack.

## OBOX-OB

A maddened, skittering horror of obscene entomological anatomy, Obox-Ob became the first Prince of Demons when he seized the chaotic shard of power from the obyrith's home universe. Betrayed and killed by the Queen of Chaos, Obox-Ob resurrected in the Abyss and

hid for thousands of years while the demon lords' power struggle resolved itself.

**Insectoid Anatomy.** This obyrith's body is a bloated scorpion, though it has three striking tails in place of its head; its head is where the scorpion stinger should be, with six blood-red eyes and a long, probing tongue protruding wetly from a vertical mouth. Obox-Ob's body produces a mind-numbing droning sound that



dulls the senses and threatens to overwhelm the mind.

**A Legacy of Learning.** Obox-Ob has tasted bitter defeat more than once; first, the combined might of the demon lords cast him down to the lowest layers of the Abyss after he dared to claim the chaotic shard of power for his own. When Obox-Ob trusted the Queen of Chaos to protect him, she killed him to offer his title to Miska the Wolf-Spider instead. Obox-Ob regenerated in the depths of the Abyss but never forgot the painful lessons he learned at the hands of the demon lords and fellow obyrith alike.

**Prince of Vermin.** The title “Prince of Vermin” is a mockery of the title Obox-Ob briefly held, a reminder that he now controls rats and insects when omnipotence was once within his grasp. He rules the 663rd layer of the Abyss with a bitter fury, dreaming of the day he will kill Demogorgon and reclaim his princely title.

## OBOX-OB’S LAIR

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Obox-Ob can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; it can’t use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- A mix of 1d4 swarms of beetles, centipedes, and rats appear in unoccupied spaces within 60 feet of Obox-Ob.
- One creature of Obox-Ob’s choice feels phantom insects crawling on its skin; it must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or use its reaction to move half its speed in a random direction as if affected by the *infestation* cantrip.
- Obox-Ob exudes a cloud of buzzing flies in a 10-foot radius around himself, which follow his movements. The area is considered heavily obscured for creatures other than Obox-Ob. The flies disappear on initiative count 20 of the next round.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Obox-Ob’s lair is warped by his magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- Insect and rat swarms, giant rats, and giant insects within 1 mile of Obox-Ob’s lair add Obox-Ob’s Charisma modifier (+3) to their attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.
- Creatures within 1 mile of the lair have an insect crawling on their bodies at all times. If the insect is removed or killed, another inexplicably appears.
- Non-demons other than Obox-Ob attempting to long rest within 1 mile of the lair gain no benefit as tiny insects intermittently appear to bite and crawl over them. This regional effect can be prevented if the area is warded using holy water, a *hallow* spell, or similar magic.

## MADNESS OF OBOX-OB

If a creature goes mad in Obox Ob’s lair or within line of sight of the obyrith, roll on the Madness of Obox-Ob table to determine the nature of the madness, which is a character flaw that lasts until cured. See the *Dungeon Master’s Guide* for more on madness.

### MADNESS OF OBOX-OB TABLE

d100	Madness Effect
01-20	“The bugs are inside my friends and controlling their thoughts.”
21-40	“Bugs and rats are the only food fit for me.”
41-60	“Vermin know ancient secrets and they whisper things to me.”
61-80	“I long to feel my body consumed by swarming scavengers.”
81-100	“Obox-Ob is the true Prince of Demons. I would die for my Prince!”



**OBOX-OB***Huge fiend (obyrith), chaotic evil***Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 216 (16d12 + 112)**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	18 (+4)	25 (+7)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +14, Con +14, Wis +12, Cha +10**Skills** Athletics +14, Arcana +12, Deception +10, Insight +12, Perception +12**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning**Damage Immunities** poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, poisoned**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 22**Languages** Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.**Challenge** 23 (50,000 XP)

**Discordant Drone.** Obox-Ob produces a horrid droning sound to which demons are immune. Any other creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of Obox-Ob must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or become stunned for 1 minute. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect early on a success. A creature that succeeds on its initial saving throw or has the effect end on it is immune to the droning for the next 24 hours. A creature that fails the initial saving throw by 5 or more also descends into a form of madness as determined by the Madness of Obox-Ob table as soon as the droning effect ends for it.

**Form of Madness.** Any non-demon that looks upon Obox-Ob must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness as determined by the Madness of Obox-Ob table. Any creature that succeeds on its saving throw against this effect can't be affected by this feature again for 24 hours. A creature that already has one of these forms of madness from another source does not make a new saving throw.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Obox-Ob's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *infestation* (17th level)3/day each: *conjure animals* (rats and insects only), *giant insect*1/day: *insect plague*

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Obox-Ob fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Obox-Ob has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Magic Weapons.** Obox-Ob's weapon attacks are magical.

**Regeneration.** Obox-Ob regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point.

**ACTIONS**

**Multiattack.** Obox-Ob makes four attacks: three with his stingers and one with his tongue.

**Stinger. Melee Weapon Attack:** +14 to hit, reach 15 feet, one target. **Hit:** 13 (1d12+7) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Tongue. Melee Weapon Attack:** +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 26 (3d12+7) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be affected by chaotic energies for 1 minute. At the start of each of its turns, an affected creature suffers one failed death saving throw regardless of its current hit point total. If a creature with three death saving throw failures is reduced to 0 hit points, it dies instantly and can't be restored to life by anything other than a true resurrection or wish spell. An affected creature that receives magical healing can remove one failed death saving throw once per round when it regains lost hit points. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success and removing death saving throws accumulated from the effect.

**LEGENDARY ACTIONS**

Obox-Ob can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Obox-Ob regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Sting.** Obox-Ob makes one stinger attack.

**Buzz.** Obox-Ob flies up to half his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Vermin Magic.** Obox-Ob casts one of his at-will spells.



## PALE NIGHT

The obyrith known as Pale Night appears almost ghost-like, a fleeting glimpse of a feminine figure wholly concealed by rippling energies like an ethereal white sheet. No one is certain what Pale Night's true obyrith form looks like; to see past her shroud is almost certain death and those that have survived the experience can do little to describe the roiling, eldritch chaos that embodies her.

**Ancient and Reclusive.** Pale Night is aged even by obyrith standards, far older than the traditional demon lords that have a ruling interest in the Abyss. She resides in a castle of bone on the 600th layer of the Abyss, a layer usually associated with Baphomet. For his part, the Horned King respects the boundaries of Pale Night's dreadful sanctum; the obyrith herself never emerges and rarely speaks.

**Mother of Demons.** Though she's held the title 'Mother of Demons' since before recorded history, the exact reason for the moniker is unclear. Some ancient texts attribute her as the mother of powerful demon lords, including Graz'zt (who boasts numerous origin myths); other sources claim her as the progenitor of the lamia, or even as the obyrith who shaped the first tanar'ri demons.

## PALE NIGHT'S LAIR

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Pale Night can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; it can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Pale Night gains 5 temporary hit points for each creature in her lair affected by her Embrace, Draining Touch, or who are suffering a madness effect from Pale Night.
- Pillars of bone rise from the ground and attempt to ensnare each creature of Pale Night's choice that she can see. Each target must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained until initiative count 20 of the next round.

- Demons within 90 feet of Pale Night have advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until initiative count 20 of the next round. This includes demons hostile to Pale Night.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Pale Night's lair is warped by its magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- Creatures that sleep within 1 mile of Pale Night's lair sometimes awaken to find themselves kneeling and facing her castle of bone, their hands clasped in feverish worship.
- Demons of Challenge Rating 1 or lower spawn spontaneously in areas within 1 mile of the lair, appearing from a tear in reality like a rippling cloth.
- If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour within 1 mile of the lair, it must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness determined by the Madness of Pale Night table. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw can't be affected by this regional effect for 24 hours.

If Pale Night dies, these effects fade over the course of 1d10 days.

### MADNESS OF PALE NIGHT

If a creature goes mad in Pale Night's lair or within line of sight of the obyrith, roll on the Madness of Pale Night table to determine the nature of the madness, which is a character flaw that lasts until cured. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more on madness.

#### MADNESS OF PALE NIGHT TABLE

d100	Madness Effect
01-20	"I must prevent myself and others from disturbing the solace of the bone castle."
21-40	"The great truth of the universe is hidden behind Pale Night's veil."
41-60	"It would serve my life's purpose for my bones to be added to this magnificent castle."



