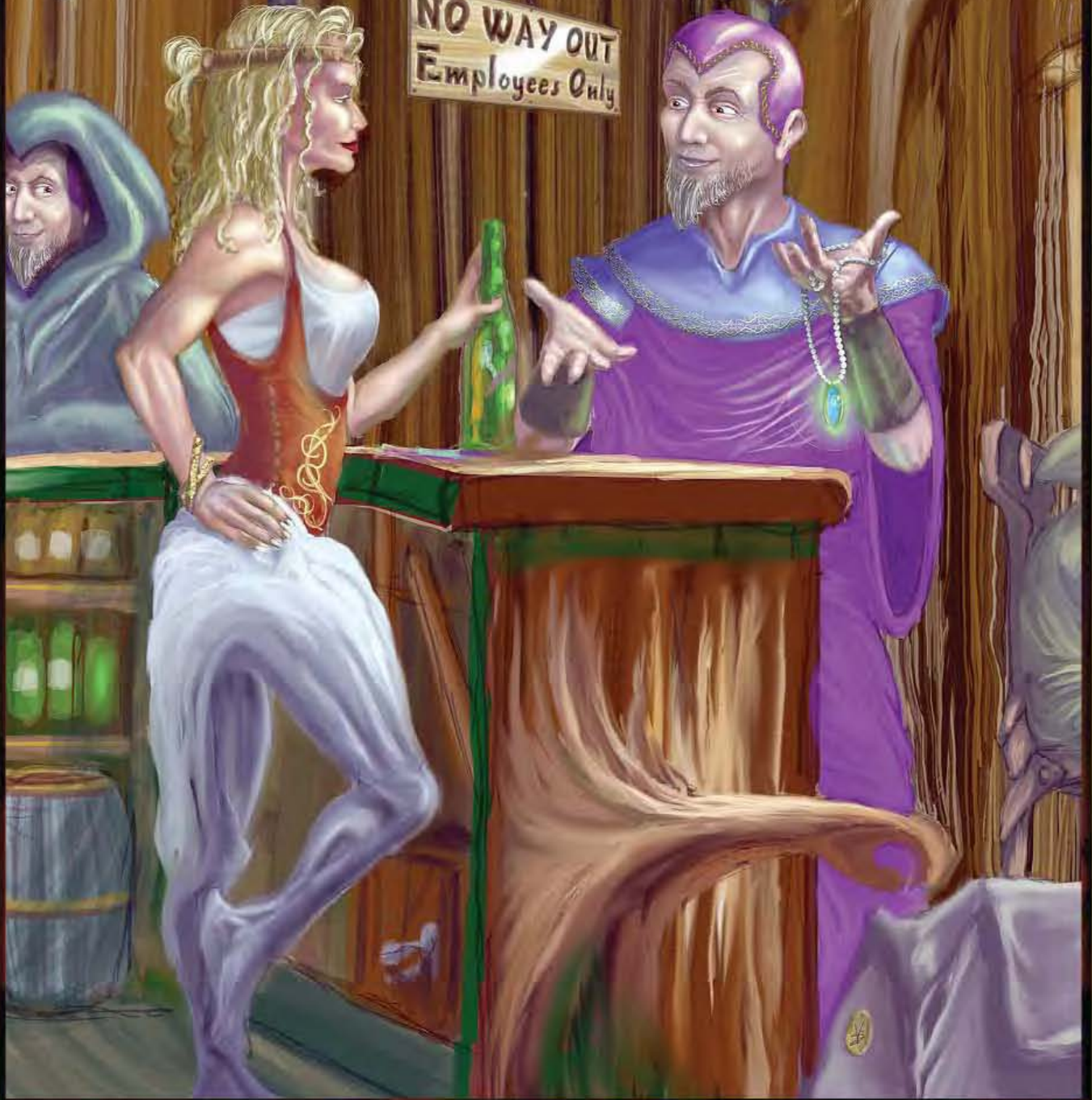


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The **Complete**  
Guide to

# Doppelgangers

NO WAY OUT  
Employees Only



# The Complete Guide to Doppelgangers

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# Introduction

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*What do you truly know?*

*Here we sit, surrounded by guards. You believe that I will tell you the mysteries of my people, and you will record them with parchment and ink. That is your first mistake — your reliance on words, your belief that you can assign a shape to the world. You have but one form, and you want all questions to have a single answer. But they don't. Life is about change — about mysteries that you cannot understand. Look at me now. Am I your lover? Look at me now. Am I your friend? No, you are thinking. I have simply stolen his appearance — I am trying to trick you. But can you be certain? Is your friend still at the inn? Or am I the one you have known for years? Am I the one who guarded your back in the battle at Balen Moor? I can tell you the words you said at the end of that battle, when we were alone in the dark drenched in sweat and blood. But was I there? Was it real? How can you know?*

*I can see your thoughts. How simple and flat they are — as two-dimensional as the words you are writing. You believe that you and your companions captured me, that you foiled a plot against the leader of this city. But what if there was no plot? What if I was the duke all along — and the man you “restored” to power was just another of my kind, standing in the shadows and waiting to take my place? Is there anyone in this city who you truly know — about whom you have no doubts whatsoever?*

*What about the city itself? Has it ever occurred to you that the city might have its own thoughts, its own ideas? What if I was simply part of the city — playing a role and waiting for the next act to begin? I see you don't believe me. Is it harder to accept this than to imagine that the guards who stand around us are also part of the city, and that in a moment they will kill you? Because both of these things are true...*

— The last entry in the journal of loremaster Kenta Barri

Doppelgangers have spawned hundreds of rumors and stories. What adventurer doesn't have a tale about the time he fought a doppelganger assassin, stopped one from impersonating the duke, or was surprised by a doppelganger disguised as his friend? But these accounts leave many questions unanswered. What do doppelgangers do when they aren't assassinating or impersonating people? Why do they work for humans — and how do prospective employers find them, anyway? Are there Doppelganger communities?

This book examines the psychology and motivations of these mysterious creatures. It looks at the lifecycle of the doppelganger, and reveals the existence of biological variations of the creature. For the fact of the matter is that there are doppelgangers all around — that they are far more common than people believe.

A point of clarification: the word “doppelganger” is used for two purposes in this book. As you will see in the next chapter, the doppelganger is a particular stage in the lifecycle — the stage at which the creature is the most active and during which it impersonates living creatures. When capitalized it is used as a general term to describe the entire species, including mimics and doppelstadte.

Complete details on the new feats, skills, and classes mentioned in this book can be found in the chapter on character creation. Statistics for the new forms of Doppelganger can be found in Appendix I.

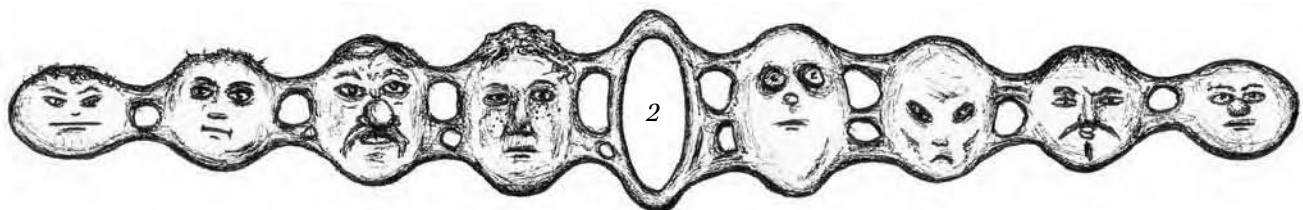
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## Physiology

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A Doppelganger is a telepathic, asexual creature that possesses the power to change its shape. Doppelgangers are fundamentally magical creatures that have evolved through the interaction of arcane and natural forces. A Doppelganger's body is made up of undifferentiated cells that shift form to meet the needs of the moment. It forms bones, sensory organs, and anything else it requires from its general mass. A Doppelganger has nothing that a human would recognize as a brain; its consciousness is a field spread throughout its entire being. This field cannot be split; a piece removed from a Doppelganger becomes dead flesh, and will not revert to its original form.

The lifecycle of the Doppelganger is more complicated than most people realize. A Doppelganger goes through three stages of development. In addition, there are a number of distinct subspecies of Doppelganger, each



adapted to a specific environment. The three most common varieties are the urban Doppelganger, which has adapted to live around sentient humanoid; the rustic Doppelganger, which blends in with the natural world; and the dungeon Doppelganger, a more primitive subtype dwelling underground. All subspecies go through the same three stages, but vary in appearance; the pictures in this chapter are of the urban doppelganger.

Regardless of subspecies or stage of development, these creatures have a number of shared abilities. The dissociated consciousness of a Doppelganger renders it immune to *sleep* or *charm* effects. Doppelgangers can operate freely even in complete darkness. Many believe that the creatures can see in the dark, but in fact their senses are more highly evolved than that. A Doppelganger “sees” using its telepathic sense, perceiving inanimate objects by their lack of thoughts. This provides the creature with blindsight with a range of 60 feet. It should be noted that these telepathic abilities are magical in nature — not psionic powers.

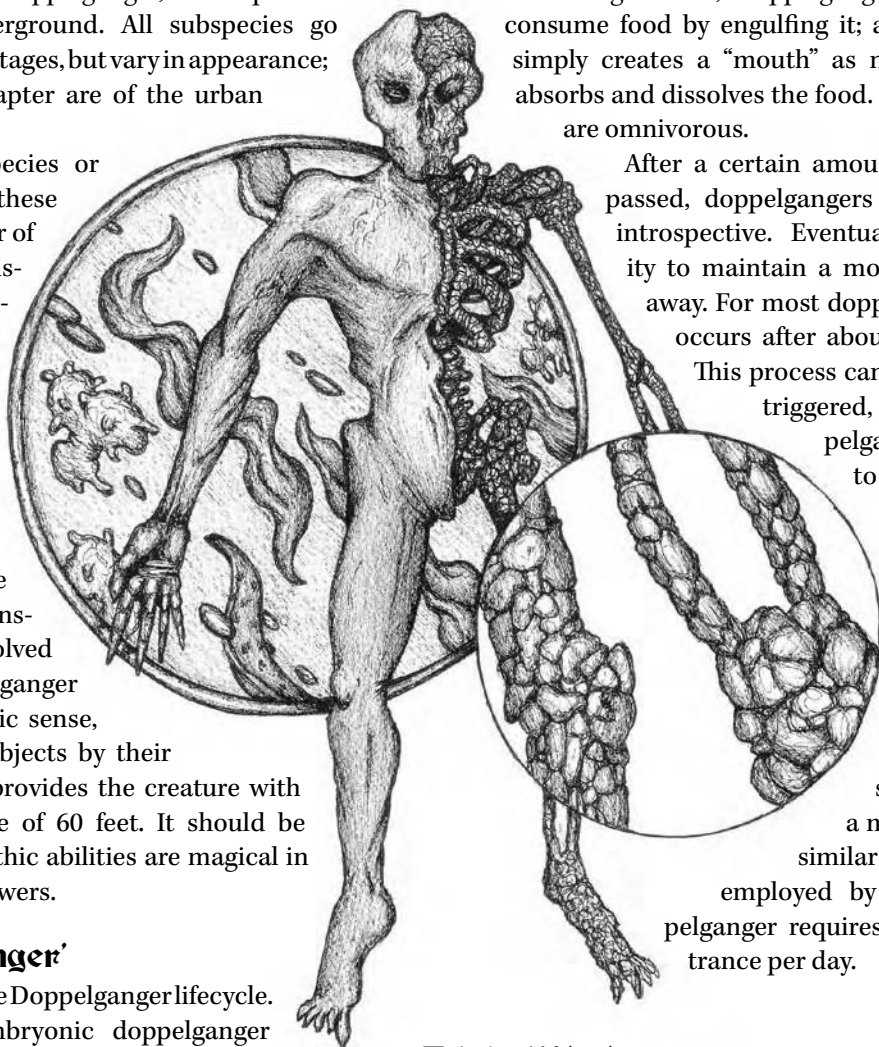
### Youth: ‘Doppelganger’

This is the first stage of the Doppelganger lifecycle. As it gestates, an embryonic doppelganger adjusts to a particular environment. It adapts to interact with the other creatures that share this environment; its telepathic and shapeshifting abilities are honed to focus on these creatures, and even its natural form is altered to a shape more suited to its new home. The urban doppelganger is designed to interact with sentient humanoids. Its natural shape is a bipedal mockery of human form — completely hairless and covered with gray, oily skin. A typical urban doppelganger is about five and a half feet tall; it appears to be spindly and frail, but it is pure muscle and bone beneath the skin and is surprisingly strong and fast. The only facial features it possesses are two large, white eyes that lack any visible pupil. This lack of features does not adversely affect the creature. The primary sense used by

a doppelganger is telepathy; it “sees” through telepathy and mentally communicates with other doppelgangers. A doppelganger can hear sounds even without visible ears; it feels the vibrations against its skin. As for the missing mouth, Doppelgangers of all ages consume food by engulfing it; a doppelganger simply creates a “mouth” as necessary, then absorbs and dissolves the food. Doppelgangers are omnivorous.

After a certain amount of time has passed, doppelgangers become more introspective. Eventually, their ability to maintain a mobile form slips away. For most doppelgangers, this occurs after about twenty years.

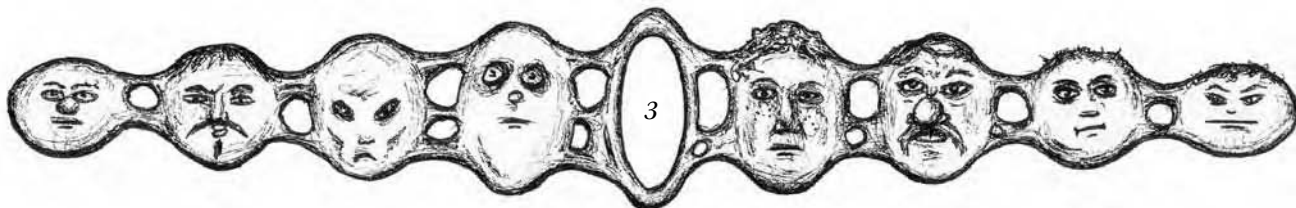
This process can be voluntarily triggered, and many doppelgangers choose to advance to the next stage to meet the needs of their community. A doppelganger does not sleep; instead it enters a meditative state similar to the trance employed by elves. A doppelganger requires four hours of trance per day.



### Adult: Mimic

The second stage of the Doppelganger lifecycle is familiar to adventurers — but few make the connection to the doppelganger. This is the mimic — a slow-moving shapeshifter that can assume the form of inanimate objects. Most adventurers know of the dungeon mimic, which is more aggressive and less intelligent than its urban and rustic relatives. In its natural state, a mimic is a blob of oily gray flesh with a mass that can range from three hundred to two thousand pounds. It usually relies on its telepathic senses and vibrational hearing, but it can create eyes if necessary.

Mimics are sedentary creatures. A mimic cannot assume the forms of living creatures, and it cannot move quickly. It spends most of the time in a state of



trance, communing with other members of its gestalt and listening to the thoughts of the creatures around it. A mimic must attain a certain level of mental discipline before it can progress to the next stage of life; this can take anywhere from a few months to a few decades based on the individual mimic. As a result, a community of Doppelgangers may contain dozens of mimics scattered around striving to advance to the next stage.

### Elder: Doppelstadt

The doppelstadt (plural doppelstadte) is the final stage of the Doppelganger lifecycle. It is a communal entity, formed when multiple mimics fuse together into a single mass. A doppelstadt duplicates the forms of vast inanimate objects; urban doppelstadt typically assume the forms of buildings, while rustic doppelstadt mimic groves of trees or other natural formations. The physical abilities of a doppelstadt are extremely limited; it can shift its internal structure, but this is a painfully slow process. Its power is its mind; a doppelstadt possesses impressive mental abilities and maintains a telepathic network that acts as a psychic anchor for the community.

A doppelstadt relies on its offspring to fetch the food it requires. A doppelstadt that is spawning needs a considerable amount of protein, but if it is not engaged in reproduction it can survive with less sustenance. With proper support, a doppelstadt can live for hundreds of years; the maximum lifespan of these creatures has yet to be determined.

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## The Mechanics of Shapeshifting

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A Doppelganger embodies the phrase “mind over matter.” The intelligence of the creature is a field that suffuses its flesh; when it concentrates on a desired form, its body shifts to match its thoughts. For doppelgangers and mimics, this is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

This power has many limitations. Magically, it has more in common with *alter self* than *polymorph*. A doppelganger can adjust its muscle and bone structure and even alter its mass, but its statistics do not change and it does not gain any of the inherent abilities of the creature it copies (with one exception: it can form working gills when in the shape of an aquatic creature).