61-80	"I feel a familial connection to demons. They are precious things."
81-100	"Pale Night is our mother. I must ensure my companions and I respect her."

## PALE NIGHT

Medium fiend (obyrith), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 253 (22d8+154)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	28 (+9)	24 (+7)

**Saving Throws** Dex +11, Con +14, Int +13, Wis +16

**Skills** Arcana +13, History +13, Perception +23

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing that is nonmagical

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 33

**Languages** all, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 23 (50,000 XP)

**Ethereal Walker.** Pale Night can target and affect creatures in the Border Ethereal.

**Mother of Demons.** Demons summoned by Pale Night cannot be compelled to attack her. Other demons, including those under the control of another creature, treat Pale Night as though she is under a permanent *sanctuary* spell (DC 24). Demon Lords and obyriths automatically succeed on their saving throw against this effect.

**Incorporeal Movement.** Pale Night can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She can move through any fiend she commands without treating them as difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

**Magic Resistance.** Pale Night has advantage on saving throws made against spells and other magical effects.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Pale Night fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regeneration.** Pale Night regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least 1 hit point.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Pale Night's spell casting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 24, +16 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material or verbal components:

At will: *confusion*, *dispel magic*, *misty step*, *summon lesser demons*

2/day each: *summon greater demon*

1/day each: *maddening darkness*, *teleport*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Pale Night makes two draining touch attacks.

**Draining Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (2d12 + 9) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 24 Wisdom saving throw or its Charisma score is reduced by 1d4. Pale Night can't reduce a target's Charisma score more than once before the start of her next turn. A target whose Charisma score is reduced to 0 by this effect becomes an ethereal spirit as though it failed a saving throw against Pale Night's Embrace ability, but the effect is permanent unless ended with a wish spell, which returns the creature to its physical form and returns its lost Charisma score.

**Embrace.** Pale Night envelops a creature she can see within 20 feet with a portion of her shroud. The creature must succeed on a DC 24 Charisma saving throw or become incorporeal for 1 minute. While a creature is in the Border Ethereal; they pass through creatures and objects as if they weren't there and can't affect other creatures with attacks, spells, or other abilities. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect early on a success. An affected creature can choose to end the effect on itself at the end of its turn without making a saving throw; a creature that does so takes 5d10 psychic damage and gains 1 level of Exhaustion.

**Truth Beyond the Veil (1/Day).** Pale Night suppresses the shroud concealing her true form. Each creature within 120 feet that can see Pale Night must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature drops to 0 hit points. On a success, the creature takes 22 (4d10) psychic damage and must make a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness as determined by the Madness of Pale Night table. A creature that already has one of these forms of madness from another source does not make a new Wisdom saving throw.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Pale Night can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Pale Night regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Draining Touch.** Pale Night makes a draining touch attack.

**Vanish.** Pale Night becomes invisible and can teleport to an unoccupied space she can see within 30 feet. The invisibility lasts until she moves, attacks, or takes an action.



# CHAPTER TWELVE:

# SERPENTFOLK

*"They're the heirs, you understand? The oldest humanoid kingdoms were a distant future when their empires were already old. Humans get impatient in the span of minutes...they've waited thousands of years just to make a single move."*

## PREHISTORIC PROGENITORS

Tens of thousands of years ago, scaled creatures like dinosaurs were the dominant beasts. From among the many scaled creatures rose the sarrukh, intelligent scaled humanoids that created vast empires that controlled the entire world. The sarrukh were powerful enough to shape new races in their image: lizardfolk, naga, troglodytes, yuan-ti, and others. Long after the sarrukh empires collapsed into dust, their creations flourished and remain to this day.

## TYPE, CLASS, AND CASTE

All manner of reptilian creatures, including troglodytes, dinosaurs, lizardfolk, and kobolds, fall under the broad category of "scaled ones." However, only yuan-ti and naga consider themselves serpentfolk, a class apart from and above the animal lizards and inferior "scalyfolk." They commonly command lizardfolk and other scaled creatures alongside humanoids and beasts, seeing themselves as the natural leaders of these weaker species.

## HIDDEN EMPIRES

Today, the serpentfolk live in isolated empires or operate puppet-states of enslaved humanoids. While evil naga often make a point of jealously protecting the lairs where they live or the realms they command, yuan-ti pursue more aggressive goals of undermining and

eventually subjugating new territories. These actions are rarely overt and can take place over centuries before they fully come to fruition.

## THE NAGA

Naga were created by the sarrukh as researchers and guardians of knowledge. Regardless of how the naga have split into myriad forms in the millennia since, their subtypes generally exhibit the same cunning, aptitude for magic, and interest in ancient places.

## TEMPERED EGO

Naga see themselves as superior beings, even perfect, with an ego not dissimilar to that of beholders. However unlike those maddened aberrations, naga recognize when other creatures are more powerful or more knowledgeable and aren't too proud to serve and learn.

## TIMELESS BEINGS

Other scaled races grow old and die, but naga are doggedly immortal--more than immune to age, thirst, and hunger, only a *wish* spell or similarly powerful magic can prevent them from resurrecting within days of being killed. It can make their vigil over ancient ruins unending, their rule over their subjects countless generations long, and their wealth of accumulated knowledge enormous.



## MOSTLY SOLITARY

A naga's ego causes it to think of its own subspecies as the true embodiment of perfection, and themselves the "embodiment of the ideal" of their creators, the long-dead sarrukh. As such, nagas rarely associate with others of their own subtype and even more uncommonly with nagas of a different subtype. Nagas infrequently band together in groups of up to four individuals in pursuit of a common goal, and a particularly powerful individual or group, such as a yuan-ti nation, can successfully get larger groups to occupy the same space.

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Though naga motivations vary little from specimen to specimen, understanding their drives and worldview can be essential for adventurers hoping to outsmart them.

### d6 Ideal

- 1-6 We are the embodiment of the ideal.  
(Any)

### d6 Bond

- 1-3 The creatures in our service are the body's limbs; we are the mind.  
4-6 The civilization whose ruins I occupy is the only society I require.

### d6 Flaw

- 1-3 Our obsession with fallen empires blinds us to modern solutions.  
4-6 Isolation has rendered us poor judges of a creature's motivation and character.

## YUAN-TI

Just as the naga see themselves as a perfect embodiment of the sarrukh's ideals, the more varied yuan-ti refer to themselves as *vrael olo*, or "favored ones."

Unsatisfied with merely occupying the ruins of fallen empires, yuan-ti actively control territory in remote jungles and infiltrate humanoid empires around the world,

destabilizing them and furthering their own goals. Yuan-ti value subtlety as a core societal value, always preferring statecraft and manipulation over open combat wherever possible.

## YUAN-TI SOCIETY

The yuan-ti are born into organized tribes, though they aren't bound to them. Yuan-ti can choose to join another tribe, and it's common for those that lose contact with their tribes and exiles to do so. Particularly ambitious individuals occasionally join with others to form their own tribe. At any given time a handful of tribes hold the most power. There are currently seven of these 'houses' in power: Eselemas, Extaminos, Hss'tafi, Jennestas, Sauringar, Se'Sehen, and Sseradess. Many of them have seats of power in the hot, jungle-thick areas of southwest Faerun like Chult and Lushpool. Each





## YUAN-TI HOUSES

House Name	Allied Houses	Rival Houses	Common Trait
Eselemas	Jennestas	Se'Sehen	Prehensile Tail
Extaminos	Se'Sehen	-	Serpent Arms
Hss'tafi	-	-	Cobra Head
Jennestas	Eselemas	Se'Sehen	Chameleon Hide*
Sauringar	Se'Sehen	-	Puff Torso
Se'Sehen	Extaminos, Sauringar	Coiled Cabal, Eselemas, Jennestas	Spit Venom
Sseradess	-	-	Water Snake

\*Described in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

house jealously seeks to preserve its current holdings and increase its own power, resulting in long-standing alliances and grudges between them. Regardless of where their seat of power is located, yuan-ti outposts and their agents can be found in almost any humanoid nation in the world.