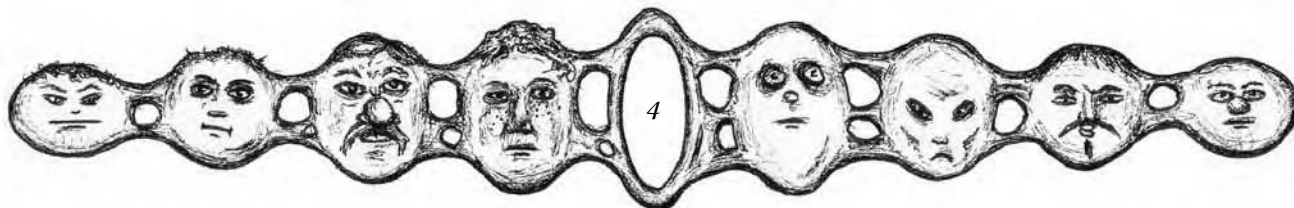
It does not recover damage when it shifts form. Finally, it is limited in the range of forms it can assume. An urban doppelganger can assume any humanoid form — but it must actually copy the appearance of an existing creature; it cannot simply add an extra pair of arms and a set of wings, as a sorcerer could using *alter self*. Rustic doppelgangers are limited to animal shapes. The act of changing shape is a supernatural ability and cannot be performed in an *antimagic field*. However, maintaining a shape is not an actively supernatural effect; a doppelganger that enters an *antimagic field* will not revert to its natural form. See Appendix I for more details on the limitations of specific types of Doppelganger.

With training, a doppelganger can develop additional abilities; see the chapter on Doppelganger Characters for complete details on new feats, the geistspeaker class, and the protean warrior prestige class.

### Body Weaponry

Doppelgangers avoid material possessions that interfere with their ability to shift form. A doppelganger wearing armor can shift its facial features and the color or texture of its skin, but cannot change its overall shape. Further, it cannot use any of the following feats: Adhesive Slime, Chameleon, Extend Limb, Slippery, Springheels, or Wings. As a result, most doppelgangers form armor and clothing out of their own flesh. If the AC bonus of the armor does not exceed the natural AC bonus of the doppelganger, this synthetic armor will pass close inspection. Thus a typical doppelganger can replicate any form of light armor, hide armor, or scale mail. Protean warriors or doppelgangers with the Improved Natural Armor feat can reproduce heavier armor. If the bonus of the armor exceeds the natural AC bonus of the doppelganger, the armor may *look* convincing, but someone who touches it may notice that it feels thin. This requires a successful Craft (armorsmithing) check (DC 13). Synthetic armor does not hinder the doppelganger’s motions in any way, and it does not inflict an armor check penalty or a chance of arcane spell failure. A doppelganger always receives its full natural AC bonus; normally, this bonus comes from the thickened muscles and bones that lie beneath the skin.

Doppelgangers can also create weapons and shields. Such a weapon is an extension of the doppelganger’s body; when it appears to be holding a sword, the hilt is fused to its palm, and when the blade is returned to its scabbard it merges with it. A doppelganger “holding a weapon” cannot be disarmed, but cannot use that hand



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## Social Structure

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for spellcasting or skill use; further, if an opponent tries to disarm a doppelganger and would normally succeed, the doppelganger suffers 1d4 points of damage.

If an opponent strikes a synthetic weapon, the damage is reduced by an amount equal to the doppelganger's natural armor bonus and then applied to the creature itself. The doppelganger must also make a Fortitude saving throw; the DC is equal to 5 + the amount of damage dealt by the attack. If the doppelganger fails the roll, the "weapon" breaks. A doppelganger can reform a weapon as a standard action. Doppelgangers can create missile weapons, but cannot create ammunition for them.

Doppelgangers suffer standard penalties for using weapons without proficiency. Most prefer to rely on unarmed combat. If a disguise requires a weapon, a doppelganger will try to obtain an actual weapon as soon as possible.



*I spoke with the prisoner earlier today. I have the impression it is playing with me. It knows my questions the moment I think of them, and seems to enjoy giving me answers that simply raise further questions. I asked it about doppelganger society. I wanted to know where its people lived — why no human has ever discovered a doppelganger city.*

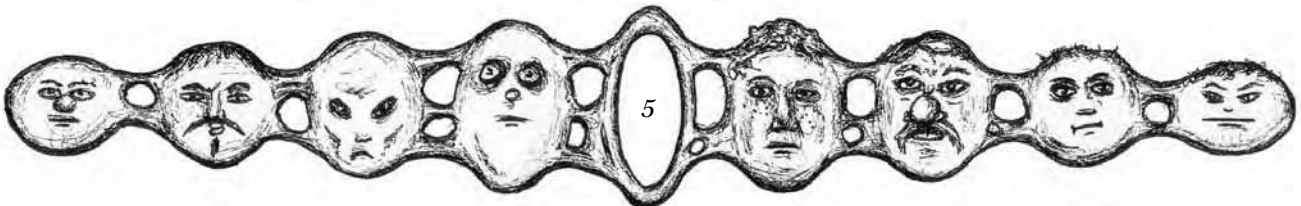
*It had assumed the form of my mother, and it spoke with her voice. "Where have you been looking, dear?" it said. It seemed perfectly sincere. I repeated the question, and it said "You walk in our cities every day, Kenta. You just need to open your eyes."*

*Frustrated, I turned to another topic, asking what sort of social units doppelgangers formed. The creature with my mother's face smiled as it said, "Why, dearest, isn't family the most important bond of all?" Then its face seemed to lose expression. "You are lost and isolated — you build so many walls inside. What binds us together is that there is nothing to keep us apart. In all ways that matter, we are one." As it spoke, its flesh flowed until it was a reflection of my own form. "Don't you feel more comfortable now, Kenta?"*

*I left it at that point. Let it sit for a while — perhaps it will be more helpful after a day in chains.*

— From the journal of loremaster Kenta Barri

**D**oppelganger society is a mystery. No explorer has ever found a Doppelganger city. Most believe that these shapechangers have no civilization, that they are nomadic creations of mad wizards. Nothing could be further from the truth. No one has found a Doppelganger city because they don't know what to look for. There are far more Doppelgangers in the world than humans have ever guessed — and their society is hidden in plain sight.



To understand the shape of Doppelganger society, one must look at the biological and mystical traits of these creatures. Imagine two human children raised together from the moment of birth. These twins share every experience, every memory. They have no secrets; each one knows exactly what the other is thinking at any time, and each uses the same frame of reference to evaluate events. This is the world of the Doppelganger. These creatures perceive their environment through telepathy, literally seeing the thoughts of those around them. It is ironic that these creatures, who are best known in the human world for their cunning and deceptive nature, cannot lie to each other. With Doppelgangers of the same genetic line this psychic bond goes even deeper. A Doppelganger feels a relative's emotions and can experience its memories. Studying these creatures, some might assume that they are controlled by a single intelligence; but this is not the case. Two Doppelgangers from the same colony typically react to a situation in an identical manner. This is not because a single mind controls both Doppelgangers; it is because mentally the two are virtually identical. Intellectually they are individuals capable of making their own decisions; but their motivations, their experiences, and emotions are the same. Raised from birth with this connection, Doppelgangers feel a bond to their brethren that they cannot share with any other creature. The other members of their genetic line are the only creatures that they can truly trust, the only ones who truly understand them. As a result, Doppelgangers are incredibly loyal to their kin; most are willing to die in order to preserve the secrets of their clan.

These genetic and telepathic ties define Doppelganger society. At the lower level colonies are maintained by the local doppelstadte. Above these communities are the extended genetic clans referred to as *gestalts*.

This chapter examines each level of Doppelganger society, and also looks at *orphans* — doppelgangers who have been cut off from their gestalt and forced to live alone.

## Doppelstadte

Doppelstadte form the center of Doppelganger communities, providing physical shelter and mental support. These massive shapechangers sacrifice mobility for mental power. A doppelganger can only see the thoughts of creatures in its immediate vicinity; a doppelstadt can spin a mental web that spans miles. Doppelstadte use this telepathic net to coordinate local activities and to stay in contact with the gestalt. These powers also al-

low doppelstadte to maintain the communal banks of knowledge known as *memory wells*. In addition, it is the doppelstadte who spawn new doppelgangers. They hold the keys to the past and the future of a gestalt — the memories of those who have gone before and the lives of those yet to come. Combining telepathic power, knowledge, and the experience of age, the doppelstadt are the natural leaders of the gestalts.

### *Spawning Chambers*

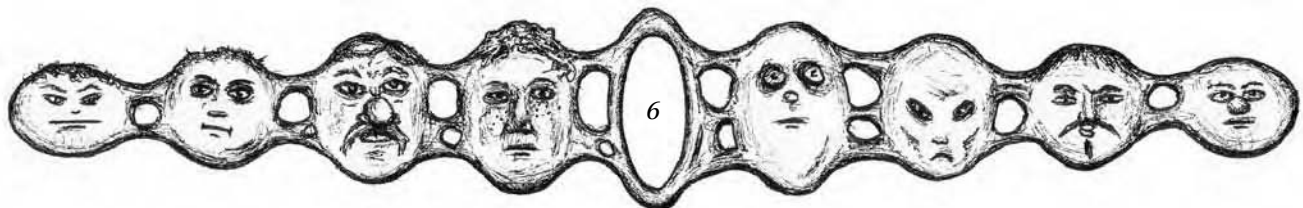
Doppelstadte are the source of new doppelgangers. The doppelstadt slowly severs a piece of its own flesh, giving it time to develop its own personality field. This process takes ninety days to complete. At any one time, a doppelstadt may support a number of embryonic doppelgangers equal to its Hit Dice. These immature doppelgangers develop in hidden spawning chambers — small rooms made of tough fleshy material, with thick veins running along the walls connected to the pulsing gray sacs of the developing shapeshifters. These chambers are usually kept sealed; the only way to find one is to cut through the skin of the doppelstadt or to convince it to create an opening.

Developing doppelgangers spend their final month of gestation in contact with the memory well of the doppelstadt, drawing on the experiences of their community; when they emerge from the chamber, they are prepared to become productive members of the colony.

### *Mental Communion*

The telepathic abilities of a doppelstadt are far greater than those of doppelgangers or mimics. A doppelstadt spreads a telepathic net that allows it to sense and communicate with all members of its gestalt within a certain radius. The uses of this power are described below:

- ☉ The communion radius of a doppelstadte is two miles for every Hit Die it possesses. If two or more doppelstadte are located within one mile of one another, they can merge their Hit Dice for this purpose. Merged or unmerged, 80 miles is the maximum range of communion.
- ☉ A doppelstadt can sense the presence and general emotional state of any member of its gestalt within its communion radius. It can form direct telepathic bonds within a more limited area. A doppelstadt can link to any doppelganger within  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the maximum range or any mimic within  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the range. Two doppelstadte may link to one an-



other at any distance up to the maximum range; this forms the backbone of gestalt communications.

- Once a link has been established, a doppelstadt may engage in two-way mental conversations with its subject. It may draw memories from the subject's mind, or provide the target with access to the doppelstadt's memory wells. The doppelstadt can also directly receive images from the target's senses, allowing it to study enemies or monitor conversations.

Mental communion plays a critical role when doppelgangers are spread throughout a city and engaged in deep cover work; the doppelstadt will use its connection to relay messages between the sleeper agents, coordinating operations and obtaining specific information that an infiltrator may require to maintain its cover.

## Memory Wells

The memory wells are liquid pools of pure information. Any member of a gestalt can use a memory well to draw on the experiences of those who have gone before them. This can be accomplished in one of two ways — through a mental connection with the doppelstadt that maintains the well, or by visiting the well itself. Well chambers are concealed within the bodies of the doppelstadte. Walls of gray flesh surround pools of oily, opalescent white liquid; pulsing veins connect the well to the spawning chamber, carrying the dreams of the colony to the gestating doppelgangers.

The capacity of a memory well is limited, and one reason Doppelgangers work to expand the doppelstadte is to make room for additional memories. The loss of a memory well can be a tremendous blow to a gestalt. Critical memories are often preserved in multiple pools, but the destruction of a well can eradicate hundreds of years of collected memories — the knowledge of Doppelgangers who have been dead for decades. To a gestalt, this information is priceless — and it will certainly seek vengeance against anyone who threatens it.

## Avatars

*The cloaked figure pulled back his hood to reveal his face. It was Maximilian Shaia.*

*Next to me, Jazi stiffened and cursed. "Shaia! It's impossible! We burned your corpse and scattered the ashes into the ocean!"*

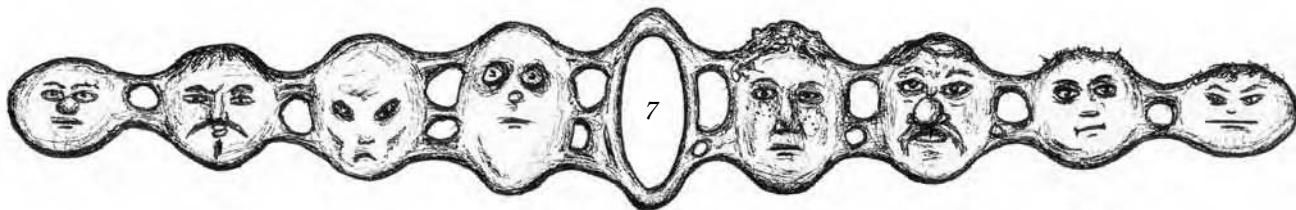
*"Careful, Jazi," I said. "This could be some sort of trick. He's trying to unnerve us. Don't let him get to you."*

*The figure smiled — and it was Maximilian's smile, that smug smirk I had seen so many times before. "Think what you will, Kenta," he said. "But I assure you, you'll find that my skills with a blade are all that you remember."*

A memory well can provide a Doppelganger with access to valuable information. But drawing on the well is not the same as actually living through an experience. A doppelganger that draws on the memories of an ancestor who happened to be a 13th-level monk does not become a 13th-level monk. However, certain doppelgangers learn to compartmentalize their minds — to channel the thoughts and skills of those who have gone before. This practice is known as *thoughtweaving*. It is an art that few can master; most thoughtweavers can acquire skills or information that will help to impersonate an individual, but cannot fully channel a personality from the past. Those who *can* accomplish this feat are known as *Avatars*, and are highly prized within their gestalts. The doppelstadte may guide the communities, but they cannot interact directly with the world around them; only doppelgangers can do that. Avatars have access to an arsenal of skills and personalities. As such, they are the most dangerous doppelgangers an adventurer will encounter.

Avatars are rarely wasted on trivial assignments. They are assigned to critical tasks where a gestalt expects to face active resistance. Avatars will also stand in for the doppelstadte in cases where a unit of doppelgangers must operate beyond the range of mental communion — such as when a group of doppelgangers and mimics set out to establish a new colony.

When an Avatar channels a personality stored in a memory well, it does not remove the personality from that well. It is possible for more than one Avatar to channel the same personality at the same time. After a personality has served its purpose, an Avatar will try to "deposit" it, adding recent experiences to its memories. However, certain valuable personalities are stored in multiple wells, and it is possible that a particular version will not be updated with all of the latest memories. What does this mean? The personalities channeled by the Avatars are powerful, highly skilled individuals — the treasures of a gestalt. They can play a major role in a campaign, regardless of whether they are ever revealed to be doppelgangers. Take the warlord Maximilian Shaia.





Perhaps a party of adventurers encounters Shaia and prevents him from acquiring the Broken Blade of the Morn. Later, they encounter him again — only this time, a different Avatar is channeling his personality. As far as the adventurers can tell, it's the same man. His mannerisms are the same. His skills are the same. But does he remember "his" previous encounter with the party? If the previous Shaia recorded the experience, he may. Otherwise, he won't — although using his innate ability to *detect thoughts*, he may pick up enough information to bluff his way through. These channeled personalities can make excellent long-term opponents for a campaign. Like the villains of a movie serial, they can return from certain death; even once the heroes realize what they are dealing with, the only way to eliminate the enemies once and for all would be to destroy the memory wells that contain their personalities.

More information on Thoughtweaving and the abilities of Avatars can be found in the chapter on Doppelganger Characters.

## Gestalts

A gestalt is formed of multiple groups of doppelstadte. While they are the highest level of doppelganger society, gestalts are more like families than nations. All members of a gestalt are related; this genetic bond provides the telepathic connection that holds the gestalts together. Beyond that, all doppelgangers from a specific colony have virtually identical personalities. Doppelgangers from different colonies within the same gestalt have a great deal in common with one another, but having been raised under the influence of different doppelstadte and with access to different memory wells,

they will have developed their own idiosyncrasies. In a sense, each colony can be seen as an individual member of a family. Each one will do what's best for the family, but one may be more impetuous than the others, one more cautious, and so on.

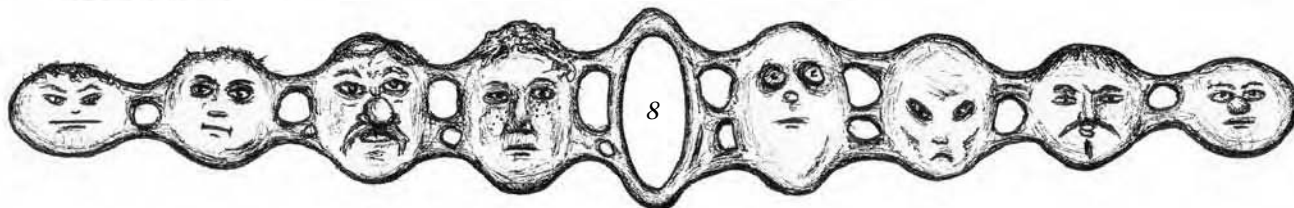
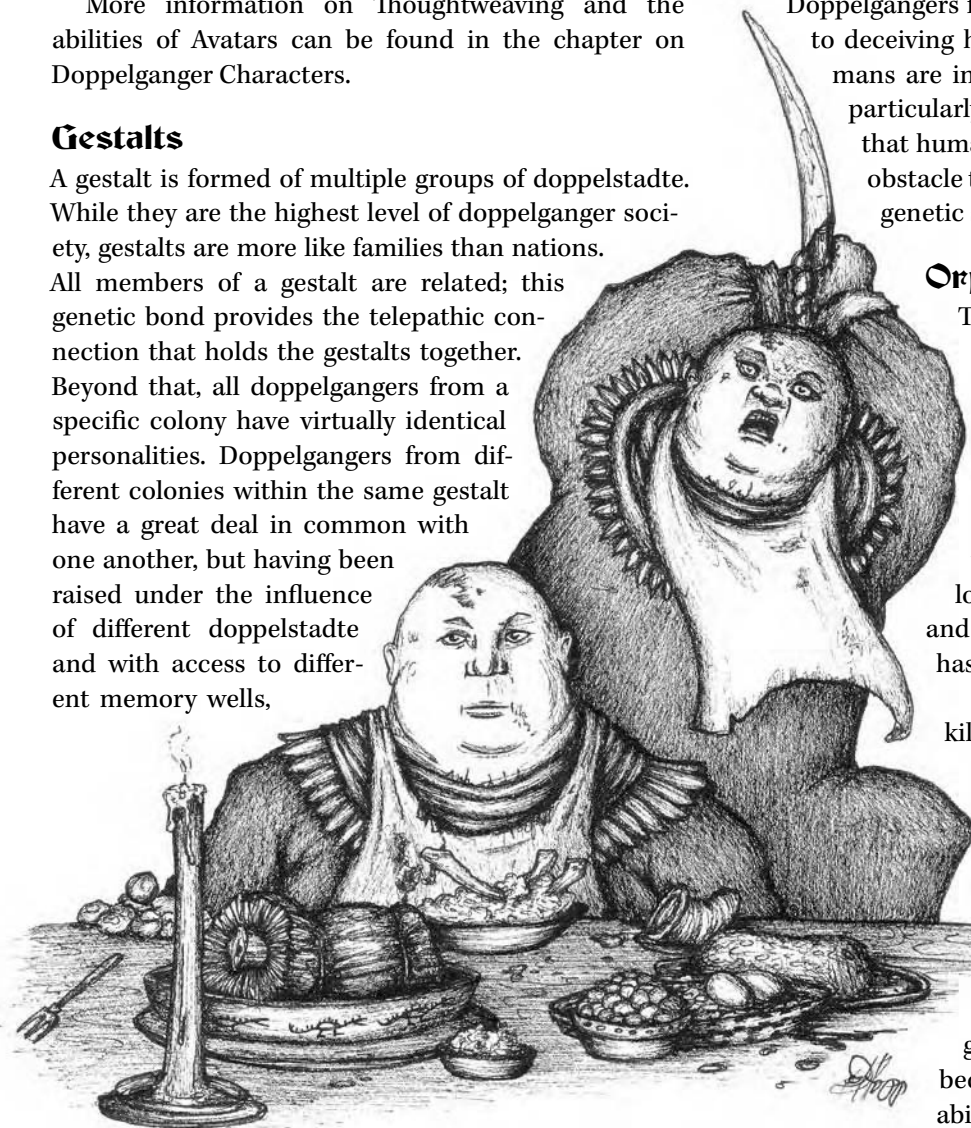
Some may find the simplicity of gestalt organization to be an oddity, coming from creatures as sly and sophisticated as Doppelgangers. But Doppelgangers have no secrets from one another. They all come from the same source; ultimately, they are all part of the doppelstadte, and they trust their ancestors to hear their thoughts and act in their best interests. Most doppelgangers find the complexities of human politics to be a symptom of tragic flaws in humanity; they feel that mental separation has stunted the psychological development of these unfortunate creatures, who so often turn on one another with schemes of power and lust. This is one reason that

Doppelgangers feel so little remorse when it comes to deceiving humans. They truly believe that humans are inferior, incomplete creatures; a few particularly religious gestalts actually believe that humans were placed on the world as an obstacle to be overcome in the quest to prove genetic superiority.

## Orphans

The identity of a doppelganger is drawn from the shared experiences of its colony. But a tiny fraction of doppelgangers lose this bond when they emerge from the spawning chamber. An afflicted doppelganger can still sense thoughts on a general level, but it loses the deeper bond to the gestalt and cannot access the memory wells. It has become an orphan.

Most orphans are immediately killed. For many, this is a welcome release; the shock of being cut off from the community is a traumatic experience. But some find a reserve of independent spirit and escape. These orphans seek areas that have not been claimed by doppelgangers, searching for a surrogate family to replace the gestalt. Some join thieves' guilds or become spies, bartering their natural abilities for a place in an organization.



Others hide their true nature; an orphan might work at a tavern or a brothel, using its powers to create a pleasing shape and using the strong emotions of the customers to help mask its own pain. Most orphans eventually go insane; the forced mental solitude ultimately drives them mad.

Doppelgangers can also be orphaned if all of the doppelstadte in their gestalt are destroyed. These orphans are more stable than their afflicted counterparts; they still share a bond to the other doppelgangers of their line, and have a chance of reestablishing their gestalt. Most dedicate their lives to gathering together the remnants of their gestalt, but some look for other surrogates.

In either case, it is possible for an orphaned doppelganger to continue through its lifecycle and even to eventually become a doppelstadt itself. An orphaned doppelstadt might become a haunted house or a rotting dungeon — or it might manage to start a new gestalt of its own.

As most doppelgangers are completely loyal to their gestalts, an orphan is the best choice for a player who wishes to create a doppelganger character. This is discussed in more detail on page 25.

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## Cultural Habits

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### Language and Telepathic Communication

*Studying this creature, I have come to believe that it actually sees thoughts. Imagine that you are a member of a magical species that can assume any shape. Telepathy is an adaptation that allows you to fool your prey. But beyond that — using normal sight, you wouldn't be able to identify another one of your own kind. But using telepathy — you would recognize your allies by the pattern of their thoughts, not the shape of their flesh.*

*I try to imagine what it would be like to live with my thoughts on my face. There would be no lies, no secrets. If I was angry at you, you'd know about it immediately and you'd know the reasons — and I'd know how you felt about that. Could I even get mad at you? Or would we know each other too well?*

— From the journal of loremaster Kenta Barri

The Doppelganger language has no written or spoken form; it is a unique mode of thought, both simpler and infinitely more complex than any human language. It is difficult for a human to learn Doppelganger thought-speech; a student needs telepathic abilities and access to a willing instructor.

As has been noted before, telepathy is the primary sense of a Doppelganger. When a Doppelganger is around another member of its species, it feels its thoughts and emotions. There is no saving throw against this effect; while members of other species get a Will saving throw to conceal their thoughts, Doppelgangers cannot close their minds to one another. Doppelgangers can also project messages; this is an untargeted effect that sends the message to every Doppelganger within 60 feet, and is equivalent to shouting. Through mental communion, doppelstadte can monitor and speak with members of their gestalt over greater distances.

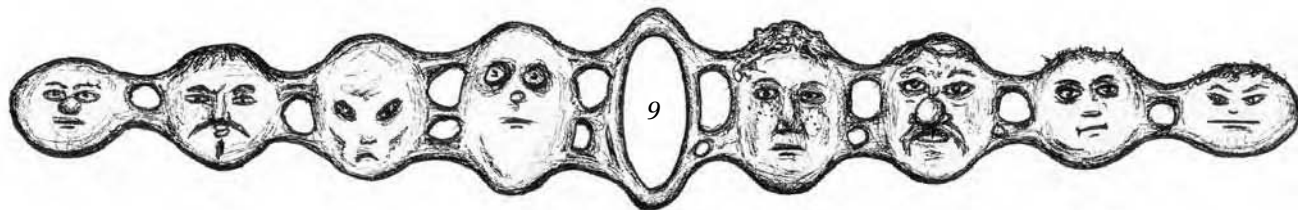
A Doppelganger's ability to read the thoughts of other creatures is limited by its subspecies. Urban Doppelgangers can read the minds of humanoids, while rustic Doppelgangers bond with animals. In either case, a Doppelganger is constantly aware of the presence of other minds, but has to actually focus its attention on a single mind to read its thoughts. The target gets a Will save to resist the effect; if it is successful, the Doppelganger must wait one minute before trying again.

Urban doppelgangers learn humanoid languages in order to facilitate interaction with humans and their ilk. Thoughtweavers can absorb languages directly from a memory well, switching languages as easily as they change shape. But while they are capable of speech, doppelgangers consider it to be highly inferior to mental communication and only use it amongst their own kind if it is necessary to maintain a role.

### Motivations

It is easy to attribute human motivations to the Doppelganger — especially the urban doppelganger, which wears a human face. But these creatures are human only in appearance. A few things to consider when dealing with doppelgangers:

- ☉ The primary goal of any Doppelganger is to expand the scope of its gestalt. Everything else is secondary.
- ☉ Doppelgangers are asexual. Children are spawned by the doppelstadte. As a result, sexual tension plays no part in the Doppelganger psyche. Urban



doppelgangers will use sexual wiles against humanoid opponents. But this is smoke and mirrors. The biology of a doppelganger is nothing like that of a human, and they gain no pleasure from the sexual act.

- ☉ Doppelgangers gain more gratification from mental activities than physical ones; the nervous system of a doppelganger is not as sophisticated as that of a human. Doppelgangers enjoy being around other members of their own gestalt, and their greatest pleasure comes from submerging their thoughts in a memory well, becoming one with their community and their ancestors. They also derive considerable satisfaction from overcoming mental challenges — thus their fondness for cat-and-mouse mindgames with humans.
- ☉ Doppelgangers view humanoids with a combination of contempt and pity. Most humanoids constantly deceive one another. They are aggressive and egocentric. Even those who are altruistic by nature cannot truly understand their fellow creatures. One reason that doppelgangers don't mind deceiving humans is because humans are constantly deceiving themselves; doppelgangers consider their own actions to be justified by human behavior. A side effect of this is that many doppelgangers will go out of their way to play mindgames with humanoids who are particularly deceptive or cruel to their fellows. Doppelgangers don't care about humans, but they have a fine sense of irony and enjoy dispensing poetic justice, if only to pass the time.
- ☉ The memories and experiences of each member of a Doppelganger community will be stored in one of the local memory wells. An Avatar can channel the personality of this individual — even if the original is still alive. As a result, the death of an individual is not a great loss to the community — in a very real sense, the victim is still a part of the community. But the destruction of a memory well is a terrible blow that will cry out for vengeance.
- ☉ Doppelgangers are not evil by nature. They have no interest in enslaving and prefer to avoid unnecessary killing. But when it furthers the ends of their gestalt they are ruthless killers. In a sense, they are the ultimate Darwinists. They believe in their genetic superiority and will do whatever is necessary to ensure the spread of their gestalt.

This includes conflict with doppelgangers of other gestalts. In the mind of the Doppelganger, one gestalt will inherit the world — the rest must be pushed aside.

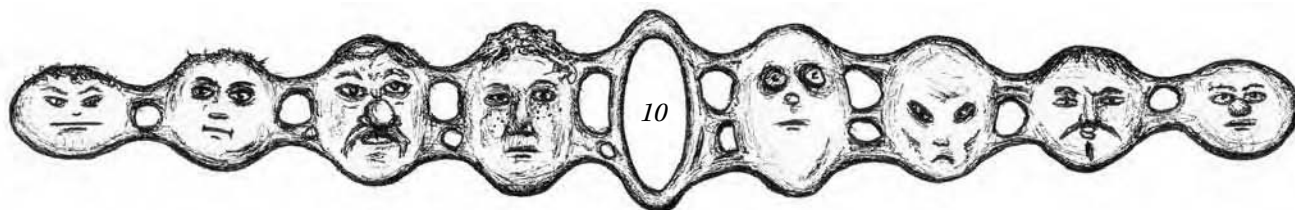
## Doppelganger Myths: The Zeitgeist

*You have but one shape, and you believe that the world is the same way. You believe that you can trap time in your books of history, that because something is written it is true. You are a fool. Life is about change. Look to the seasons, the difference between summer and winter. What if history itself had many forms? What if all that you know and believe is simply the shape of the current age — an era that merely waits for a moment of definition before it shifts and changes once more?*

— From the journal of loremaster Kenta Barri

Doppelganger mythology is simple and universal. Even the different subspecies share the same basic belief structure. Doppelgangers believe that the world is alive, and all life is part of the communal spirit of the world. Existence is a competition — a test of physical and genetic superiority, and a struggle within the mind of the world itself. Ultimately one gestalt will spread across the entire planet — and in that moment it will become the spirit of the current age, the *Zeitgeist*. The *Zeitgeist* will ascend to a new plane of existence, and in its wake the world will be reborn and repopulated; a new age will begin, and a new struggle to see what gestalt will become the spirit of that age. The major celestial bodies are the *Zeitgeists* of previous ages — the Sun is the *Zeitgeist* of the First Age, the Moon is the spirit of the Second Age, and so on. The stars are the embers of the failed gestalts of the past ages.

These beliefs drive the Doppelgangers' attitudes towards other lifeforms. Humans and other humanoids are flawed by their mental isolation. Lacking the telepathic bond of the gestalts, humans cannot play a role in the coming *Zeitgeist*; as a result, they are the lint of history, obstacles in the path of the Doppelgangers in their quest for ascension. While Doppelgangers prefer to avoid unnecessary slaughter, this world is ultimately temporary. The formation of the *Zeitgeist* is the reason for existence; other creatures may have another chance in the next age. This is especially true of Doppelgangers of other gestalts. Doppelgangers don't hate each other, but they recognize the other gestalts as their natural



enemies. In the end, there can be only one. As for gods and demons, Doppelgangers acknowledge their existence but deny their divinity. They see these creatures as manifestations of the current age, “dreams of the world” that will ultimately be destroyed when the next age begins.

Among the urban Doppelgangers, there are clerics who call themselves Geistspeakers; these priests can commune with the Zeitgeists of the former ages, and can channel the power of their gestalt itself. Rustic Doppelgangers have a druidic tradition, strengthening their bond to the natural world.

## Rites and Rituals

Doppelgangers cannot hold physical ceremonies; aside from jeopardizing the secrecy of the gestalt, it would be a burden to gather mimics in one location, and doppelstadte cannot move at all. Instead Doppelgangers gather through mental communion, using the powers of the doppelstadte to join their minds together for important events. As a result, a doppelganger innkeeper might be engaged in a memorial while he tends bar — or the deer in the woods might be communing with the rocks and trees.

The following events provide a sense of Doppelganger rituals and traditions.

### *Crime & Punishment*

Conflict within a gestalt is almost unheard of. The mental bond between doppelgangers is so strong that other members of a colony would sense criminal intent as soon as a doppelganger conceived of it. Doppelgangers occasionally disagree with one another; but the other members of the community will sense the disharmony and work to resolve the situation.

However, there are exceptions to every rule. There are also times when a doppelganger will ask the community to take action to redress an insult delivered in the human world. Perhaps the doppelganger innkeeper’s tavern has been vandalized or robbed. In these cases, the doppelstadte act as judge and jury. Mimics and doppelgangers may join the deliberations, but the doppelstadte will evaluate the situation and determine the action that will be taken. Justice is quick and simple; death is the standard penalty for a transgression. In the case of a human offender, the victim might be replaced to keep other humans from noticing. In the case of a doppelganger, executing the body is only the beginning; in addition, its memories will be expunged from all memory wells.