### THE COILED CABAL

Though not a tribe in its own right, the secretive yuan-ti group known as the Coiled Cabal is as powerful as any of the great houses. It has a keen interest in arcane magic, which puts them at odds with the divine spellcasters in the clergy of Sseth. Membership in the Coiled Cabal supersedes house loyalty, and has bases of influence in the Serpent Hills, Shaar, and the Black Jungles. The Coiled Cabal's goals vary depending on which commander, or 'overhead,' is assigning missions. Small operative groups of up to a dozen individuals are given tasks to weaken or control certain individuals, and to subvert humanoid institutions like governments and religious institutions. No Cabalist cell or overhead knows all of the organization's secrets or goals; at times, the activities of two different agent groups can seem to conflict with one another.



## YUAN-TI TRAITS

Through divergent bloodlines and profane experimentation, yuan-ti have developed unusual traits and abilities. Certain traits are so common in specific yuan-ti houses that they are considered iconic for that house, as seen on the Common Traits column of the Yuan-Ti Houses table. These traits are described below with the exception of the Chameleon Hide trait, which is described in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*.

**Cobra Head.** This yuan-ti has a particularly large cobra-like hood. As a bonus action the yuan-ti can flare its hood in an intimidating display. Up to three creatures of the yuan-ti's choice within 30 feet that can see it must make Wisdom (Insight) checks contested by the yuan-ti's Charisma (Deception) check. Any creature that fails the contest has disadvantage on saving throws against the yuan-ti's spells and abilities until the end of its next turn. A creature that wins the contested check is immune to the yuan-ti's intimidating display for 24 hours.

**Prehensile Tail.** The yuan-ti can use its tail to hold any object it can hold in one hand. In addition, it can use its tail to use or interact with simple objects such as pushing open



doors, drawing weapons, operating levers, and other simple mechanisms.

**Puff Torso.** The yuan-ti can expand its body as a bonus action, giving it advantage on ability checks and saving throws to resist or end the grappled and restrained conditions.

**Serpent Arms.** The yuan-ti has an extra serpent-like appendage ending in a snake head that it often wraps or drapes around itself. When delivering a bite attack, the yuan-ti can use this serpent arm instead of its normal bite. The arm has a reach of 15 ft.



**Spit Venom.** If this yuan-ti's bite attack deals poison damage, it can spit its venom as a ranged attack with a range of 20/40, using its bite's attack bonus for the attack roll. On hit, the attack deals only the bite's poison damage to the target.

**Water Snake.** The yuan-ti can hold its breath for up to 15 minutes and gains a swimming speed equal to its walking speed.

## EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: SERPENTFOLK

### BANELAR NAGA

Though the naga originally worshipped the World Serpent and the many sub-deities it became, this purple and green naga subtype is named for its association with the church of Bane. These rare, water-loving creatures are granted divine spellcasting by their chosen deity in contrast to other nagas' intrinsic connection to the World Serpent's aspects.

**Allies of Dark Clerics.** Banelar naga are rare and valued guardians for evil priests and priestesses, provided they are given respect befitting their power and a living space appropriate for their enormous size. The relationship between banelar naga and evil cults is one of alliance, not servitude. The banelar maintains its independence and commands a position of importance.

**Beyond Bane.** When the god Bane was killed, many banelar naga switched to worshipping Cyric. Even after Bane's resurrection, not all banelar naga returned to honoring their original deity. It's just as likely that individual banelar naga have branched out even further to serve other evil gods and goddesses.

**Magic Item Lovers.** The banelar naga's face is surrounded by thin tentacles. Though too weak to use as weapons, they can manipulate small objects with ease. Banelar nagas love using these tentacles to wear magic rings or use wands against their enemies.



## BANELAR NAGA

*Large monstrosity, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 110 (13d10 + 39)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+0)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +6, Int +5, Wis +7, Cha +5

**Damage Immunities** Poison

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Rejuvenation.** If it dies, the naga returns to life in 1d6 days and regains all its hit points. Only a wish spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

**Hold Breath.** The naga can hold its breath for 1 hour.

**Spellcasting.** The naga is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks), and needs only somatic components to cast its spells. It has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*, *toll the dead*

1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *command*, *detect magic*, *healing word*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *hold person*, *silence*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse*, *protection from energy*

4th level (3 slots): *control water*, *guardian of faith*

5th level (1 slot): *flame strike*, *insect plague*

### ACTIONS

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.





# NAGAHYDRA

Wildly divergent from other naga subtypes, the nagahydra is an enormous five-headed monstrosity. Each neck and head is usually a different hue and can include crimson, emerald, silver, black, purple, and yellow. Unlike the divine spellcasting of many nagas, the nagahydra boasts a repertoire of sorcerer spells.

**Jungle Predators.** Nagahydras are rare and tend to isolate their nests in deep jungle, such as the uncharted peninsula of Chult. They are

particularly aggressive for naga, taking great pleasure in preying upon an intelligent humanoid that find themselves in the nagahydra's territory.

**Regenerative Powers.** Like a true hydra, the nagahydra's heads grow back within seconds if the neck is not exposed to a sufficient amount of fire. Unlike a normal hydra, the nagahydra only regrows the head that was lost and doesn't gain additional heads. More powerful than a traditional hydra, the nagahydra can cause a shorn neck to regrow a missing head with sufficient concentration.

## NAGAHYDRA

*Huge monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 210 (20d12 + 80)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +10

**Damage Immunities** Poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Rejuvenation.** If it dies, the naga returns to life in 1d6 days and regains all its hit points. Only a wish spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

**Multiple Heads.** The nagahydra has five heads. While it has more than one head, the nagahydra has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious. Whenever the nagahydra takes 30 or more damage in a single turn, one of its heads dies. If all its heads die, the nagahydra dies. At the end of its turn, it regrows one missing head and regains 10 hit points.

**Reactive Heads.** For each head the nagahydra has beyond one, it gets an extra reaction that can be used only for opportunity attacks.

**Spellcasting.** The nagahydra is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast its spells without the need for material components. It knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, dancing lights, light, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shape water*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, detect magic, magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *mirror image, misty step, scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *ice storm, wall of fire*

5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The nagahydra makes as many bite attacks as it has heads.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

**Flurry of Bites (Recharge 6).** The nagahydra makes as many bite attacks as it has heads against one target within reach. Each successful bite attack after the first deals an additional cumulative 1d6 piercing damage (1d6 extra damage on the second successful bite attack, 2d6 on the third, etc.).

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The nagahydra can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The nagahydra regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Bite.** The nagahydra makes one bite attack.

**Sorcery.** The nagahydra casts a cantrip.

**Forced Regeneration.** The nagahydra regrows one of its heads and regains 10 hit points.



## YUAN-TI HOLY GUARDIAN

Anyone foolish enough to trespass in yuan-ti temples or attack their clerics is likely to find themselves overwhelmed by the faith's most dedicated defenders, the holy guardians. These yuan-ti have mostly serpentine bodies and two-armed upper torso of an abomination, but are raised from birth with a particular place in yuan-ti society.

**Warriors of Dogma.** Holy guardians ignore the ties of family and the hierarchy of tribe, answering only to the clergy of the deity they revere. Originally created by worshipers of Sseth, the process of raising holy guardians has been mimicked by the other major yuan-ti religions to create devoted defenders of clerics, altars, and holy sites.

Though they don't scheme with the same constant cold ambition as most of their kind, holy guardians are deeply knowledgeable about the tenets of the religion they serve. Holy guardians know the teachings of their deity by rote and have been known to refuse orders that violate holy doctrine or pose unneeded risk to the clergy and holy places they are sworn to protect.

**Ambush Skirmishers.** The holy guardians aren't trained to be as direct a combatant as other abominations, but are masters of hit-and-run tactics. Holy guardians constantly reposition themselves in a fight, slipping in and out of cover as they riddle their opponents' bodies with arrows before slithering in for a finishing blow. Guardians serve together their whole lives and develop a deep camaraderie unusual among yuan-ti, fighting with a deadly level of coordination.

### YUAN-TI HOLY GUARDIAN

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger, yuan-ti), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 71 (13d8 + 13)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Perception +5, Religion +9, Stealth +9

**Damage Immunities** Poison

**Condition Immunities** Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The yuan-ti can use its action to polymorph into a Large snake, or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It doesn't change form if it dies.