### *Memorials*

Doppelgangers believe that as long as memories are preserved, a slain Doppelganger continues to exist. After the death of a Doppelganger, members of the community will join together mentally and draw on the memory well, reviewing and reflecting upon the greatest accomplishments in the life of the deceased.

### *Testimonials*

Doppelgangers consider memories to be priceless. Memories allow a Doppelganger to survive the death of the body — and as a result, it is vital that memories be preserved and kept up to date.

In a typical Doppelganger colony, each member will give testimony every other day. On average, the process takes about ten minutes; a doppelstadt sifts through the mind of the subject, crystallizing the new memories into the liquid of the well. In a community with multiple doppelstadte, each member of the colony will work with a specific doppelstadt; only the most important events or individuals will be recorded in multiple wells.

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# The Many Faces of the Doppelganger

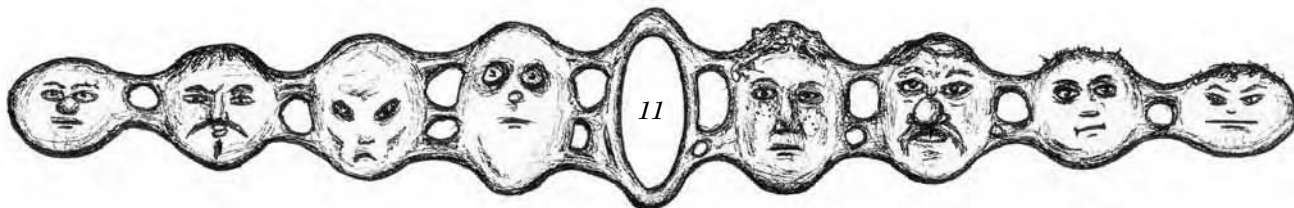
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Over time, Doppelgangers have evolved into a number of distinct subspecies. This section examines the three most common subspecies in greater detail.

## Urban Doppelgangers: Living Cities

When people think of the doppelganger, it is the urban doppelganger that comes to mind. The urban subspecies has adapted to interact with sentient humanoids. Urban doppelgangers can read human thoughts and assume human form. Adventurers think of them as treacherous thieves and assassins. But few consider the questions that linger around these shapechangers. Where are their communities? What do they do when they aren’t involved in sinister schemes? Why do they accept mercenary work from humans? What do they do with the money from these jobs? And how do people contact them in the first place?

The answers are as simple as they are disturbing. The cities of the urban doppelgangers are hidden in plain



sight—you could be standing in one right now. Any number of people walking around you might actually be doppelgangers. And it's not just the people. Mimics can take the shape of any sort of inanimate object. Urban doppelstadte assume the forms of buildings. Over time, urban doppelgangers slowly replace everything in their environment with their own kind. At the end there is a village or city that appears to be completely normal—but which is actually 100% Doppelganger, from the people on the streets to the streets themselves.

This sort of conversion takes a great deal of time and effort. While there are many doppelganger villages scattered around the world, only a few large cities have been completely converted. But there are doppelganger neighborhoods in many major cities, and these cancers are slowly spreading....

## The Urban Lifecycle

### *Urban Doppelgangers*

Most adventurers are familiar with the natural appearance of these creatures and their talent for impersonating humanoids. But few people realize how many doppelgangers they encounter on a daily basis. Urban doppelgangers can be blacksmiths, innkeepers, guardsmen, priests, prostitutes, or members of any other profession. While some doppelgangers hold key positions throughout a city, the bulk of a doppelganger colony will be concentrated in a certain part of town; if an innkeeper is a doppelganger the odds are good that the barmaid and cook are as well, and it's possible that the inn itself is a doppelstadt. Whether they live in a Doppelganger neighborhood or some other part of town, most of these creatures live seemingly normal human lives.

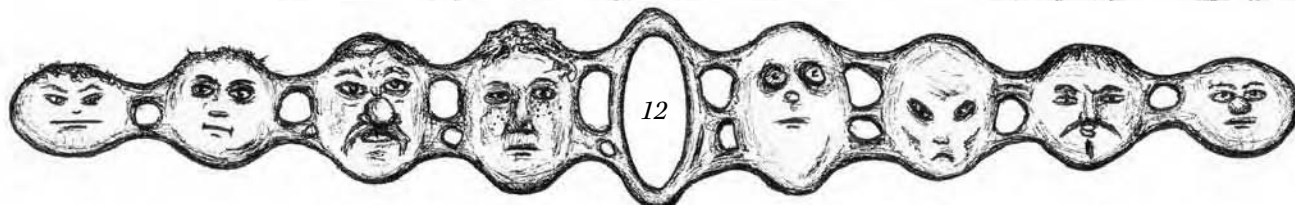
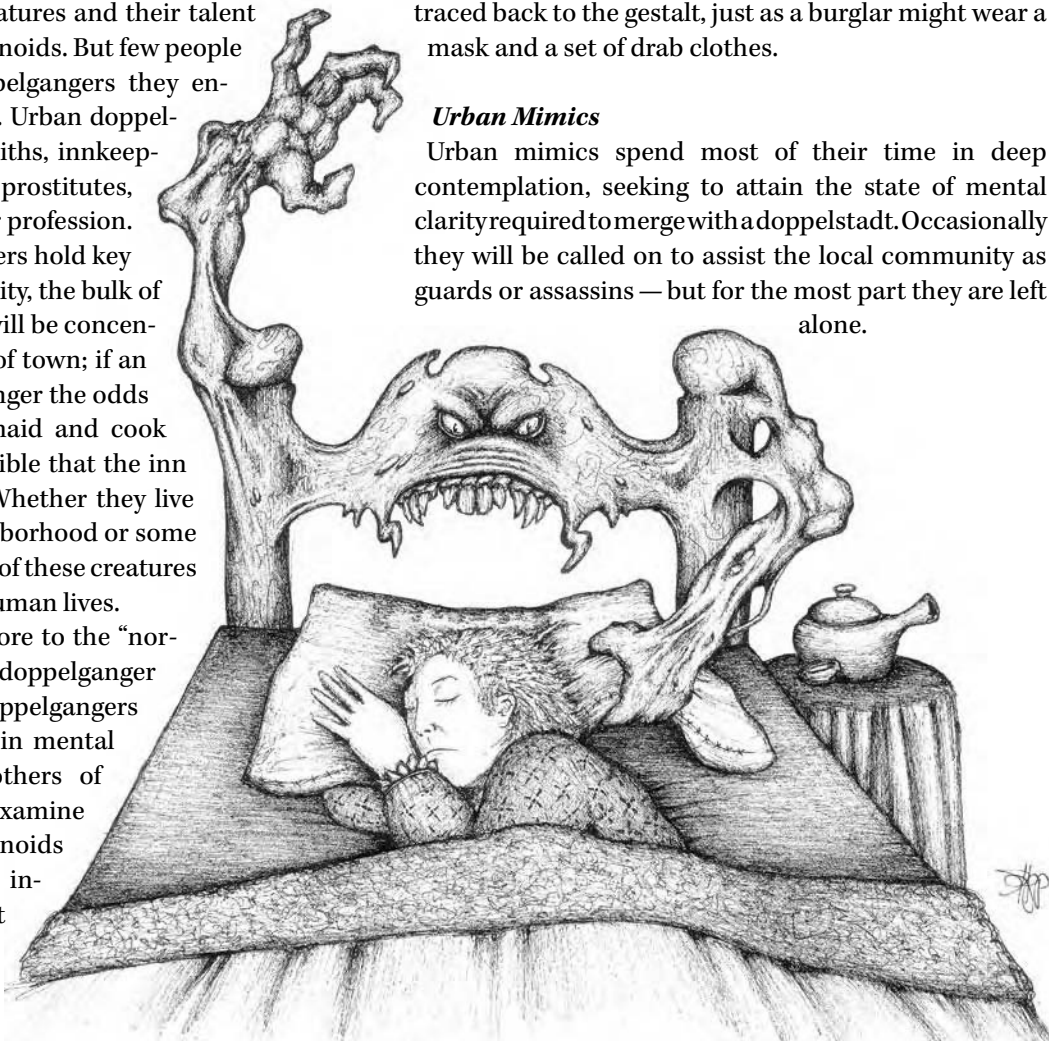
Of course, there is more to the “normal” life of an urban doppelganger than meets the eye. Doppelgangers are constantly engaged in mental communication with others of their kind. They also examine the thoughts of humanoids in the area, looking for information about current events or opportunities for the gestalt. This is much like television for

doppelgangers; some become interested in the lives of local humans and will go out of their way to follow up on their favorite characters. Doppelgangers also perform a variety of tasks to maintain the colony, like acquiring food for the mimics and doppelstadte. Doppelgangers only require four hours of trance per day; this gives them extra time for these tasks.

Unless a position requires specific skills, urban doppelgangers will not become attached to any single human identity. Say the local colony is based out of a doppelstadt that has taken the form of the Ironbelly Inn. The proprietor is Fat Stephen, and Tara sees to the needs of the guests. However, there may be six different doppelgangers who take turns being Stephen, Tara, the stableboy, and assorted guests; these roles could shift on an hourly basis, if switching identities served some useful purpose. Human forms are like clothes to a doppelganger—you wear what suits the needs of the moment. If a doppelganger is engaging in nefarious activities it will shift away from any form that could be traced back to the gestalt, just as a burglar might wear a mask and a set of drab clothes.

### *Urban Mimics*

Urban mimics spend most of their time in deep contemplation, seeking to attain the state of mental clarity required to merge with a doppelstadt. Occasionally they will be called on to assist the local community as guards or assassins—but for the most part they are left alone.



Urban mimics generally assume the form of furnishings in a doppelstadt or a building owned by doppelgangers. The wardrobes or beds in a doppelganger inn might be mimics. When doppelgangers are raising a new doppelstadt, they will disguise their actions as construction; the mimics involved will take the form of lumber or other building materials. Often a solid façade will be constructed, and the new doppelstadt will use this frame as a crutch and cloak to conceal its initial growth.

### ***Urban Doppelstadte***

Where a mimic may assume the form of a chest, a doppelstadt takes the shape of an entire building. Most doppelstadte maintain a consistent layout, changing only to add new chambers and rooms as the building grows in size. Some gestalts prefer to create as many doppelstadte as possible, spreading them across a wide area. Others focus their mimic population into one enormous doppelstadte — a single creature whose body incorporates dozens of small buildings, connected by an organic “sewer system.”

For the most part, there is nothing about a doppelstadt to reveal its true nature. The walls of a doppelstadt feel just like wood or stone. The strangest sections of a doppelstadt — the memory wells and spawning chambers — are kept hidden below the surface, concealed behind secret doors or sealed off completely; in these instances, force may be the only way to get to the hidden chamber. While it takes the creature a long time to actually alter its form, it can play standard haunted house tricks — slamming doors, closing windows, bleeding from walls — but it would be unusual for a doppelstadt to call attention to itself in this way.

Of all the urban Doppelgangers, doppelstadte are the least human and the most disturbing. A doppelstadt may have been around for centuries. It may be in mental contact with dozens of minds; through mental communion, it can reach around the world for information or to access the memories of other Doppelgangers. Generally the creature will speak through a doppelganger or mimic, but it can create a mouthpiece out of its own structure. This could be a giant stone head, an enormous mannequin on a throne, or a mirrored wall, in which the reflections of the adventurers move and act of their own accord.

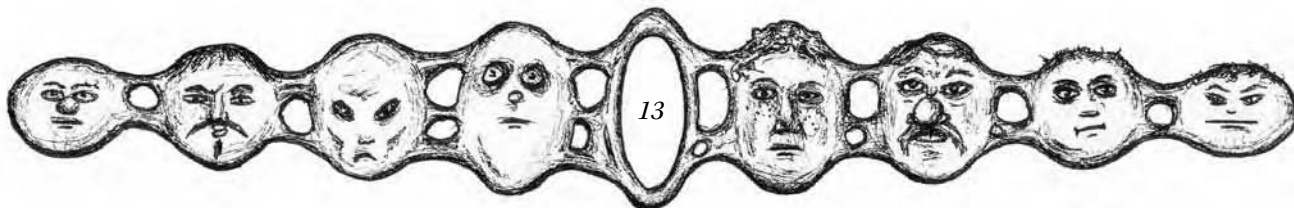
### **Interactions with Humanoids**

Urban Doppelgangers interact with humanoids on a daily basis — and the majority of these encounters are

completely unremarkable. The doppelganger innkeeper may spy on the thoughts of his human customers, but he’ll serve them drinks just the same. Doppelganger expansion is dependent on the mimic population and cannot be hurried, so generally there is no reason for a doppelganger to come into conflict with other humanoids. Of course, there are always exceptions; a few of these are described below.

- ☞ If the local government has influence over construction, zoning, or city maintenance, doppelgangers will work to seize control of these offices. Doppelgangers will also infiltrate any sort of established construction firm — the guild of stonemasons, carpenters’ association, or the like.
- ☞ Doppelgangers will identify other groups working to gather intelligence within a city — spy networks, city guards, thieves, etc. The doppelgangers will infiltrate these groups, but will rarely seize control of them. The doppelgangers want to be in a position to know what is going on, and to assassinate and replace leaders if necessary. But in general they don’t want the hassle of managing an organization.
- ☞ If a colony identifies an organization that poses a clear threat to their expansion, they will quickly move to eliminate the opposition. With their talent for disguise and ability to uncover secrets, doppelgangers are masters of “let’s you and he fight.” If a thieves’ guild was causing a problem, a doppelganger could impersonate a member of the guild and use this form to expose their activities to the local authorities or other enemies. As far as the thieves are concerned, one of their own was at fault.
- ☞ When Doppelgangers are ready to expand into a new part of a city, they will ruthlessly eliminate and replace a group of people in the target area. See the section on Expansion Massacres on page 24.
- ☞ The doppelgangers may cause general unrest in a city, in order to draw attention to neighborhoods far from the doppelstadte.

Finally, there is work for hire. Doppelgangers always conceal their true numbers. The doppelstadte will pick a human — often a local thief — to be their agent; a doppelganger will approach this individual and make an offer. They will imply that there are only two or three



doppelgangers in the city. If the agent obtains work for the doppelgangers, he will receive a commission for his trouble. He cannot lead other people to the doppelgangers, because he doesn't know where to find them; they keep an eye on his thoughts and come to him when a job looks appealing.

Doppelgangers typically take a job for one of two reasons: because they want gold or because the end result furthers their own agenda. Gold is most important when doppelgangers are starting new colonies. Within a current city, doppelgangers are always happy to see humanoids fighting amongst themselves. If two rival guilds are at war, the doppelgangers may help both of them; the weaker the humanoids are, the easier it will be to replace them completely when the time comes.

## Botches and Scapegoats

Urban doppelgangers have hidden among humanity for centuries. They are masters of subterfuge, and are willing to make sacrifices to achieve long-term goals. If a Doppelganger community is about to undertake a critical action, they may sacrifice a few younger doppelgangers in an over-the-top scheme that is doomed to failure. This serves many purposes. It focuses attention on an area far from where the Doppelgangers are actually striking. It makes them appear to be disorganized loners, incapable of the precise organization that characterizes their true operations. A botch can also serve to set up conflict between two groups that the Doppelgangers want weakened. For example, if a powerful merchant family hires a doppelganger to assassinate a rival and the doppelganger fails and allows the path to be traced back to its employers, it may trigger an open conflict between the two clans that will ultimately destroy both of them.

Botches are typically extremely colorful schemes — replacing rulers or merchant lords, assassinating public figures, or similar eye-catching events. The goal is to keep people from noticing the important activity. A pair of doppelgangers replacing the king — that's exciting. Four doppelgangers replacing the family of the senior stonemason on the Street of Lead — why would someone ever worry about this happening?

Another common tactic is the use of scapegoats. This practice is based on the shapeshifting abilities of the doppelganger and the channeling powers of the Avatars. Scapegoats are personalities that are created to give the public an enemy to worry about — a bandit king, a colorful master thief, a sinister wizard, a fiendish killer. These individuals appear to be human and to

have mundane motives, and draw attention away from the actual work of the Doppelgangers. A gestalt can spend decades developing a particular set of skills for an individual; this skill set can then be distributed and stored in memory wells, allowing the villain to appear in any location that has a suitable Avatar.

Scapegoats will work with humanoids as opposed to other doppelgangers; the purpose of the scapegoat is to draw attention away from the gestalt. Doppelgangers can assume any humanoid form; as a result, a powerful hobgoblin leader who brings multiple clans together could easily be a doppelganger, using its cunning and telepathy to maintain a goblinoid alliance that an actual hobgoblin could never hold together.

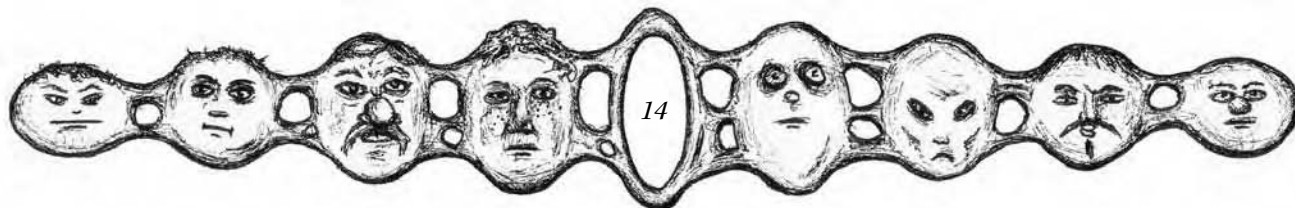
Within a campaign, scapegoats make excellent recurring characters. No matter how many times they are defeated, they always turn up again. The moment when the villain is finally revealed to be a doppelganger can be a dramatic scene — and once the secret is revealed, can the party hunt down the memory wells containing the villain's essence, to destroy him once and for all?

## Shadow Wars

Major cities attract all kinds of creatures. Many terrors lurk in the shadows, and the greatest threats to doppelganger expansion are rarely human. Wererats scheme in the sewers. Dark elves or vampire clans may have their own plans for the city. Powerful and deadly, these creatures can pose major obstacles for a gestalt. And with their telepathic powers, doppelgangers are in a unique position to spot these beings and uncover their plans.

Doppelgangers dislike sharing a city with other nonhuman schemers. At the same time, they detest diplomacy. Ultimately, Doppelgangers feel that they cannot trust anyone outside of their gestalt. Typically, a gestalt faced with an incursion by another secretive race will trick someone else into solving the problem. Adventurers are perfect tools for this sort of work. Here are a few tactics a gestalt might use to spark a conflict between its enemies:

- ☞ A seemingly normal human may ask a party for help. The innkeeper believes that vampires killed his daughter. She was last seen in the Temple district, in the company of Devon Blackchapel. The innkeeper couldn't possibly cross the Blackchapel family — but would these bold heroes investigate his daughter's death? The "innkeeper" might even have a "daughter" who *has* vanished; the doppelgangers could easily set up the entire situation.



- ☞ The heroes may catch a few of the schemers red-handed. Doppelgangers can mimic the forms of any of the creatures mentioned above. The doppelgangers could actually fake an attack, theft, or murder attempt to give the heroes a personal stake in the matter. Doppelgangers can also use this tactic to get the local law involved, or to set two secretive groups against one another — why not get the vampires to fight the wererats?

While this is going on, the doppelgangers will sit back and watch; if necessary, they will intervene with anonymous information — but they will do their best to remain out of any sort of open conflict.

## The Process of Expansion

When urban Doppelgangers move into a new area, they will take over a single building. While a gestalt going through hard times may kill and replace a number of existing inhabitants, common practice is to purchase a building with gold and set up some sort of business, with mimics being shipped in as “trade goods.” This gives the doppelgangers an opportunity to study the area; as newcomers any strange behavior or lack of knowledge will generally be dismissed. Half of the settlers will pose as travelers or otherwise stay out the public eye.

The next step is to pick an area to serve as the focal point for the new colony. Some gestalts operate out of the worst areas of town; others prefer quiet residential areas. Once a location has been selected the hidden doppelgangers will move in. By this point they will have gathered all of the knowledge they need for an effective long-term impersonation. Construction of a doppelstadt will begin immediately. Soon additional doppelgangers will arrive; they will eliminate and replace the population around the doppelstadt, slowly creating a buffer zone between the doppelstadt and the human population.

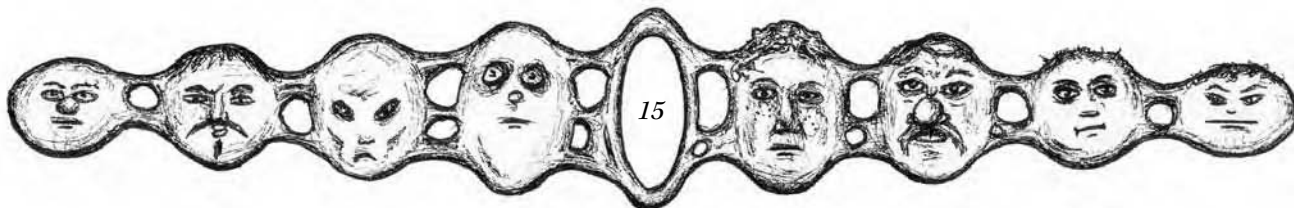
From this point on, growth is limited by the number of mimics ready to become doppelstadte. Urban doppelgangers rarely expand too far beyond the area of the doppelstadte. It becomes a waiting game, with doppelgangers taking care of the meditating mimics and looking for the opportunity to expand an existing doppelstadt or to create a new one. When that time comes, they will expand the perimeter around the doppelstadt, killing and replacing the humanoid inhabitants with doppelgangers.

## Exploring a Living City

If their progress is unchecked, a community of doppelgangers can eventually replace an entire urban center. So what is it like inside a living city?

Doppelgangers will continue to maintain their humanoid masquerade even after a village has been completely subsumed. Who knows when relatives may return to visit their parents, or an imperial patrol may come to town to conduct a census? Of course, there are a few things that may catch the eye of an observant adventurer....

- ☞ Doppelgangers don't need to speak to communicate with one another. While living among humanoids, they get used to speaking; but those who spend years in an area that has been fully subsumed may fall out of the habit. Visitors may notice that the villagers are unusually quiet, and seem to respond to one another without speaking.
- ☞ Given this telepathic bond, it is almost impossible to infiltrate a doppelganger community. It would require some sort of mental shield, and even then the invader would stand out because the doppelgangers *wouldn't* know what he was thinking.
- ☞ Doppelgangers rarely attack visitors. But they will try to encourage outsiders to move on. Remember that doppelgangers are cunning manipulators and telepaths. A doppelganger innkeeper won't just give a visitor the cold shoulder. He will be friendly, inquire about her business, and read her thoughts to find out the true story, then determine the best way to get her out of town. In some cases, doppelgangers may even be helpful. Say an adventurer comes to a doppelganger village in search of a fugitive. There's no reason for the doppelgangers *not* to help her, unless the fugitive is a doppelganger in disguise.
- ☞ Doppelgangers are omnivorous. They need to maintain a certain amount of mass, but they can ingest a wide variety of substances. In converted settlements, urban doppelgangers usually focus on crops as opposed to livestock; when possible they prefer to have an environment that is free of the mental emanations of other creatures, even animals. Visitors may find the lack of livestock to be odd for a farming community, and a doppelganger inn will have a limited menu. Likewise, doppelgangers can't get drunk; they will keep a





supply of ale on hand for visiting humanoids, but the selection of beverages will be limited.

- ☉ Finally, doppelgangers don't require as much sleep as humans do. If the doppelgangers have taken the form of elves, this will go unnoticed, as the resting habits of an elf and a doppelganger are virtually identical. But if the villagers appear to be human, visitors may notice that they keep late hours....

## Character Classes

Like the humanoids they impersonate, urban doppelgangers follow many different paths. Rogues gather information and serve as assassins when the time comes for a purge. Fighters provide a solid line of defense for the doppelstadte. Geistspeaker clerics provide guidance and healing.

As a general rule, a gestalt will possess either sorcerers or wizards, but not both. Doppelganger spellcasters focus on illusion, enchantment, and abjuration. Abjuration spells are used to shield the community from magical detection, while illusion magic and shapeshifting powers can make a doppelganger illusionist a truly surreal opponent.

Monks are rarely found in doppelganger colonies; the protean warrior (see page 29) fills this role. Paladins, druids, rangers, bards, and barbarians are equally uncommon.

The mental abilities of the Doppelganger are derived from magic as opposed to being psionic powers. As a result, psions and psionic warriors are no more common among Doppelgangers than they are among humans.

## Rustic Doppelgangers: Groves

*"Something is wrong here," Rasira murmured. "The trees — the trees are alive."*

*"I thought trees were SUPPOSED to be alive," I said. I mean, I'm no druid, but I know a thing or two.*

*Rasira silenced me with a gesture. "It's not like that. It's as if these trees, those deer, that rabbit — somehow they are all the same. All one."*

*"But yesterday you said that all life WAS one," I said. "Is it, or isn't it?" At that moment, the deer turned into bears and charged at us. It looked like the theological debate was over.*

Humanoids tell stories. They keep records. As a result, there are many tales of the sinister shapeshifters that try to infiltrate the cities of men. But the trees speak only to those who can hear them. So far fewer people know of the rustic Doppelgangers — creatures that spread across forests and deserts, replacing flora and fauna alike.

Rustic Doppelgangers rarely interact with humanoids, and this has helped keep their existence a secret. The goal of the rustic Doppelgangers is the same as that of the urban gestalts — to become the Zeitgeist of the current age. But for the most part they can accomplish this without coming into direct conflict with humanity. The conflicts that occur when the Doppelgangers are forced to fight will be discussed later in this section. But whenever possible rustic Doppelgangers will remain in hiding — silently replacing the beasts and the trees and slowly spreading across the face of the world.

## The Rustic Lifecycle

### *Rustic Doppelgangers*

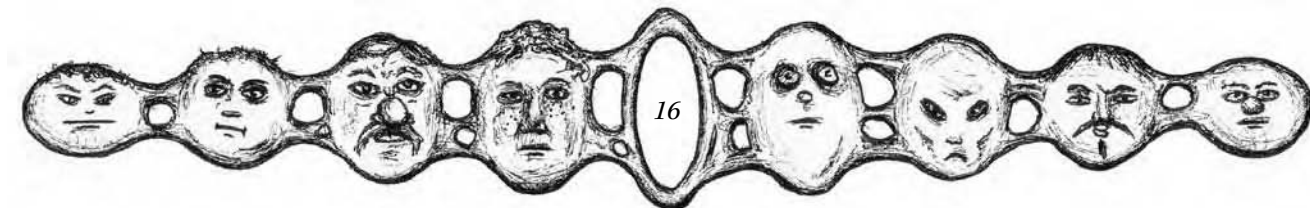
Rustic doppelgangers possess the ability to impersonate animals. The powers of the doppelganger help it hide from humanoids, and make it a deadly opponent if it is pushed into combat. A deer may seem harmless — but when it turns into a tiger, a hunter will be in for a surprise.

The telepathic abilities of rustic doppelgangers are also adapted to target natural creatures. A rustic doppelganger can sense the presence of sentient humanoids, but it cannot read their thoughts. However, it can perceive the thoughts and emotions of other animals.

Complete statistics for the rustic doppelganger can be found on page 37.

### *Rustic Mimics*

When a doppelganger becomes a mimic, it sacrifices much of its mobility. Urban mimics assume the forms of inanimate objects. Rustic mimics become part of the landscape. Most mimics assume the forms of trees. In arid environments, a rustic mimic might take the shape of a stone outcropping, or any other feature of the local landscape. Like urban mimics, rustic mimics will only reveal their presence in dire circumstances. Otherwise they remains in a state of trance, developing their mental abilities and preparing to bond with a doppelstadt. Travelers wandering along a wooded path could be surrounded by rustic mimics and never know it. When rustic mimics do move, they can be mistaken for treants — a point of confusion they will use to their advantage.



## Rustic Doppelstadte

Where communities of urban doppelgangers often have multiple doppelstadte, rustic doppelgangers concentrate their resources; each community has one massive doppelstadt, which may cover miles of land. For the most part, rustic doppelstadte are unremarkable in appearance; whatever form local mimics take, a doppelstadt will simply be a large number of these joined together beneath the surface.

In a desert, the doppelstadt will be made of cacti and buttes. In a forest or jungle, it will be a dense thicket of trees. However, somewhere there will be a way to enter the heart of the doppelstadt — an opening that leads into the body of the creature, allowing doppelgangers to reach the memory wells and the spawning chambers. This could be a deep pool of water, a well-concealed cave, or the hollow trunk of a dead tree. Whatever it is, it will be carefully guarded by rustic doppelgangers. The guards will attempt to make this protection appear to be natural; if the entrance is a cave, a clan of grizzlies happen to have made their lair in the cave. Do you really want to go poking around in there?

Rustic doppelstadte possess a strong bond to the natural world. Like other rustic Doppelgangers, they can sense humanoid minds but cannot decipher their thoughts. However, rustic doppelstadt can read the thoughts of humanoid druids, because of their shared ties to nature. If it wishes to speak, a doppelstadt will typically form a massive face in the side of a tree trunk. The voice of the doppelstadt is a loud whisper, like hundreds of pieces of bark being rubbed together to create coherent sounds.

## Interactions with Humanoids

Rustic Doppelgangers avoid humanoids whenever possible. Rustic gestalts establish themselves far from major cities. But the race of elves and those who follow

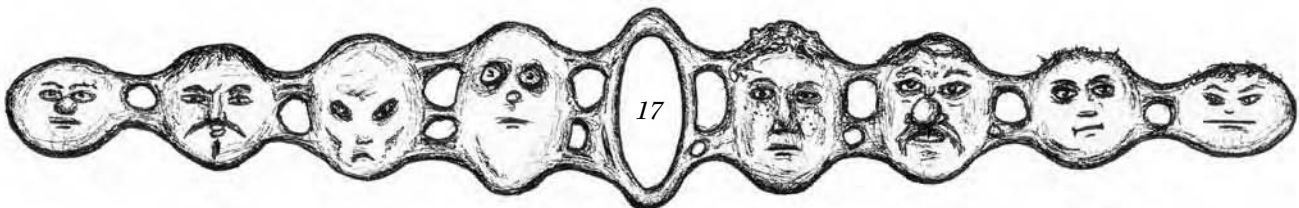


the druidic path see themselves as guardians of the wild, and both are at home in the deep wilderness. Mid-level druids are uniquely qualified to recognize a spreading Doppelganger grove, as the *commune with nature* spell allows them to recognize a rustic Doppelganger as an imposter. (Characters might also make an opposed Survival or Knowledge (nature) check against the rustic Doppelganger's Disguise check to realize that it is not what it appears to be. However, the character must actively examine a creature or plant to do so, and while this will tell the character that the Doppelganger is not what it appears to be, it will not reveal what it actually is.)

This is where possibilities open up. Rustic gestalts have a strong bond to nature. The gestalts feel that they are unifying and purifying nature by spreading across the world — of course, once they are done “nature” will mean the same thing as “doppelganger.” Some zealous elves and druids trust these living forests and join forces with them. Wild elves are particularly likely to ally with

Doppelganger gestalts; the groves will reshape themselves to become fortresses of ivy and briar, and rustic doppelgangers will hunt with the grugach. Other elves and druids see the rustic Doppelgangers as alien abominations, infestations that must be destroyed. These lead to bitter purges, as elves burn down living forests and rangers and druids track and destroy the smallest surviving creatures.

Rustic doppelstadte can read the thoughts of druids. A doppelstadt will keep a close watch on the thoughts of any druid that enters a grove. If the Doppelgangers are discovered, the doppelstadt will form a face or use a mimic as an intermediary. Speaking in Sylvan or Druidic, it will explain that it is a forest guided by a single mind — a natural spirit that should be left in peace. If the druid accepts this, she will be allowed to leave in



peace. But if the doppelstadt senses that a druid intends to harm the grove or to reveal its presence to others, it will devote all resources to eliminating the threat.

If hostile humanoid discover the existence of a rustic grove and escape, the gestalt may contact other humanoid allies, bringing in friendly elves or druids to act as intermediaries. These mediators will be selected for their belief in divinity of the living forests, and will seek to prevent characters from revealing the existence of the Doppelgangers to the public.

## The Process of Expansion

Communities of rustic Doppelgangers are based around a single doppelstadt. Each grove maintains a population of doppelgangers to patrol and protect the area, but doppelgangers advance to become mimics at an early age. These mimics will assume the forms of trees or other vegetation along the existing perimeter of the doppelstadt; when they are prepared to become one with the doppelstadt, the mimics will connect their roots to the its subterranean structure.

Once a doppelstadt has reached its maximum size, a pack of doppelgangers will migrate to a new location and begin the process of establishing a new doppelstadt. Rustic Doppelgangers will try to go around humanoid settlements as opposed to forcing a path through them; the telepathic range of the massive doppelstadt is usually sufficient to reach across cities to uninhabited areas.

## Exploring a Grove

Without *commune with nature*, it is unlikely that a party of adventurers will recognize rustic mimics or doppelstade while passing through a Doppelganger grove. Rustic doppelgangers emulate the behavior of the creatures that they appear to be, which generally means avoiding contact with people. However, an especially stealthy scout might catch animals behaving in an uncharacteristically intelligent or cooperative manner, or observe predators and prey in unnaturally close proximity.