**Innate Spellcasting (Yuan-Ti Form Only).** The yuan-ti's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The yuan-ti can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

2/day: *suggestion*

**Magic Resistance.** The yuan-ti has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Skirmishing Tactics.** The yuan-ti can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack (Yuan-Ti Form Only).** The yuan-ti makes three ranged attacks or three melee attacks, but can use its bite only once.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

**Constrict (Snake Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the yuan-ti can't grapple another target.

**Scimitar (Yuan-Ti Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Longbow (Yuan-Ti Form Only).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

### REACTIONS

**Slither.** The yuan-ti moves up to half its speed as a reaction when a hostile creature ends its turn within 5 feet of it. This movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.



# CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

# SLAADI

*"Weeks went by after the attack and things went back to normal. Kaine seemed fine. We were all having dinner and...it must have implanted something with its claws, some kind of embryo."*

## CHAOS FROM ORDER

Primus, ruler of the rigidly ordered plane of Mechanus and master of modrons, sought to tame the chaotic plane of Limbo by creating a stone infused with rigid precepts of law, order, and control. The stone brought some elements of order into the unpredictable plane, allowing creatures to establish survivable outposts within its maddened upheaval.

The unintended side effect of the stone were the creatures created when it absorbed Limbo's chaotic energy. Toad-like in appearance, the creatures known as slaadi now wreak havoc across the Planes of Existence.

Primus' ill-wrought attempt to tame Limbo still exists, a slaad-birthing rock now known as the Spawning Stone.

## PLAGUE FROM LIMBO

The slaadi are aberrations of chaos and are not motivated by grand ideals of good or evil. Even the weakest form of adult slaad are dangerous brutes, driven to destruction and reproduction. Slaadi are essentially sexless and can only perpetuate their species by infesting other creatures with infestations that ultimately kill the host. Depending on the original slaad's type, a series of slaad attacks can result in an exponential outbreak that might take days or even months to become apparent.

## SLAAD BIOLOGY

### CONSTANT TRANSFORMATION

Red and blue slaad are brutes and propagators, neither type particularly intelligent. These types are complementary to the other's life cycle: a red slaad's implanted-egg-turned-tadpole will usually mature into a blue slaad, and a blue slaad's chaos phage will usually transform its victim into a red slaad.

In both cases, the exception comes when the chaos phage infects, or a tadpole is born from, a talented spellcaster. In both cases, the resulting adult will be a green slaad. More intelligent than both blue and red slaadi, a green slaad also wields a selection of spells and can shapechange into humanoid forms, giving it some ability to infiltrate humanoid areas without arousing too much suspicion.





However, a green slaad's journey isn't finished with its birth. At some point during its life it undergoes a metamorphosis into a gray slaad, a more powerful form. Gray slaadi can transform into a death slaad by consuming an existing death slaad's corpse, a puzzling paradox that has raised numerous questions about the death slaad's origin. For their part, the death slaadi are truly malevolent creatures who actively seek to marshal blue and red slaadi in planned invasions of other planes, spreading destruction and creating new slaadi from the survivors.

Though supremely rare, two even greater varieties of slaadi are known to exist. A death slaad that has survived in its current form for at least a century can seclude itself in Limbo, initiating a slow metamorphosis into an enormous white slaad. After another century, a white slaad can repeat this process to become a black slaad. Both white and black slaadi are Limbo's chaos incarnate, and it's fortunate that so few survive the long journey from green to one of these supremely powerful forms. Even at their most powerful and intelligent, slaadi are unpredictable creatures with generally poor instincts.

## HIERARCHY OF STRENGTH

Slaadi have no known craft, art, architecture, or cultural creations. Sharing their home plane's unpredictable nature, slaadi seem content living chaotic and reactionary lives. The only semblance of organization among the slaadi is centered on domination. More powerful slaadi subjugate the weaker categories into serving them. This often results in red and blue slaadi serving the will of a slaad that is green or greater—the stronger the slaad, the more of lesser kinds it can hope to control at a given time.

Even if a red or blue slaad fears destruction at the hands of its master, it is still a disorderly creature at heart and dimwitted to boot. They cannot be expected to carry out complex orders or focus on a detail-oriented task for long. With time and distance away from the slaad

controlling it, lesser slaadi become more likely to break away and wreak havoc as they wish.

## CONTROLLED CHAOS?

Though it's generally agreed-upon that the Spawning Stone still creates new slaadi, there are theories as to why it continues to produce the same known slaadi types. While it's possible that the stone's original lawful nature causes it to only create slaad of known categories, another theory suggests that something carefully controls the Spawning Stone's creation of new slaad. Whispers of self-proclaimed slaad lords have made their way across the planes, mentions of names like Ssendam, Ygorl, and others. It's believed these slaad lords seek to spread the chaos of Limbo and their kind, but carefully ensure the Spawning Stone never randomly produces a new slaad type that could rival their power.

## SLAAD TRAITS

### d4 Trait

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | I'm compelled to scatter, rearrange, upend, and disrupt neatly ordered things.                                     |
| 2 | I can't spend more than a day in a given humanoid form. I'm always shapechanging into a new guise and personality. |
| 3 | I take a liking to certain non-slaadi, but my friendship is a fleeting thing.                                      |
| 4 | I'm drawn to instruments and create jarring, discordant music.   |



## SLAAD IDEALS

d6	Ideal
1	<b>Transformation.</b> I will unlock the next stage of my metamorphosis by any means necessary.
2	<b>Domination.</b> I must control over other slaad around me; their will must match my own.
3	<b>Destruction.</b> Nothing is better than running rampant and spreading Limbo's chaos.
4	<b>Propagation.</b> As many creatures as possible should be host to the slaadi transformation.
5	<b>Protection.</b> Creatures seek to impose order on Limbo's beautiful chaos. They must all be destroyed.
6	<b>Uncertainty.</b> I am reaction and unpredictability incarnate, any path could be mine from one day to the next.

## SLAAD BONDS

d4	Bond
1-2	I serve no one and nothing but my own ever-changing whims.
3	A creature once commanded me with my control gem. They're still out there, and maybe so is the gem.
4	A stronger slaad bullies me into serving its desires. I obey it...for now.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CHAOS

## VARIANT TRAITS

Even among the same color type, no two slaadi are identical. Some examples of latent powers and unusual abilities are documented below.

## SLAAD VARIANT TRAITS

d10	Variant Trait
1	<b>Chaotic Magic Absorption.</b> When the slaad fails a saving throw against a spell of 1st level or higher, it can use its reaction to roll once on the sorcerer's Wild Magic Surge table and generate the corresponding effect.
2	<b>Variable Vulnerability.</b> When this slaad takes acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage, roll a d6. On a result of 6, it loses any resistance to the damage it might have and gains a vulnerability to the damage instead.
3	<b>Phage Burst.</b> When this slaad dies, the body swells and bursts. Creatures within 10 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be infected with chaos phage. This strain behaves identically to the blue slaad's chaos phage.
4	<b>Chaos Gaze.</b> The slaad has truesight to a range of 60 feet.
5	<b>Transmutative Bite.</b> When the slaad hits a creature with a bite attack and the creature is wearing armor, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or its armor is transformed into a random useless material until the end of its next turn. During this time, its armor provides no bonus to Armor Class.
6	<b>Unmoored Movement.</b> The slaad teleports 10 feet to a random unoccupied space at the start of each of its turns.
7	<b>Tadpole Reincarnation.</b> When the slaad dies, a <b>slaad tadpole</b> bursts from its corpse and attempts to escape. The tadpole retains all of the slaad's memories and matures into the same slaad type within 2d12 hours.
8	<b>Elemental Retaliation.</b> When the slaad takes acid, cold, fire, or lightning damage, its bite attack's damage becomes that type until the end of its next turn.



## LAIR ACTIONS

When battling a particularly powerful slaad of the death, white, or black variety, the slaad's innate connection to Limbo causes the plane's unpredictable energy to manifest around them. These effects can also manifest when fighting large groups of lesser slaadi, or fighting slaadi in Limbo itself. When these effects are manifested by the presence of numerous slaadi, one random member of the most powerful type present determines which lair action occurs.

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the slaad takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the slaad can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Until initiative count 20 of the next round, any creature that expends a spell slot must roll a d20. If the result is equal to the expended spell slot's level or lower, the creature generates a random effect from the sorcerer Wild Magic Surge table.
- Until initiative count 20 of the next round, any time a creature uses a spell or feature that deals acid, cold, fire, or lightning damage, they roll a d4. The spell or effect instead deals damage based on the result: acid (1), cold (2), fire (3), or lightning (4).
- Until initiative count 20 of the next round, volatile energies cause all creatures to treat all areas as difficult terrain. In addition, spells and class features that allow for teleportation expend 2 feet from their total distance for every 1 foot traveled.
- Until initiative count 20 of the next round, each slaadi's Regeneration trait is increased by an amount equal to its Constitution modifier.
- Until initiative count 20 of the next round, whenever a creature makes a weapon or spell attack it doesn't make an attack roll. Instead, it rolls a d6. On a 1-3, the attack misses. On a 4-6, the attack hits. Abilities and features that allow a creature to reroll an attack can be used to reroll the d6.



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: SLAADI

## WHITE AND BLACK SLAADI

After a century surviving in its current form, a death slaad can isolate itself in Limbo and begin bathing in its chaotic energies, triggering a slow transformation that takes anywhere from months to years. When it emerges, the death slaad's gray skin has bleached to become snow-white and its body has grown to an enormous size. After another century or more, a white slaad can repeat this metamorphosis to become the last known stage of the slaad's twisted life cycle: a black slaad. A black slaad's form is so utterly tenebrous that it absorbs all light, giving it the appearance of a hulking, three-dimensional silhouette with glittering eyes.

**Chaos Carriers.** White and black slaadi are the purest embodiments of Limbo's chaos behind the unique Slaad Lords and carry pure planar chaos in their saliva. While lesser slaad transfer a weaker form of this in the chaos phage, white and black slaadi's bites have immediate and often unpredictable effects that can be nigh-impossible to reverse. Some of the documented effects of white and black slaad bites are listed on the Chaos Bite Effects table, below.

**Heralds of Limbo.** These greater slaadi can only feasibly be the valued servants of Slaad Lords, or the leaders of their own slaad horde. They bring the chaos of Limbo with them, and their continued presence in an area can cause basic natural laws to bend or break as pockets of distorted light, time, and gravity manifest.

## CHAOS BITE EFFECTS

If an entry doesn't specify a duration, it is permanent. A white slaad's chaos bite effects can be reversed with a *greater restoration* or *wish* spell. A black slaad's chaos bite effects can only be reversed with a *wish* spell.

### CHAOS BITE EFFECTS

#### d8 Chaos Bite Effect

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Your race immediately changes as though you were affected by a <i>reincarnation</i> spell. Your equipment changes to match your new form.  |
| 2 | For the next 1d4 minutes, your attack rolls automatically miss if the total is an even number, and automatically hit if the total is an odd number.  |
| 3 | For the next 2d4 minutes, critical strikes against the character deal no damage; instead, they regain hit points equal to the attack's total. The character's critical strikes against other creatures deal no damage; instead, the target regains hit points equal to the attack's total.   |
| 4 | For the next 2d4 rounds, the character teleports 15 feet in a random direction at the start of each of their turns.  |
| 5 | The character loses one random saving throw proficiency and gains one random saving throw proficiency.   |
| 6 | The character is infected with aggressive chaos phage. If an infected character is reduced to 0 hit points, they automatically fail their death saving throw each round as their body begins to transform into a red or green slaad. If a character dies while infected they immediately transform into a red or green slaad. This chaos phage ignores immunity to disease while the character is within 120 feet of a white or black slaad.   |
| 7 | The creature is infested by a rapidly maturing slaad egg. The egg develops into a tadpole and chews its way out of the host body within 1d4 rounds, doing so at the end of the creature's turn. The tadpole deals 4d10 piercing damage as it does so, and this damage cannot be reduced in any way. The tadpole becomes a blue slaad within 1 minute of emerging. Characters normally immune to disease can be infested by the slaad egg while they are within 120 feet of a white or black slaad. |
| 8 | The character expends and rolls half of its available Hit Dice without adding any modifiers. The character regains a number of hit points equal to the total, and each non-slaad within 15 feet of the character takes force damage equal to half of the total.  |



## WHITE SLAAD

*Huge aberration (shapechanger), chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 210 (20d12 + 80)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)

**Skills** Perception +12

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

**Languages** Common, Celestial, Infernal, Slaad, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

*At will:* chaos bolt, detect magic, detect thoughts, invisibility (self only), mage hand, major image

*3/day each:* fireball, fly, tongues

*1/day each:* cloudkill, plane shift

**Magic Resistance.** The slaad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Magic Weapons.** The slaad's weapon attacks are magical.

**Regeneration.** The slaad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The slaad makes three attacks; one with its chaos bite and two with its claws.

**Chaos Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage. A creature hit by this attack must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be affected by a random effect from the Chaos Bite Effects table. A creature can only be affected by one chaos bite effect at a time.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d12 + 6) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The slaad can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The slaad regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Claw.** The slaad makes one claw attack.

**Lumber.** The slaad moves up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.





## BLACK SLAAD

Huge aberration (shapechanger), chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 276 (24d12 + 120)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+1)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

**Skills** Perception +15

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhausted, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 25

**Languages** Common, Celestial, Infernal, Slaad, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 20 (25,000 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *chaos bolt*, *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *invisibility (self only)*, *mage hand*, *major image*

3/day each: *fireball*, *fly*, *tongues*

1/day each: *cloudkill*, *plane shift*

**Magic Resistance.** The slaad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Magic Weapons.** The slaad's weapon attacks are magical.

**Regeneration.** The slaad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The slaad makes three attacks; one with its chaos bite and two with its claws.

**Chaos Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 27 (3d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage. A creature hit by this attack must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be affected by a random effect from the Chaos Bite Effects table. A creature can only be affected by one chaos bite effect at a time.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d12 + 7) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The slaad can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The slaad regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Claw.** The slaad makes one claw attack.

**Lumber.** The slaad moves up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Elemental Chaos.** The slaad changes one of its damage resistances into a damage immunity until the end of the slaad's next turn or until it uses this legendary action again.

**Chaos Realization (Costs 3 Actions).** Each creature within 120 feet of the slaad that is affected by a black or white slaad's chaos bite, or that is infected with a slaad tadpole or chaos phage, must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. An affected creature takes 39 (6d12) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature infected with a slaad tadpole or chaos phage that is reduced to 0 hit points by this effect immediately births its tadpole or transforms into a red or green slaad. Slaad tadpoles birthed by this effect mature to become a blue or green slaad within 1d4 rounds.







# CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

# VAMPIRES

*"The figure looked up from Artor's bed, its eyes as scarlet as the blood that trickled from the corners of its pale mouth. I thought those eyes would show me surprise, rage, fear, or at the very least some hateful evil. Instead I saw nothing."*

A fixation of folk tales and legends in every corner of the world, the vampire haunts the shadows of decaying ruins and the imaginations of the living. Their popularity as a tale and their iconic strengths and weaknesses does nothing to make them less dangerous. A sinister and manipulative predator, the vampire brings its misery and death to everything it touches.

## ARROGANCE

Some vampires were nobles in life, the grandiosity of their living emotions mirrored by the depths of their monstrous depravity in undeath. Regardless of who they were in life, the vampire's hunger drives them to control and overpower others. Vampires are physically superior beings to common humanoid races, but it is their sense of superiority that ultimately drives them to more and more reckless, self-destructive behavior.

## LIFE~THIRST

It is well-known that vampires thirst for blood, but it doesn't fully capture their nature. Some vampires don't feed on blood at all and drain the life-force from their victims with a touch. There is much to suggest that their thirst is a compulsion that fits into the broader vampire ecology.



## EMPTINESS

For all their presentation of passion, love, and anger, vampires tend to be void of true emotion and only play at the feelings they experienced in life. This emptiness goes hand-in-hand with its hunger for the lives of others, a desire to inflict the void of its existence onto the living.

## THE VAMPIRE'S NATURE

## UNUSUAL UNDEAD

Even the most inexperienced necromancer's zombie is a relentless creature that requires no food, rest, or air to survive. While vampires are more powerful, they are bound by rules and weaknesses, including a need to sleep in a special resting place and, their need for blood.