In addition to *commune with nature*, the skills Animal Empathy, Knowledge (nature), and Survival may allow a character to penetrate the disguise of a rustic Doppelganger. Details on the rustic Doppelgangers' Disguise checks are provided in Appendix I.

## Character Classes

Rustic doppelgangers follow paths that are aligned with nature. Despite their non-humanoid shape, they can

still take classes. Druids take the place of the urban geistspeakers. Barbarians provide raw physical power, while rangers and protean warriors act as guardians and scouts. These are the only classes that are commonly found among rustic gestalts.

## Dungeon Doppelgangers

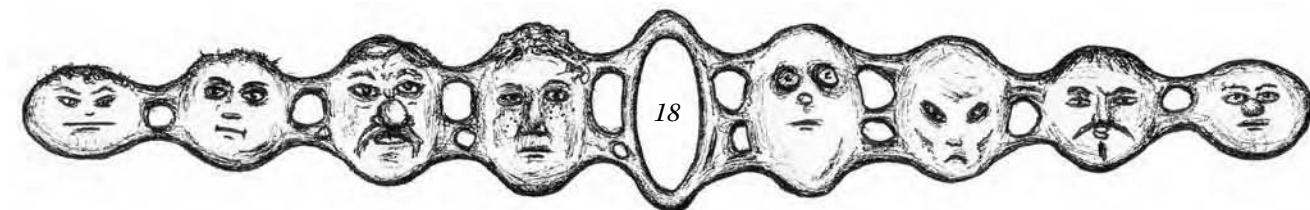
*...it appeared to be the ruins of a great temple. Fallen columns were covered with moss and weeds, and cracks ran through the massive flagstones. There was an enormous granite idol towards the back, but the features of the face had crumbled away or been chiseled off. Something bothered me — why hadn't we found any other signs of the civilization that built this place? The architecture was completely unfamiliar to me, and I didn't recognize any of the religious symbols. Somehow it just seemed — staged. Convenient. Here we are looking for adventure, and what do you know, here's a ruin waiting to be explored. Then Fergus found the trapdoor leading into the slimy basement....*

Isn't it just the slightest bit odd how many dungeons there are in the world? Clammy subterranean labyrinths teeming with oozes and slimes, seemingly tailor-made for adventurers? Well, what if they *were*? What if these ruins were living creatures, whose bodies were designed to attract monsters and adventurers — creatures whose corpses would be absorbed by the stone itself and used as sustenance?

Dungeon Doppelgangers are commonly believed to be the progeny of urban Doppelgangers who have become separated from their gestalts and gone insane due to the mental isolation. As a result, the form of the dungeon doppelstadt is similar to that of an urban doppelstadt — a building, only ruined and dilapidated to reflect the tormented state of the creature's mind. As a result of the parent's insanity, its offspring are fundamentally flawed. While dangerous and bizarre, dungeon Doppelgangers lack sophistication and do not form gestalts or spread out to new locations; they simply sit, festering, dreaming tormented dreams and slowly spreading deeper into the earth.

## The Dungeon Lifecycle

Occasionally, a dungeon doppelstadt will produce superior offspring — creatures with the abilities and



intellect of urban doppelgangers. But most of the time, dungeon Doppelgangers are flawed and twisted creatures. This section examines their lifecycle.

### ***Dungeon Doppelgangers***

Urban doppelgangers can impersonate humanoids. Rustic doppelgangers can disguise themselves as animals. Dungeon doppelgangers—well, they can't manage any sort of shape at all. They simply crawl about—semi-sentient protoplasm searching for food and keeping the floors of the dungeon clean. These creatures have generally been mistaken for unique species that have somehow found their way into the dungeon environment. But in fact, these slimes, oozes, and puddings are all secretions of the dungeon itself.

A dungeon doppelganger does possess the ability to shift forms, but it is limited to oozes. Unlike most doppelgangers, a dungeon doppelganger gains the abilities of its new form; when a dungeon doppelganger shifts into the form of a gelatinous cube, it gains that creature's paralytic slime.

For all intents and purposes, a dungeon doppelganger is a normal ooze. It is nonsentient and will not change shape on its own. However, a particularly alert mimic or doppelstadt could trigger a transformation with a telepathic command. Within a campaign, this is a way to spring a surprise of a party of adventurers—and a sign that something strange is going on in a particular dungeon or cavern.

### ***Dungeon Mimics***

The dungeon mimic is the standard beast that adventurers associate with the term "mimic." While physically identical to its urban cousin, it is less intelligent and its telepathic powers are stunted; it cannot read humanoid thoughts. Dungeon mimics also have less control over their shapeshifting powers; they cannot alter the texture of their body. This rough, fleshy texture will spoil any disguise—although by the time someone touches a mimic, it is often too late.

In comparison to the other subspecies, only a tiny number of dungeon doppelgangers ever become mimics. The mental gap between the stages is far greater than it is for rustic or urban doppelgangers. Most doppelgangers spend their entire life as oozes; eventually they lose cohesion and are reabsorbed into the mass of the doppelstadt. The same fate generally awaits a mimic; even if it has the intelligence to make plans, it lacks the mobility to escape from a dungeon on its own. There is a story of a particularly clever mimic that tricked a party

of adventurers into removing it from a dungeon—and then got them to dump it in the woods once its true nature was revealed. It might have been able to start an entirely new dungeon—if it hadn't been attacked and killed by a passing pack of rustic doppelgangers in the form of wolves.

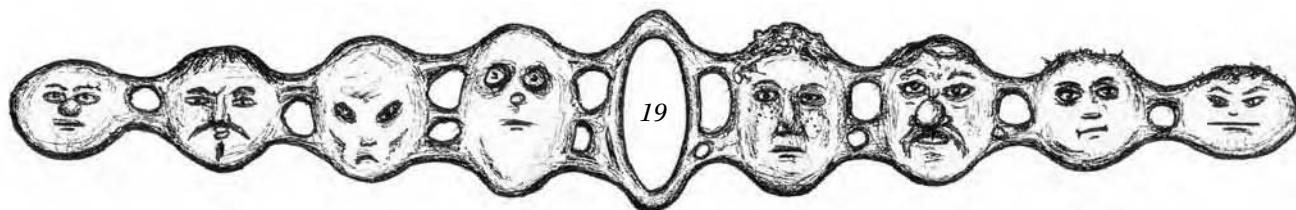
While they are not particularly bright, mimics are generally the most intelligent and coherent form of dungeon Doppelganger. They cannot understand human thoughts, but many learn to speak humanoid languages. The two prime motivations of a dungeon mimic are hunger and boredom; as a result, it will typically attack any sentient creature that gets close enough, but occasionally it will choose to talk instead. When goblinoids or other intelligent creatures settle in a dungeon, the mimics will usually try to come to terms with the invaders—acting as guards in exchange for a steady supply of food and conversation.

### ***Dungeon Doppelstadt***

Dungeon doppelstadt are deeply disturbed creatures. Most are only vaguely aware of their surroundings and the things that go on within their bodies. The layout of a doppelstadt is partially drawn from its faded genetic memories, but it is also affected by the humanoids that encounter the creature. While it may be almost comatose, a dungeon doppelstadt still has powerful telepathic abilities; it reads the expectations of explorers and slowly reforms its architecture to match those expectations. If a group of adventurers poked around the depths of a doppelstadt convinced that there was a throne room—well, eventually there would *be* a throne room.

The average dungeon doppelstadt does not even have the intelligence of a mimic. It has the capacity for rational thought, but its mind has fragmented and fallen into disuse. However, there are always exceptions. A more alert dungeon might work make deals with the monsters that inhabit it. It could use a mimic as an intermediary, or create some sort of stationary mouthpiece. A sentient dungeon could certainly adjust its architecture based on the thoughts of explorers; if it had any healthy children—beings with the abilities of urban doppelgangers as opposed to dungeon doppelgangers—it could send them out disguised to fulfill the player's expectations.

In this way, the same dungeon could become a vampire's crypt, a warren of wererats, or a temple of a sinister cult—all based on what the adventurers expect to find.



## Interactions with Humanoids

Alone among the subspecies, dungeon doppelgangers rarely infiltrate areas inhabited by other creatures. Instead, creatures come to them. Ruins can make inviting abodes for goblins, orcs, and other humanoids. Large caverns may attract a variety of dangerous beasts. If a doppelstadt is even aware of these visitors, it will generally work to accommodate them. Inhabitants mean more food for the doppelstadt; as an omnivorous creature it can subsist on their refuse, and if adventurers come to kill the beasts the doppelstadt will simply eat the corpses (whether those of the monsters or those of fallen heroes). This is also how these dungeons build up treasure; a doppelstadt cannot digest metals, so it may build up a stockpile of gold and equipment from previous adventuring parties. An exceptionally intelligent dungeon doppelstadt might contact the creatures inhabiting its body and come to some sort of agreement. The situations are rare, and the inhabitants generally don't know what it is they are dealing with; most savage humanoids will mistake the doppelstadt for a powerful spirit, which must be placated with gifts and sacrifices. If humanoids work together with the doppelstadt, it can alter its layout to suit their needs.

## The Process of Expansion

A dungeon doppelstadt begins as an orphaned mimic. It slowly gains mass by devouring vegetation and unlucky wildlife. However, a dungeon doppelstadt has no gestalt and no interest in spreading a net of mental communion, so instead of spreading out it delves down, burrowing into the ground. A more alert doppelstadt will mimic the shapes of buildings, creating a series of catacombs or crypts; one that is being driven by instinct may simply create a network of caverns. In any case, the doppelstadt will slowly burrow further and further beneath the ground, spreading out tunnels and caverns like the roots of a plant. Eventually, most doppelstadte reach a point of equilibrium, where they cannot obtain enough sustenance to continue to increase their mass. Unlike the other Doppelgangers, they will not seek to spread their mimics about to create new communities; a dungeon doppelstadt is far more likely to absorb its mimics to feed its own appetites.

## Character Classes

Dungeon Doppelgangers lack the intelligence and mental stability to pursue character classes. As a result, they progress through the addition of Hit Dice instead of character levels.

## Doppelganger, Dungeon

Dungeon doppelgangers cannot maintain a focused, coherent form. Instead, a dungeon doppelganger can shift between any of the common forms of ooze.

### Dungeon Doppelganger

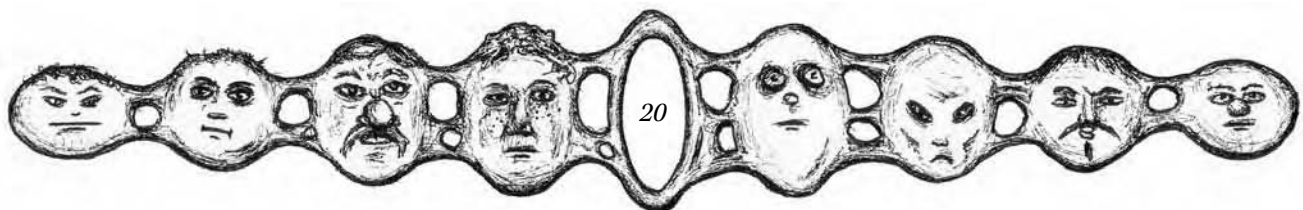
Large Ooze	
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	3d10+12 (28 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	-5
<b>Speed:</b>	Varies by form
<b>AC:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Attack:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Varies by form
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Change shape, telepathy; additional qualities based on current form
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +5, Ref -4, Will -4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 15, Dex 1, Con 19, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +2*, Disguise +2*
<b>Feats:</b>	—
<b>Environment:</b>	Underground (dungeon doppelstadt)
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	See below
<b>Treasure:</b>	None
<b>Alignment:</b>	Always neutral
<b>Advancement:</b>	4-9 HD (Large), 10-16 HD (Huge), 17-30 HD (Gargantuan)
<b>Level Adjustment:</b>	—

A dungeon doppelganger possesses the following special qualities and abilities:

**Change Shape (Su):** A dungeon doppelganger can assume a variety of liquid forms. The available forms vary based on the Hit Dice of the doppelganger. The doppelganger's Hit Dice and hit points remain constant regardless of its form, but otherwise it gains all of the statistics and abilities of its current form. The available forms are:

Hit Dice	Forms
3d10	Gray Ooze
4d10–5d10	Gelatinous Cube, Gray Ooze
6d10–9d10	Gelatinous Cube, Gray Ooze, Ochre Jelly
10d10–18d10	Black Pudding, Gelatinous Cube, Ochre Jelly
18d10–30d10	Black Pudding, Gelatinous Cube

**Telepathy (Su):** A dungeon doppelganger can continuously *detect thoughts*. This is identical to the spell, as



if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer. The doppelganger cannot actually read surface thoughts, but it can interpret general moods. Generally this ability is used to locate and track hostile creatures.

**Skills:** A dungeon doppelganger receives a +4 racial bonus to Bluff and Disguise. When using Change Shape, a doppelganger receives a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If it can detect the thoughts of an opponent, it receives an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

**Challenge Rating:** To determine the CR of a dungeon doppelganger, add 1 to the rating of its most powerful form.

## Other Subspecies

Other subspecies could evolve to fill especially unusual environmental niches. Perhaps a breed of gaseous doppelgangers is colonizing the clouds, or a race of infernal doppelgangers is hidden among the demons!

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## Combat Strategies

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Doppelgangers have little interest in fighting humanoids. But when combat is inevitable Doppelgangers are ruthless and deadly opponents. This section looks at the challenges of fighting Doppelgangers, including the tactics and abilities shared by all of the intelligent subspecies and the strategies that are unique to each.

### Natural Abilities and General Tactics

#### Blindsight

Doppelgangers possess blindsight with a range of 60 feet. Blindsight allows Doppelgangers to ignore the effects of invisibility or blinding spells; Doppelganger spellcasters can use *darkness*, *fog cloud*, *glitterdust*, or *obscuring mist* to put opponents at a disadvantage, and memory wells or spawning chambers may be shrouded in *deeper darkness*.

Doppelganger blindsight is based on telepathic ability. A creature that is completely shielded from telepathic effects cannot be seen with blindsight. Doppelgangers possess normal eyesight, but mimics and doppelstadt may not; it depends on whether the creatures' current forms have eyes.

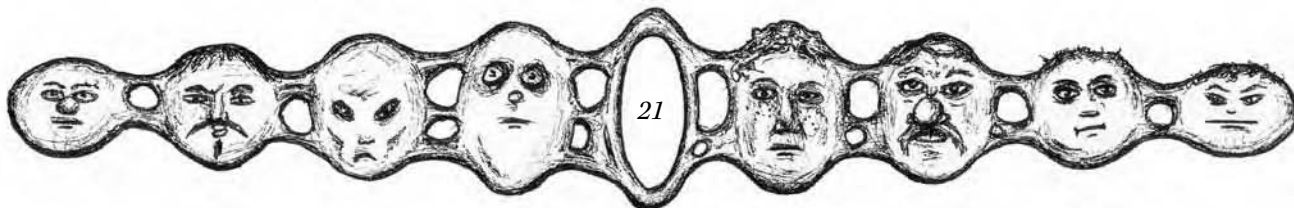


#### Shapeshifting

The doppelganger is best known as a master of disguise. These creatures can change shape as a standard action, and this power has many uses in combat.

**Ambush:** Both mimics and doppelgangers prefer to surprise their enemies. Mimics will assume seemingly harmless forms, then lash out when an opponent is within range. Doppelgangers will use both shapeshifting and telepathy to get close to a victim, choosing the perfect moment to strike.

**Disappearing into the Crowd:** When the tide of battle turns against a doppelganger, its ability to shift forms can be invaluable for slipping away. A rustic doppelganger can leap into a herd of cattle, while an urban doppelganger can simply slip onto a crowded street. If the doppelganger is under direct observation, it can make a Bluff check to create a distraction; if it is successful, its victims look away long enough for it to make the change. Anyone whose Sense Motive check defeats the doppelganger's Bluff roll manages to keep their eyes on the creature and can describe its current form to those who looked away.



*Bait and Switch:* If two doppelgangers possess different abilities, or if one is injured, it may be to their advantage to “trade” appearances. Each doppelganger must make a successful Bluff check against all observers to pull this off, followed by a Disguise check. Needless to say, this is most effective if the doppelgangers that are “trading places” are standing next to each other.

### **Sticky Situations**

Certain Doppelgangers (notably mimics) can exude adhesive slime. This can immobilize an opponent and may trap any weapon that strikes the sticky creature. Doppelgangers will try to lure opponents into attacking adhesive targets in order to disarm them; they will also move to flank opponents who are trapped on a sticky Doppelganger.