## PHYSICAL OR SYMBOLIC?

Vampires need to feed or they risk starvation, but the most blood-deprived vampire still doesn't die the way a living creature does. At worst, starved vampires withdraw into a withered hibernation and remain in this state until they are either destroyed or awakened by the presence of fresh blood. In rare cases some vampires don't require blood at all, feeding from victims with a draining touch.

## VICTIM PREFERENCE

Vampires almost universally prefer living humanoids as victims, and many display a strong preference





for victims of the same race (half-elf to half-elf, human to human, etc). The reason for this is unclear, especially when it's established knowledge that blood holds no true nutritional value for the vampire. It's most likely a subconscious desire; in the same way vampires warp emotions into selfish obsessions, their choice of victim is likely driven by hatred and jealousy of the uncorrupted life-force they once possessed.

## WEAKNESSES

### SUNLIGHT

Those familiar with the undead should find the vampire's weakness to sunlight unsurprising. While wights and similar undead are merely weakened, vampires are burned with a searing radiance. Sunlight continues to be one of the most reliable ways to injure and destroy vampires of almost any type.

### STAKING

A piercing stake to the vampire's heart paralyzes the monster and leaves it helpless.

Traditionally these stakes are made of wood, though some stories describe a different stake, such as one made of silver or one specially sanctified, being necessary.

### RUNNING WATER

It's theorized that running water represents a purity of life, and is therefore anathema to the vampire's undead nature. It's possible that some vampire variants are either resistant or immune to the damage caused by running water.

### FORBIDDANCE

Traditional vampires can't enter a residence without invitation. It should be noted that in most recorded instances, the invitation must come from some kind of permanent occupant, and in some cases must come directly from the owner. Public places and areas of temporary ownership, such as inns, hold no power over the vampire.

The rules of a vampire's forbiddance appear somewhat malleable. Vampires (or suspected vampires) appear capable of entering shops that double as the proprietor's residence, at least during business hours. This and other examples suggests this weakness is primarily psychological.

### STARVATION

Vampires need to feed consistently on the life-force of others, most commonly through blood. Most vampire spawn and lesser vampires are destroyed if they are denied sustenance long enough. Older, more powerful vampires go into a long hibernation and are effectively dead until some outside circumstance brings them in contact with fresh blood.

Though not all vampires will follow this progression, a typical starved vampire might exhibit the following effects:

### VAMPIRE STARVATION TABLE

Level of Starvation	Effect
------------------------	--------



1	The vampire has disadvantage on Charisma checks and Wisdom (Insight) checks.
2	The vampire loses access to its Shapechanger trait. In addition, it has disadvantage on all Intelligence checks and doesn't add its proficiency bonus to Intelligence checks.
3	The vampire's speed is halved when it is in dim or bright light, and it doesn't add its proficiency bonus to any saving throws.
4	The vampire loses access to its Regeneration and Legendary Resistance traits, if any, and has disadvantage on checks to maintain a grapple.
5	Weaker vampires are destroyed; more powerful vampires remain incapacitated until they come into contact with fresh blood.

## VAMPIRE CHARACTERISTICS

Vampires are creatures of personal corruption, especially when it comes to their emotional state. The transformation into a vampire turns love to possessiveness, joy to hate, and charity to jealousy. They are often creatures of pantomime and parody, affecting passion, sophistication, and empathy as a deception to lure in prey and mask their true, hollow emotions.

### d6 Vampire Traits

1	I choose particular victims because they remind me of someone I loved (or hated) in my former life.
2	I prefer to kill multiple victims even when one would sate my thirst.
3	I target particular groups, such as clergy.
4	I stalk my victims before the kill as both humanoid and beast, savoring their fear.
5	It's my goal to 'collect' people I'm interested in as vampire spawn that I control.
6	I take a particular cruel satisfaction in torturing and killing adventurers or would-be vampire hunters.

### d6 Vampire Ideals

1	<b>Isolation.</b> The world of the living holds no joy; those that encroach on my lands must be fed upon or driven out.
2	<b>Obsession.</b> I must possess and control a focus of my dark desire.
3	<b>Dominion.</b> Eternity isn't worth living if I do not control lands full of people who fear and obey me.
4	<b>Hunger.</b> There are two things in this world: me, and the cattle.
5	<b>Gloom.</b> There is no meaning in this endless cycle of hibernation and thirst.
6	<b>Manipulation.</b> Controlling others through machinations is the only way I feel a flicker of joy.

### d6 Vampire Bonds

1-3	I fixate on a specific person and "help" them by protecting them from harm or killing and manipulating their rivals. I would be reluctant to harm them.
4-6	The vampire spawn and choice underlings I control are the closest thing to a family I'll ever have. I resent their destruction.



**d6 Vampire Flaws**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | I am controlled by my passions and will take risks to get (or keep) what I want.                                       |
| 2 | I have been undead for so long that I cannot understand the emotions of living beings.                                 |
| 3 | My ego prevents me from believing that mortals could do me lasting harm.   |
| 4 | I can't help engaging with potential victims or rivals to spar on an intellectual level or manipulate them with charm. |
| 5 | My thirst for blood becomes an overpowering drive that tunnels my focus.   |
| 6 | I am doomed to play out my life's shortcomings and failures again and again.   |

## UNIQUE QUIRKS

Specific supernatural phenomena have been associated with specific vampires throughout the centuries. Sometimes, these unique quirks are identifiers that mark the appearance of a specific vampire across different dates and times. A thorough investigation by a hunter can successfully separate fact from folklore, and determine whether these manifestations of power are relevant to efforts to defeat a given vampire.

**d8 Vampire Quirks**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Romantic.</b> Flowers will grow, bloom, wither and dry out in their presence.   |
| 2 | <b>Tattooed.</b> They have twin sets of moon cycle tattoos that glow before they strike, usually on their arms.  |
| 3 | <b>Underwinged.</b> They can sprout phantasmal wings but from their clavicles. When flying, their slack body with an upside down head makes it appear as if they were a victim being sucked of their blood instead of an attacker. |
| 4 | <b>Beskulled.</b> Its gaseous form is a roiling pile of laughing skulls.   |

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 5 | <b>Skelly-Vision.</b> While most vampires do not have a reflection, this kind has a reflection of their skeleton. They usually avoid mirrors and reflective surfaces.  |
| 6 | <b>Blood Stars.</b> Whenever this vampire feeds, the stars above the city, town or hamlet glow and pulse with a crimson beauty.  |
| 7 | <b>Hand to Mouth.</b> As a cruel lover, they have small tiny mouths in the palms of their hands. Once a vein is opened by their vicious regular canines, they can then switch to sucking the blood out with their hands, leaving their face free for other things. |
| 8 | <b>Food-Motivated.</b> They enjoy draining extra blood to jellyfy and shape into 'human' food like a chicken leg or pie for a wobbly odd meal.   |

## UNUSUAL ABILITIES

Many vampiric powers such as turning into mist, shapechanging into animal forms, and climbing eerily across walls and ceilings, are common trademarks in both practical studies and folk legends. However, other supernatural abilities have appeared in isolated cases, suggesting the existence of different types of vampirism or, at the very least, some variation of powers among fully-fledged vampires. The table below lists a number of uncommon abilities or variations that have been observed in some vampires.

### CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT (1/DAY) VARIATIONS

This ability normally summons bats or wolves. However, some vampires call up other allies in the heat of battle based on their location or preference. Variations include:

- Children of the Night summons 2 **gargoyles** if the vampire is in a suitable location.
- Children of the Night summons 2d4 **swarms of spiders** or 3d6 **giant wolf spiders**.



- Children of the Night summons 3d6 **skeletons** or **zombies**.
- Children of the Night summons 1d4+1 **specters**.

## TURN DEFIANCE

The vampire and undead allies within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

## UNDEAD COMMANDER

Undead creatures other than the vampire that are considered friendly to it regain 1d6 hit points at the start of their turns.



## LEGENDARY ACTION: EMBRACE OF SHADOWS (COSTS 2 ACTIONS)

The vampire can teleport to another area of dim light or darkness within 60 feet of it. The vampire is invisible after teleporting and remains invisible until either the start of its next turn, if it attacks or leaves its current space, or its current space becomes brightly lit.

## LEGENDARY ACTION: CHARM

The vampire uses its charm ability. The target has advantage on its initial saving throw against the effect.

## NIGHT-TIME VISITOR (RECHARGES AFTER A LONG REST)

The vampire can cast the *dream* spell without expending a spell slot and without material components, targeting a creature it has successfully fed upon within the last 24 hours.

## PSYCHIC VAMPIRE

Some vampires don't feed on blood at all, draining the energy from their victims with a deadly touch. The following attack replaces the standard vampire's bite attack:

**Psychic Touch (Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the psychic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the ground rises the following night as a vampire spawn under the vampire's control.



## A VAMPIRE'S LAIR

Creatures of the night, vampires need a lair that can suitably protect them from the sun's deadly, hated rays. A vampire that plans on surviving long-term also seeks out a lair with suitable complexity, such as one with many rooms, winding tunnels, or secret passages, that will foil intruders in their quest to find its true resting place. These requirements, in combination with the vampire's common arrogance and veneer of nobility, prompt vampires to make their home in standing or ruined castles, manors, and the like.

### SPECIAL ROOMS

When exploring a vampire's lair, characters might come across one or more of the following chambers. You can use the following table when creating a vampire's lair or use it in conjunction with Appendix A: Random Dungeons of the Dungeon Master's Guide.

d6	Location Description
1	<b>Spawn Lair.</b> A vampire spawn, including a so-called 'bride' or 'husband,' makes its home here.
2	<b>Shrine of Obsession.</b> This room contains memorabilia related to the vampire's obsession. It might contain images of a target and objects belonging to that person, maps or images of a place the vampire seeks to control, or defiled images and gruesome trophies related to some hated target.
3	<b>False Resting Place.</b> A decoy coffin or area of dirt is designed to bait would-be slayers. The coffin and surrounding area are likely trapped or designed to alert the vampire and its minions.
4	<b>Forgotten History.</b> A room with portraits, tapestries, or other memorabilia give clues to the vampire's time as a living being. The vampire visits this room with emotions mimicking rage, sorrow, or resentment.

5	<b>True Resting Place.</b> One of the vampire's actual resting places. Traps and guardians are likely deadly.
6	<b>Disposal Chamber.</b> The bodies of unturned victims are thrown in here. Carrion-eaters populate the chamber.

## THE VAMPIRE'S COFFIN

The vampire is in its most vulnerable state during the day when it must sleep. At the outset a vampire must sleep in its coffin or crypt or, lacking a proper burial, under the earth where it was first turned. A vampire denied the ability to rest for a long enough will eventually degrade into the less intelligent but still-deadly vampiric mist (see *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*)

### POWERS WHILE RESTING

Sleeping vampires are usually unaware of their surroundings as any sleeping creature. Some vampires retain full awareness of their surroundings even while sleeping; those who don't rely on traps, alarms, and servants to protect and awaken them.

A vampire roused from the middle of its slumber is treated like any other creature that has been interrupted during a long rest: any strenuous activity lasting an hour or more forces the vampire to restart its long rest to gain any benefit from it.

### MULTIPLE RESTING PLACES

Vampires can create multiple resting places by transporting a sufficient amount of grave dirt to a new location. Those with the time and resources almost always do so as quickly as possible, especially if the vampire is a transient predator establishing itself in a new location.

Like a lich's phylactery, vampires take great pains to protect their resting places and may have at least one emergency resting place that remains a guarded secret, known either to select servants or no-one but the vampire themselves.



## COFFIN DEFENSES

Vampires defend their resting place vigorously with traps, servants, and secrets. A vampire with sufficient resources will have multiple resting places available to it within its lair, at least one of which will be unknown to most of its own servants. Traps around a vampire's coffin are deadly to all but the hardest adventurers.

Coffins themselves are fortified where possible, and can feature locking mechanisms to keep a vampire safe inside while it sleeps. Particularly vicious vampires create 'false coffins' identical to its true resting place, goading would-be slayers that force their way into the coffin only to find themselves at the mercy of the deadly trap inside.

## SPAWN, THRALLS, AND ALLIES

Undead masters and manipulators, vampires have many servants and no true friends. Creatures of death and evil are inexorably drawn to the vampire's commanding presence, and many vampires position themselves as twisted rulers over isolated lairs or as the nobility overseeing entire regions. Vampires are driven to control the creatures around them, living or dead, and see them as tools for their use and puppets for their entertainment.

## VAMPIRE SPAWN

Victims drained by a vampire to the point of death are at risk of becoming vampire spawn, a weak form of vampire that is obedient to the vampire that created it. The transformation to spawn is completed after the victim is buried, a necessary step to establish the new vampire's coffin or place of transformation. Vampires seeking to create spawn must either bury their victims themselves or prey upon a population ignorant of its presence; a population living in fear of a vampire will be certain to take whatever measures are necessary to prevent



any mysterious deaths from becoming a potential vampire spawn.

***So-Called Brides and Husbands.*** Vampires that selectively create vampire spawn sometimes create “brides” or “husbands” to act as lieutenants, partners, and emissaries. The term “bride” or “husband” is a romanticized misnomer; there is no semblance of love or equal partnership between most vampires and their spawn. Vampires create “brides” and “husbands” to satisfy their need to own and dominate living beings. Their selected spawn are often the object of their obsession or, more callously, mere proxies for their true target.

***Freeing a Spawn.*** A vampire spawn comes into its full power if a true vampire allows the spawn to feed on its blood. At that point, the spawn becomes either a true vampire in its full power or, with some frequency, a lesser vampire (see Expanded Encyclopedia for this chapter). Vampires rarely ‘promote’ their spawn to full vampires; it creates a potential rival and robs them of the control they relish.

Unusual circumstances where a spawn becomes a full vampire usually involve feeding on the blood of a vampire other than the one that created them. A vampire might elect to do so because they are rivals with the spawn’s original creator. Alternatively, vampire spawn become independent if their creator-vampire is destroyed; a spawn seeking to become a full vampire would make finding a willing patron its personal quest.

## OTHER UNDEAD

As an undead creature, vampires enjoy a mutual indifference with most mundane forms of undead, such as zombies. A vampire’s lair often includes multiple undead creatures in at least one form or another: if they aren’t naturally drawn to the vampire’s presence by an undead affinity, they are created as part of a vampire’s exploration of necromantic magic.

***Skeletons and Zombies.*** Simple undead accessible to even a novice necromancer, zombies and skeletons are common in established vampire lairs. Vampires turn

humanoids into these weak undead as punishment, out of morbid interest in necromancy, or to act as passive guardians of its lair.

***Ghouls and Specters.*** More intelligent than zombies and capable of having their own personalities, specters and ghouls reside in a vampire’s lair because something binds them there. This can be the vampire’s direct magical control, but ghouls especially see a mutual benefit living where fresh meat is likely to appear.

***Intelligent Undead.*** Wights, wraiths, ghosts, and numerous other undead have the autonomy and intelligence necessary to act as valuable assets to a vampire’s plots. They serve as agents, assassins, and lieutenants to a vampire master and are essential for vampires with goals of domination and dominion.

## LIVING SERVANTS

Though they present themselves with an air of nobility and refinement, vampires are still undead and tend to live in a manner inimical to living beings. Their living humanoid servants rarely live in the vampire’s lair unless they are either depraved or powerful enough to survive among the undead and other dangers present.

## COMMON VAMPIRE SERVANTS

The following tables give specific examples of such creatures and how they might fit into a hierarchy within the vampire’s lair.

## VALUED SECOND

A vampire has no trusted friends, only reliable servants. These usually take the form of vampire spawn that their creator can reliably control, but can include creatures of intelligence and ambition that believe they will benefit from their service to a powerful vampire master.



**d6 This vampire's valued second is...**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | A bone lord that marshalls lesser undead.                             |
| 2 | 1d4 vampire spawn that act as 'husbands' or 'brides.'                 |
| 3 | A sword wraith commander, hungry for victories it was denied in life. |
| 4 | A lesser vampire that chooses to serve its more powerful counterpart. |
| 5 | A hag, relishing the suffering the vampire inflicts on the living.    |
| 6 | A deathlock mastermind that still serves its vampire lord in death.   |

**SUB-COMMANDERS**

There is rarely a rigid command structure among a vampire's servants unless they choose to create one; the example creatures listed below are too weak to become a trusted second-in-command but still wield enough power to subjugate one or more underlings of their own.