### **Telepathy**

While urban Doppelgangers are the only subspecies that can fully understand human thoughts, Doppelgangers are always aware of the thoughts of other nearby Doppelgangers. This allows them to arrange ambushes with incredible precision, and to change tactics in the middle of battle. A group of Doppelgangers will always work in perfect unison. If a doppelganger is in contact with a doppelstadt, it can request back-up or arrange elaborate exit strategies. Further, even if the doppelgangers are killed, the doppelstadt will be able to identify the attackers and will be familiar with their techniques; this information may prove invaluable in future conflicts.

### **Caution and Self-Sacrifice**

When expanding a colony, doppelgangers are completely ruthless; they will do anything to ensure victory. But in most situations doppelgangers will err on the side of caution. To conceal its power, a doppelstadt may allow a battle to be lost instead of sending in reinforcements. If escape is impossible, a doppelganger will sacrifice itself to preserve the secrets of its gestalt. Doppelgangers believe that the good of the gestalt far outweighs the needs of any individual—further, as long as an individual’s memories are preserved in a memory well, it will never truly die.

## **Urban Doppelgangers**

Urban doppelgangers are psychological warriors. They view combat as an intellectual challenge; every battle is a game, where out-thinking the opponent is just as important as out-fighting him.

### **Advanced Telepathy**

Telepathy allows a doppelganger to gather information about its opponents’ capabilities and intentions. Quite often, a weaker doppelganger will “spot” for a group that is carrying out an ambush. The spotter will remain in disguise, using its telepathic abilities to study the attackers and advise the other doppelgangers.

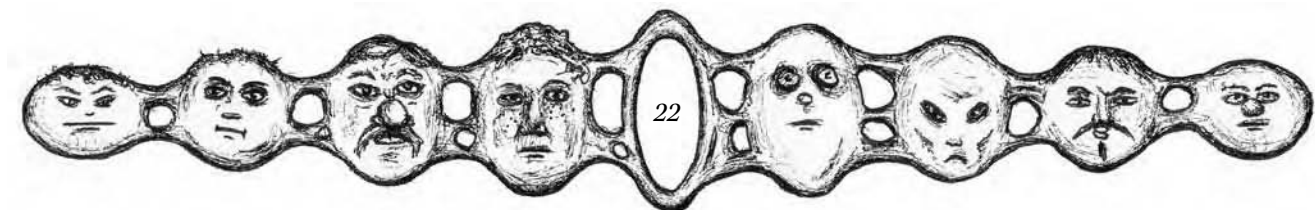
*Telepathy in Battle:* Doppelgangers are always aware of the thoughts of other doppelgangers in the immediate area, but reading the mind of a humanoid requires a certain amount of focus. A doppelganger can only study the thoughts of one humanoid at a time, and if the doppelganger is engaged in combat it can only read the mind of its current opponent. A doppelganger gains the following advantages while reading an enemy’s mind:

- ☞ It keeps its Dex bonus to AC even if caught flat-footed by the target.
- ☞ If the target uses Bluff to feint or distract the doppelganger, the creature gets a +5 circumstance bonus to its Sense Motive roll.
- ☞ Doppelgangers that train in the Thoughtweaving skill (see page 30) become more adept at using telepathy in combat. If it possesses the requisite number of ranks in Thoughtweaving, a doppelganger receives the following benefits:
  - ☞ (1 or more ranks) If the doppelganger chooses to fight defensively, it gains an additional dodge bonus to Armor Class against all attacks made by its telepathic target. This bonus is equal to half of the defender’s ranks in Thoughtweaving, with a maximum bonus of +5.
  - ☞ (5 or more ranks) If the doppelganger possesses at least five ranks of Thoughtweaving, it cannot be flanked by its current telepathic target.
  - ☞ (8 or more ranks) The doppelganger receives a +1 circumstance bonus on all attack and damage rolls made against the target.

### **Life’s a Stage**

Psychological games are a doppelganger’s greatest diversion. A few possible scenarios are described below.

*The Double Switch:* In a hostage situation, doppelgangers may kill the hostages, feed the bodies to the doppelstadt, and allow heroes to “rescue” a second set of doppelgangers. This technique is most effective if the heroes don’t realize that they are dealing with doppelgangers. The creatures may pose as common



thieves looking for ransom; actually they are causing a distraction, identifying possible enemies, and getting a doppelganger installed in the position of the hostage all at the same time.

**Self-Mutilation:** Doppelgangers may set up attacks against their own hidden agents. Say a doppelganger has assumed the role of the Count of Visario.

By staging a public attack on the count the doppelgangers may cause suspicions about the count to be eased (if those creatures were trying to kill him, he must be a good man!). It would also give the count an excuse to divert forces from other areas to look for his attackers, or to send local adventurers on a wild goose chase. The attackers may disguise themselves as another local power group the doppelgangers want to eliminate; the doppelgangers will use the attack to turn public opinion against their enemies.

**Bait:** When trying to identify the nature and power level of an opponent, a gestalt may send a single doppelganger after the target. The doppelganger will put up a good fight but be taken alive. Using mental communion, the “victim” will be able to keep the colony apprised of its location, movements, and the nature of its enemies, allowing the community to prepare a more effective response.

**Law & Order:** In a city, doppelgangers will attempt to infiltrate and control at least one unit of the guard. These guardsman can be summoned to deal with any sort of altercation involving doppelgangers. Did a group of adventurers capture the doppelganger who was attacking the count? Not to worry, the guard will take that foul creature into custody. And if the heroes have any ideas about what these creatures might be up to, please see the captain of the guard — he handles all of these sorts of cases.

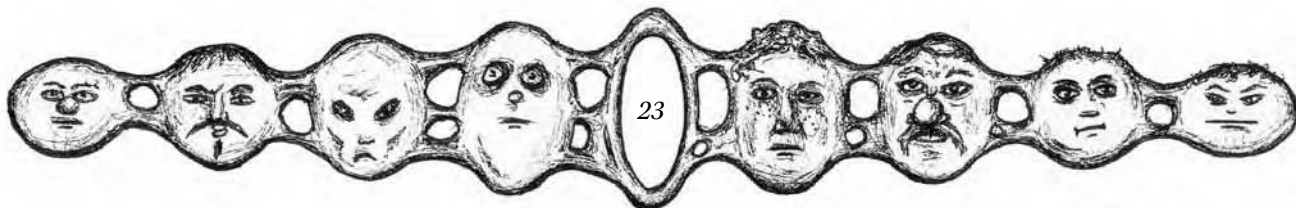
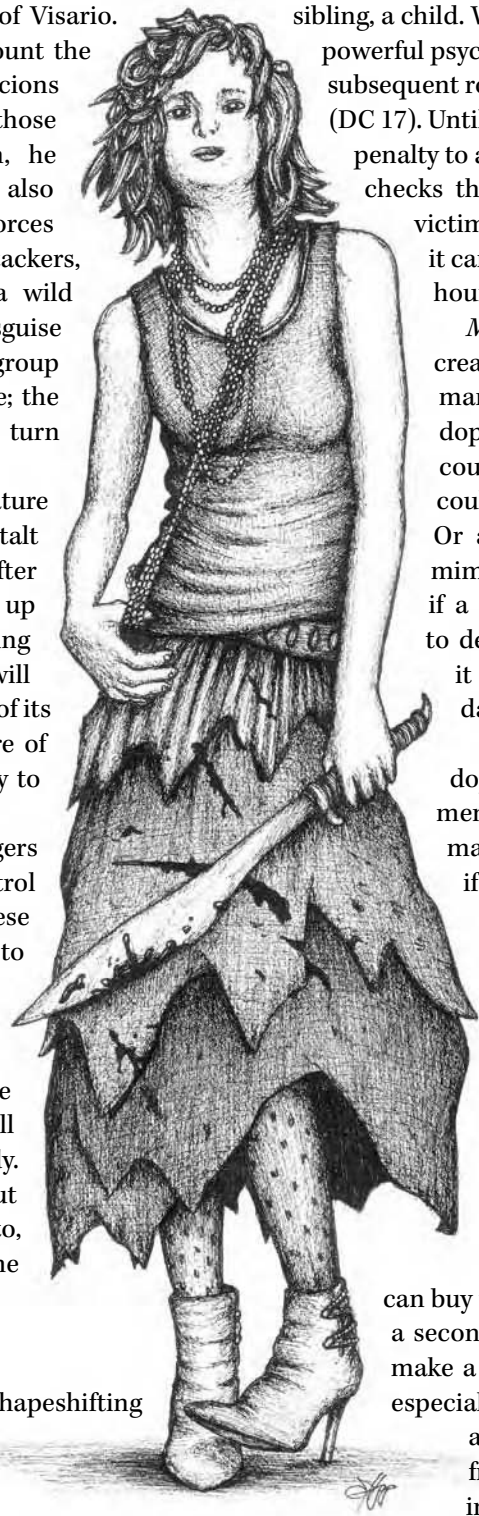
### **Psychological Shapeshifting**

Urban doppelgangers often try to use shapeshifting to gain an edge in combat. A few of their tricks are described below.

**A Lover's Face:** If a doppelganger is reading the mind of an opponent in battle, it can make a Thoughtweaving roll to pluck an emotional image from the mind of the victim; this is opposed by the target's Will save. If the doppelganger is successful, it can assume a form that produces a strong response in its opponent — a lover, a sibling, a child. While obviously a trick, this still has a powerful psychological impact. At the start of each subsequent round, the victim can make a Will save (DC 17). Until he succeeds, he receives a -2 morale penalty to all attack rolls, damage rolls, and skill checks that target the doppelganger. Once a victim has successfully resisted this effect, it cannot be used against him again for 24 hours.

**Mask of the Monster:** There are many creatures that can take human form, and many of them are far more dangerous than doppelgangers. A cornered doppelganger could revert to its natural form. Or it could become...a vampire! Or a werewolf! Or a rakshasa! The doppelganger can't mimic the abilities of these creatures, but if a group of adventurers isn't prepared to deal with the more powerful creature, it may be able to bluff its way out of danger.

**Shell Game:** A classic ploy is for a doppelganger to disguise itself as a member of the group it is fighting. It must make a Bluff check to cause a distraction; if successful it will assume the shape of its intended victim. This will require a Disguise check, opposed by the Spot checks of the other members of the party; further, the adventurers will get a minimum +6 to their Spot checks to recognize one of their associates, possibly increased to +8 or +10 if the characters are especially close or intimate with the target. But if the doppelganger can run this initial gauntlet, this ploy can buy time to plan an escape, reposition for a second attack, wait for reinforcements, or make a final report to the doppelstadte. An especially cunning doppelganger might trick adventurers into fighting their own friend! If multiple doppelgangers are involved in the encounter, they can





use telepathy to keep track of one another, so they will not be affected.

When playing out a shell game, the gamemaster should be careful not to reveal the identity of the doppelganger through his own actions. It may be best to make the player control both characters, without telling *her* which one is real; after all, the doppelganger will copy the actions of the original perfectly. Alternately, the gamemaster could take control of both characters for the duration of the scene.

### **Unarmed Combat**

Doppelgangers are deadly unarmed combatants. An urban doppelganger in the form of a portly innkeeper can shatter the bones of an armed warrior with its bare hands. Doppelgangers are strong and fast, and they have an instinctive talent for unarmed combat. But they also cheat. When an urban doppelganger engages in unarmed combat, it reinforces its fists and forearms using its shapeshifting powers. Effectively, it is fighting with a pair of bony clubs.

When an urban doppelganger hits an opponent with an unarmed strike, the victim can make a Wisdom check to notice the unnatural nature of the attack; the DC of the check is 20 minus the amount of damage inflicted by the attack.

### **Expansion Massacres**

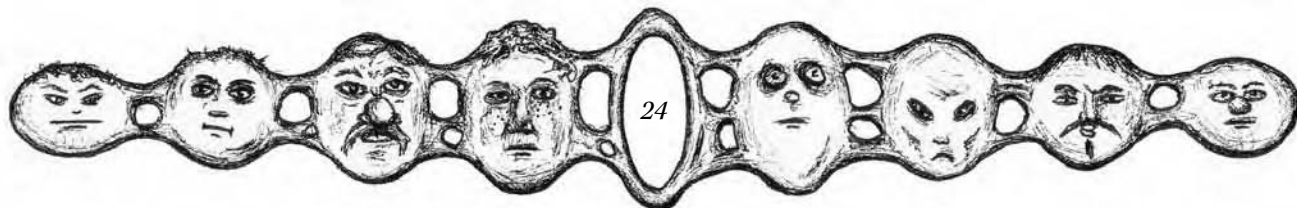
Urban doppelgangers keep buffer zones around their doppelstadte. When they expand these zones, they strike quickly and without mercy. Doppelgangers carefully evaluate the level of the opposition and strike with overwhelming force. They attack at night, taking full advantage of darkness. When possible they will infiltrate the target areas ahead of time; at the appointed moment, a husband may suddenly turn on his family, or a child might unlock the door to the house. A group of doppelgangers will move from building to building, slaughtering everyone inside. Other doppelgangers maintain a cordon around the target area, diverting guards or other bystanders. The doppelstadte telepathically coordinate all operations, ensuring that the strike team is aware of any threats and that the perimeter guards catch anyone who escapes the initial attack.

Once a massacre is complete, doppelgangers will assume the forms of the people that have been killed. The bodies of the victims will be fed to the mimics and doppelstadte. When the sun rises, there will be no signs that anything unusual happened the night before.

While these attacks are carefully planned and coordinated, it is always possible that someone will escape. As a result, all doppelgangers on the strike team will use disguises that cannot be traced to other local doppelganger activities. These may be generic in nature, or they may be designed to implicate another group — local thieves, wererats, or even a group of adventurers!

### **Forest Fires and Gang Warfare**

In the struggle to embody the Zeitgeist, one gestalt must eliminate all others. As a result, urban Doppelgangers will come into conflict with their own kind and communities of rustic Doppelgangers. There's an unwritten rule against directly exposing other Doppelgangers; while it would be



easy to start a witch-hunt, in the long term this could expose the gestalt's own activities. Instead, colonies will circle each other and try to trick others into doing the dirty work. In a battle with rustic Doppelgangers, a gestalt might use agents within the local government to lobby for the creation of a new city in the midst of the grove, producing records of the fertility of the land. Or they might spread rumors of fantastic treasures hidden at the center of the grove, trusting in gullible adventurers to explore and run up against the doppelstadt.

Struggles between urban gestalts can be long and convoluted. Warring gestalts will assassinate and replace enemy agents. They will provide information to wererats or other dangerous city-dwellers, allowing these outsiders to cripple their enemies. These maneuvers pass the time and test the enemy while the Doppelgangers work on the true objective: identifying the enemy doppelstadte. Once all of the doppelstadte have been located, the aggressive Doppelgangers will launch a series of surgical strikes. A community that loses its doppelstadte is crippled and can no longer coordinate actions or communicate with its gestalt; surviving doppelgangers will flee to the closest safe haven.

## Rustic Doppelgangers

Rustic Doppelgangers are not as subtle as their urban counterparts; they cannot interpret humanoid thoughts and do not play psychological games as effectively as their cousins. A rustic doppelganger will use its shapeshifting powers as camouflage and to gain access to faster movement and natural weaponry.

### General Tactics

When rustic Doppelgangers launch an attack, they hide their true nature; they will make the attack look like the natural actions of wild animals. If this fails, the doppelgangers will retreat and regroup. Unless the situation is dire, the Doppelgangers may abandon the fight at this point. But if the grove or gestalt is at risk, they will return for a second assault. This time they will use their natural forms, along with spells and protean warrior feats (like extending limbs or chameleon abilities). As few humanoids have ever seen one of these creatures, they are unlikely to link their presence to a Doppelganger infestation. If the second attack fails, mimics will take an active role in the next wave, striking and entangling victims with adhesive branches and roots while the doppelgangers dart about with tooth and claw.

### When Nature Comes to Town

On rare occasions, a community of rustic Doppelgangers will initiate an attack on a humanoid settlement. The most common reason for this is that a village contains a large population of urban Doppelgangers; it can also occur if a group of settlers build a village in territory already occupied by rustic Doppelgangers. When possible, the rustic Doppelgangers will work with wild elves or other humanoid allies, but they will fight alone if they must. Under cover of darkness, mimics will surround the targeted area. Doppelgangers scouts will move in to the area. Livestock and mounts will be set free; using Animal Empathy, the doppelgangers will encourage the local beasts to add to the chaos and confusion. At this point the doppelgangers will sweep through the village in organized packs, systematically cornering and eliminating anyone who crosses their path.