**d4 The vampire's other commanders include...**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | A ghast or maurezhi, overseeing ghouls and other carrion-eaters. |
| 2 | A wight, commanding its contingent of zombies.                   |
| 3 | A deathlock obediently commands a handful of lesser servants.    |
| 4 | A wraith, hungry to create more specters.                        |

**CARRION-EATERS**

Where the undead lurk, corpses accumulate. The bodies of humanoid and beast alike find their way to a vampire's lair as hunted prey, discarded victims, experimental subjects, and defeated adventurers pile up. Common scavengers and less natural beings are drawn to the delicious scent of decay.

**d4 Corpses of victims are consumed by...**

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Giant rats and swarms of rats |
| 2 | Carrion crawlers              |
| 3 | An otyugh                     |
| 4 | A corpse flower               |

**HUMANOID ALLIES**

Though they're viewed as little better than expendable cattle, some talented or convenient living humanoids enjoy a position of power (or at least relative safety) within the vampire's hierarchy of followers.

**d4 Notable humanoid allies or servants include...**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | A necromancer ( <i>VGTM</i> ) fascinated by the vampire and its subservient undead.  |
| 2 | A cult fanatic that worships the vampire.  |
| 3 | A blackguard ( <i>VGTM</i> ) that sees their relationship as a mutual alliance.      |
| 4 | A noble from the surrounding region or nearby town, or a still-living family member. |



# EXPANDED ENCYCLOPEDIA: VAMPIRES

## BAOBHAN SITH

Many have been fooled by the ethereal visage of a baobhan sith. They appear looking like young, female humanoids wearing long dresses that fall down to cover the deer-like hooves they have in place of feet.

**Drawn by Loneliness.** The baobhan sith preys almost exclusively on hunters and other humanoids frequenting the forests where it has its home. Should these humanoids begin expressing their loneliness and call out for female companionship, either by longing for a random woman or for one they love, the baobhan sith is supernaturally drawn to their need. Its deceptive looks allows it to get close to the lonely humanoids, charming them with its beauty before attacking.

### BAOBHAN SITH

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 38 (5d8 + 15)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Wis +3

**Skills** Perception +3, Persuasion +5, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Beautiful Visage.** Non-female characters have disadvantage on ability checks made against the baobhan sith.

**Deer Hooves.** The baobhan sith's speed is not lowered by passing through difficult terrain while in a forest. In addition, all Wisdom (Survival) checks made to track the baobhan sith are made with disadvantage.

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire has the following flaws:

**Forbiddance.** The baobhan sith can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The baobhan sith takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The baobhan sith makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the baobhan sith regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.



## LESSER VAMPIRE

After a vampire spawn has been turned into a full vampire, it doesn't immediately gain all the powers of a fully developed specimen of the species. Instead, they turn into a lesser version of their full potential. A vampire that has some of the powers associated with its kind, and is slowly growing into the blood draining beast of night it was destined to become.

**Servants to None.** Lesser vampires, though not as strong as full vampires, are still their own masters. Unlike vampire spawn, they are not bound by the will of their creator and may wander the world, terrorizing or exploring it as they see fit.

**Unable to Turn Others.** Though powerful, lesser vampires cannot turn humanoids into vampire spawn. Lesser vampires who attempt this will most likely end up killing their victim instead of turning them, making the existence of a lesser vampire a rather lonely one.

The time until a lesser vampire grows into a full vampire can vary. Some remain in this weakened state for decades.



### LESSER VAMPIRE

Medium undead, chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 105 (14d8 + 42)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Wis +4, Cha +5

**Skills** Perception +7, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Regeneration.** The vampire regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

**Spider Climb.** The vampire can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The vampire has the following flaws:

**Forbiddance.** The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

**Harmed by Running Water.** The vampire takes 20 acid damage when it ends its turn in running water.

**Stake to the Heart.** If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the vampire's heart while the vampire is incapacitated in its resting place, the vampire is destroyed.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

**Wings of Night.** If the vampire isn't in sunlight or running water, it can use its action to polymorph into a Tiny bat or back into its true form.

While in bat form, the vampire can't speak, its walking speed is 5 feet, and it has a flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. Anything it is wearing transforms with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Claws (Vampire Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 14).

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.



# MANANANGGAL

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Unlike other vampiric entities, the manananggal is capable of walking outside during the day without being hurt by sunlight. It uses this ability to scout for possible prey as it looks entirely humanoid when walking among the living in the daytime. It's not until night falls that its true nature is shown, as it then severs its torso from its legs and sprouts enormous, bat-like wings from its back.

**Hunter of the Sleeping.** Manananggals are not physically powerful beings and must rely on stealth more than strength to feed on their prey.

As a result, they often feed on sleeping humanoids, sucking their blood using their long proboscis to drain their victims. They particularly enjoy feeding on unborn children, using their proboscis to pierce the stomachs of pregnant women and suckle on the blood of the baby they are carrying.

**Split and Vulnerable.** If the manananggal is unable to reconnect to its bottom half before sunrise, both body parts die.

**Eternal Hunter.** The manananggal does not require sleep, and magic can't put it to sleep.



## MANANANGGAL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Wis +4

**Skills** Deception +4, Perception +7, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistances** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Regeneration.** The manananggal regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the manananggal takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the manananggal's next turn.

**Severed Torso.** When night falls, the manananggal must use an action to sever its upper body from its legs and sprouts wings from its back. When it has done this its walking speed is 5 feet, its size is Medium, and it has a

flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. If either part of its body is destroyed while its severed, the manananggal dies.

**Vampire Weaknesses.** The manananggal has the following flaws:

**Harmed by Running Water.** The manananggal takes 20 acid damage when it ends its turn in running water.

**Stake to the Heart.** If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the manananggal's heart while the manananggal is incapacitated, the manananggal is destroyed.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The manananggal makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the manananggal can grapple the target (escape DC 16).

**Proboscis.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the manananggal, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the manananggal regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.



## YARA-MA-YHA-WHO

While it doesn't make for the most intimidating visage, the yara-ma-yha-who is a threat not to be taken lightly. Looking like a small frog-like humanoid with reddish skin, the yara-ma-yha-who is patient predator with a big head, a large toothless mouth, and suckers on the end of each of its fingers.

**Waiting Hunter.** A yara-ma-yha-who is capable of sitting for hours without moving, patiently waiting for its prey to come close enough for it to attack. It waits in treetops until a traveler sits down to rest beneath it. Then it drops down, using its suckers to drain the victim's blood and swallows its prey whole.

It only hunts in sunlight, using the night to nap and digest any victims it may have caught during the day.

**Regurgitation Spawn.** To create a new yara-ma-yha-who is not the most simple of affairs. A humanoid that has been swallowed is regurgitated by the yara-ma-yha-who before being swallowed again. The process is then repeated several times, leaving the victim shorter and with a slightly redder skin tone each time it is thrown up. Unless this process is interrupted, the victim transforms into a yara-ma-yha-who themselves.

### THE REAL MYTH

The yara-ma-yha-who is presented here as an interesting and entertaining creature in the context of a *Dungeons & Dragons* fantasy world. The real yara-ma-yha-who comes from Aboriginal mythology and is more nuanced than a combat-centric roleplaying game can effectively illustrate. For further reading and inspiration about the creature's origin, see *Legendary Tales of the Australian Aborigines*, where author and activist David Unaipon transcribes this and other stories from his culture.

## YARA-MA-YHA-WHO

*Small undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 46 (7d6 + 21)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30. Ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +5

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +6

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 4 (2,900 XP)

**Ambusher.** The yara-ma-yha-who has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

**Spider Climb.** The yara-ma-yha-who can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The yara-ma-yha-who makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

**Suckers.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the yara-ma-yha-who regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature and it has taken damage from the yara-ma-yha-who's suckers, that creature is swallowed. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the yara-ma-yha-who, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the yara-ma-yha-who's turns. If the yara-ma-yha-who takes 25 or more damage on a single turn from the creature inside it, the yara-ma-yha-who must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate the swallowed creature, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of yara-ma-yha-who. If the yara-ma-yha-who dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

The yara-ma-yha-who can only have one creature swallowed at any given time. As long as it has a creature swallowed, its speed is halved.