The burden of combat will fall to the doppelgangers. The mimics will maintain a protective cordon around the area to catch urban doppelgangers attempting to slip away. Mimic druids will also provide magical support; *call lightning*, *entangle*, and *summon swarm* can all be useful in battle.

The doppelgangers will attempt to eliminate all humanoids, to prevent tales of the attack from being spread around. However, they will generally leave the village intact; thus travelers who arrive at a later time will find a town that has been slaughtered by animals, with no explanation for the attack.

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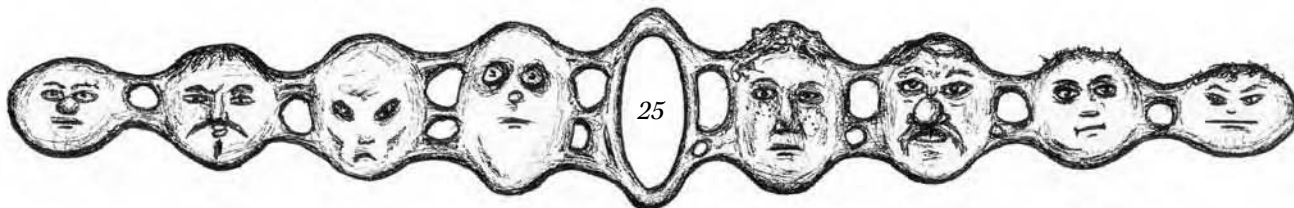
# Doppelganger Characters

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An orphaned doppelganger can make an interesting Player Character. A normal doppelganger is at the beck and call of its gestalt; it might pretend to work with a party of adventurers, but its true loyalty would always be with its kin. But doppelganger orphans are outcasts, ideally suited to joining a group of adventurers. A rustic doppelganger would be difficult to play, as it would lack the means to communicate with humanoids; as a result, this section focuses on urban doppelgangers.

## Urban Doppelgangers as a Character Race

Urban doppelgangers have the following traits and statistics.



**Personality:** The personality of a doppelganger is driven by its doppelstadt and its gestalt. Orphan doppelgangers lack this connection; they are renegades whose personalities vary dramatically from individual to individual. Separation from a gestalt is a terrible burden on a doppelganger, and most orphans are unstable individuals plagued by feelings of intense loneliness and isolation. Orphans often try to bond with other creatures in search of a surrogate gestalt, but most still feel lost and alone.

**Physical Description:** A doppelganger can assume the form of any Small or Medium-sized humanoid. In its natural form, a doppelganger is a slender humanoid covered with slick gray skin. See page 3 for more details.

**Relations:** Doppelgangers are social chameleons; they hide their true emotions and mimic the behavior of the creatures whose forms they have assumed. Orphans are more likely to develop strong opinions, but these vary based on the experiences of the individual.

**Alignment:** Orphaned doppelgangers can be of any alignment, although frustration and loneliness tends to drive them towards evil or neutrality; the pain of isolation often turns orphans into sociopaths.

**Doppelganger Lands:** Orphans are outcasts with no territory of their own. They are far more interested in social relationships than physical space.

**Religion:** The myth of the Zeitgeist has no room for orphan doppelgangers. As a result, most orphans are cynical atheists. A few turn to the religions of humanoid species. These “born-again” doppelgangers tend to be fanatically devoted to their new religion, seeking to replace the bond to the gestalt with religious zeal.

**Language:** Urban doppelgangers speak the dominant language of the region that they inhabit. They also possess a language called Doppelganger, but this language is only used for mental communication; it has no spoken or written form.

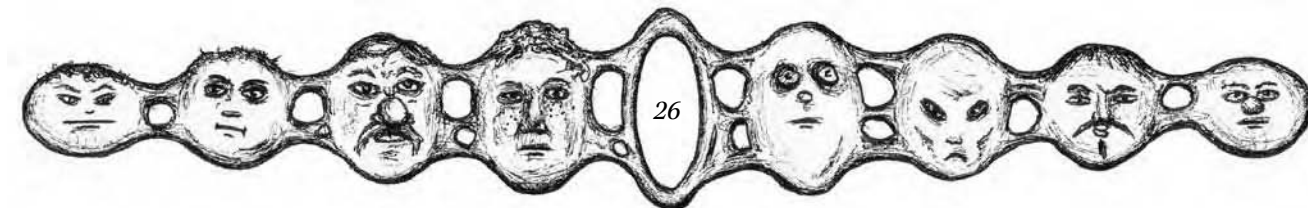
**Names:** Doppelganger names are telepathic snapshots of the doppelganger’s mental aura, and have no verbal or written equivalent. Doppelgangers adopt and discard human names as easily as they do human forms. Orphan doppelgangers will typically settle on a single name, since they cannot share their true name with their comrades; however, an orphan may still change its name on a whim.

**Adventurers:** An urban doppelganger is tied to its community and its gestalt; it would only become an adventurer if this furthered the goals of the gestalt. But orphan doppelgangers are born adventurers. Lacking a bond to a gestalt, orphan doppelgangers are rootless

individuals in search of diversion. To keep from going insane, orphans need to develop a close bond with a group, something to replace the tie to the gestalt; being part of an adventuring band can often fill this void. Doppelgangers rarely care about acquiring wealth; social ties are more important to them than physical possessions.

## Doppelganger Racial Traits

- ☉ A doppelganger’s creature type is Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger) as opposed to Humanoid.
- ☉ +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +4 Wisdom, +2 Charisma. Doppelgangers are strong, fast, and disturbingly intelligent.
- ☉ Medium-size: As Medium-sized creatures, doppelgangers have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- ☉ Doppelganger base speed is 30 feet.
- ☉ Blindsight: Doppelgangers perceive their surroundings using an enhanced form of telepathy. This has a range of 60 feet.
- ☉ Change Shape and Telepathy: See pages 21–22 for details on these abilities.
- ☉ Doppelgangers are immune to sleep and charm effects.
- ☉ A doppelganger receives a +4 natural bonus to AC.
- ☉ Thoughtweaving (page 30) is a class skill for all doppelgangers.
- ☉ Automatic Languages: Common and Doppelganger. Bonus Languages: Any. Due to their telepathic abilities, doppelgangers can even learn normally restricted languages.
- ☉ When fighting without weapons, a doppelganger receives one additional attack at its base attack bonus. It inflicts 1d6 damage with an unarmed strike. Like a monk, a doppelganger making an unarmed strike does not provoke attacks of opportunities from armed opponents, and can choose to inflict either normal or nonlethal damage.



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# Character Classes

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A doppelganger monk receives a bonus to its unarmed damage. Increase the die used for unarmed damage by one category — d6 to d8, d8 to d10, d10 to 2d6, 2d6 to 2d8, and 2d8 to 2d10. 2d10 is the maximum amount of damage that a doppelganger can inflict with an unarmed strike.

- ☞ In addition to any class levels it possesses, a doppelganger receives the following benefits: +4d8 hit points; +4 base attack bonus; and +1 to base Fortitude saves and +4 to Reflex and Will saves. A doppelganger receives skill points equal to  $7 \times (2 + \text{Intelligence modifier})$ , and can add its racial Hit Dice to its character levels to determine the maximum rank it can have in a skill. The following skills are considered to be class skills for purposes of spending these points: Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Thoughtweaving (Wis). A doppelganger is considered to be a fourth-level character; when it acquires its first class level, it only gains skill points as if it had increased a level (as opposed to the usual bonus received by first level characters).
- ☞ All doppelgangers possess the Dodge feat. A doppelganger character may select one additional feat (generally Great Fortitude).
- ☞ A doppelganger receives a +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Disguise, and Escape Artist checks. If the doppelganger can read an opponent's mind, it receives an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Disguise and Bluff checks. If using its Change Shape ability, the doppelganger receives a further +10 bonus to Disguise checks — for a total potential bonus of +18!
- ☞ The favored class of a doppelganger is determined by its gestalt. The gamemaster should pick a class to be the specialty of the gestalt. An orphan doppelganger does not have a favored class and may ignore its highest class level when determining if it suffers an XP penalty as a result of multiclassing. Due to these natural benefits, a doppelganger player character is considered to have four additional character levels. A 1st-level doppelganger protean warrior is considered to be a 5th-level character.

This section provides information on the geistspeaker, a form of doppelganger cleric, and the protean warrior, a specialist in the martial applications of shapeshifting.

## Geistspeakers

Doppelgangers are not given to extravagant displays of religious ritual. By existing, by expanding the scope of their gestalt, they are fulfilling the precepts of their religion. But the urban doppelgangers — those adapted to live among sentient humanoids — have developed a mystical tradition known as the *geistspeaker*. Geistspeakers commune with the Zeitgeists of ages past, drawing on the knowledge and experience of these powerful spirits to guide their gestalt in its quest to embody the current age. Geistspeakers also learn to tap into the lifeforce of their own gestalt, channeling this energy to heal or empower their kindred. In short, knowledge comes from the spirits of ages past; physical effects are powered by the pure mental energy of the gestalt.

Geistspeakers are clerics that venerate the Zeitgeists of the former ages. They possess all of the normal abilities and limitations of clerics, and channel positive energy. Information on the Zeitgeists, the Gestalt domain, and the two new spells it contains is provided below.

## The Zeitgeists

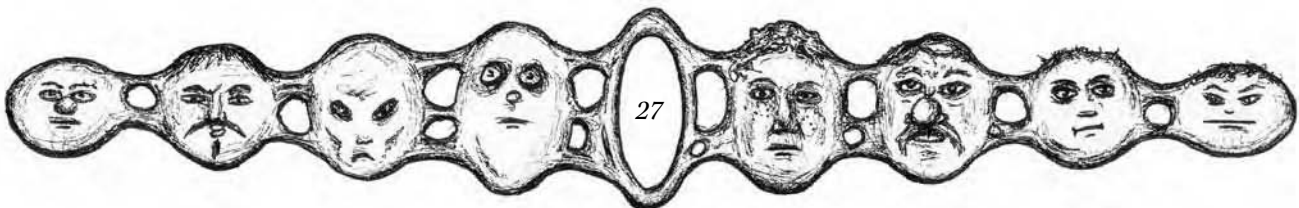
**Alignment:** Neutral

**Domains:** Gestalt, Sun, Trickery

**Typical Worshippers:** Doppelgangers

**Description:** According to myth, the Zeitgeists are the spirits of the former ages — doppelganger gestalts that have spread across the entire world and ascended to a higher state. The Doppelgangers believe that the major celestial bodies are the Zeitgeists, while the stars are the gestalts that failed in the fight. As a general rule, the Zeitgeists have no interest in the activities of the current age, but they may provide guidance to the Doppelgangers of the modern world if they are properly invoked.

The symbol most commonly used to represent the Zeitgeists is a circular medallion, with a crescent moon overlaid on a stylized sun. The favored weapon of their followers is the unarmed strike.



## Gestalt Domain

**Deities:** The Zeitgeists

**Granted Power:** A geistspeaker may lend its skill to another of its kind. By taking a standard action, the cleric may add a bonus to the attack roll or skill check of another doppelganger of the same gestalt. The target must be clearly visible and within 60 feet. The bonus is equal to the number of daily uses of Turn Undead that the cleric expends on the action; however, this bonus cannot exceed the cleric's own attack bonus or ranks in the skill in question. This effect lasts for one round.

## Gestalt Domain Spells

- 1 *bless*\*. Allied Doppelgangers gain +1 attack and +1 on saves against fear.
- 2 *augury*. Learns whether an action will be good or bad.
- 3 *imbue with skill*\*†. Transfers skills to target Doppelganger.
- 4 *imbue with spell ability*\*. Transfers spells to target Doppelganger.
- 5 *commune*. Zeitgeist answers one yes-or-no question per level.
- 6 *telepathic bond*\*. Linklets allied Doppelgangers communicate.
- 7 *channel personality*†. Channel personality from memory well or corpse.
- 8 *mass heal*\*. As *heal*, but for several Doppelgangers.
- 9 *foresight*. "Sixth sense" warns of impending danger.

Spells marked with an asterisk can only be cast on Doppelgangers of the cleric's gestalt. Spells marked with a "†" are new spells detailed below.

## New Spells

### Channel Personality

Enchantment [Mind-Altering]

**Level:** Gestalt 7

**Casting Time:** 30 minutes

**Components:** V, S

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** No

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell serves two purposes. The first is identical to the Channel Personality action associated with the Thoughtweaving skill (see page 30). If the cleric has access to a memory well (and, except in unusual

circumstances, all geistspeakers do), it can channel the skills and abilities of any personality contained within the well, and it does not need to make a Thoughtweaving check or possess the Avatar skill. The class levels, skills, and feats of the character are replaced by those of the assumed personality; the only thing that remains are the statistics of the original host. The new personality has access to the general memories (though not the skills) of the host body. The spellcaster can release the channeled personality as a standard action, in which case all record of its time in the host body is lost.

However, the spell has a second application. The priest can also use it to channel the personality of a doppelganger who has been slain. In this case, the priest must be able to touch the corpse of the doppelganger; in all other respects, it is the same as if the cleric was drawing the personality from a memory well. This action does require a successful Thoughtweaving check; the DC has a base value of 20, and is increased by 1 for every day that the doppelganger has been dead. Many gestalts prefer to use this ritual instead of *raise dead*, which results in a loss of experience; the loss of the physical body of the original doppelganger is not as significant as the destruction of knowledge. Once the cleric has absorbed the personality, it can be deposited in a memory well, where Avatars and geistspeakers can access it in the future. Since the actual spirit of the slain doppelganger is not being affected, this does not require the cooperation of the deceased.

This spell lasts until the geistspeaker voluntarily releases the personality or deposits it in a memory well. See the description of the Thoughtweaving skill for complete details.

### Imbue with Skill

Enchantment [Mind-Altering]

**Level:** Gestalt 3

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Components:** V, S

**Range:** Touch

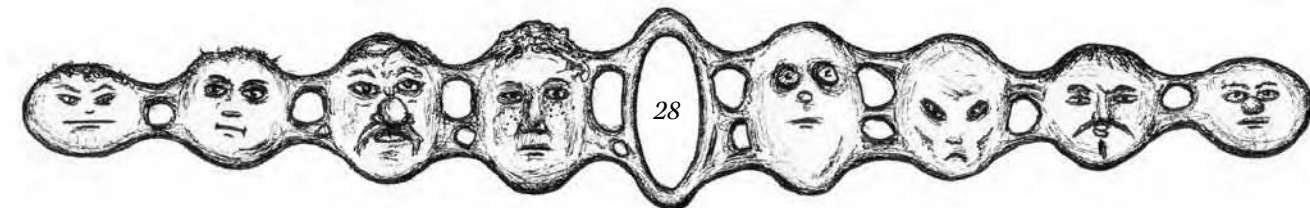
**Target:** Creature touched

**Duration:** See text

**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

By using this spell, a Doppelganger cleric transfers some of its own knowledge and experience to another member of its gestalt. The target must possess an Intelligence score of at least 5 and a Wisdom score of at least 9. The cleric can pass some or all of its ranks with a single skill, with the following restrictions:



- ☞ The cleric cannot transfer a greater number of skill ranks than its cleric level.
- ☞ If the target already possesses the skill, it uses its own value or the value of the spell, whichever is higher; the ranks are not cumulative.
- ☞ Any bonuses that the cleric possesses — for example, synergy bonuses based on other skills — are not transferred. However, the target may receive synergy bonuses due to its own skills.

This effect can allow the target to exceed the maximum number of ranks it would normally be allowed to possess in a skill based on its level.

This effect lasts until the cleric chooses to reclaim the skill. However, during this time, the cleric loses all benefits of the skill ranks it has given away. Further, it cannot prepare a 3rd-level spell to replace *imbue with skill* until it has reclaimed the knowledge. Negating the spell is a standard action for the cleric; the spell is also negated if the target is slain.

## Protean Warrior

The shapeshifting abilities of the doppelganger are an amazing form of camouflage. But the purpose of these powers is concealment — to allow a doppelganger to hide its true nature from other creatures.

**Table 1: Protean Warrior**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Unarmed Damage	AC Mod
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bonus Feat	1d8	+0
2	+2	+2	+2	+0	Bonus Feat	1d8	+1
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Boneblades	1d8	+1
4	+4	+3	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	1d10	+1
5	+5	+4	+4	+1		1d10	+2
6	+6/+1	+4	+4	+2	Bonus Feat	1d10	+2
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2		2d6	+2
8	+8/+3	+5	+5	+2	Bonus Feat	2d6	+3
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3		2d6	+3
10	+10/+5	+6	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	2d8	+3

Through training and discipline, a protean warrior turns the defensive power of shapeshifting into a deadly tool, transforming its body into a living weapon. The key ability of the protean warrior is its skill at unarmed

combat. Swift and silent, a protean warrior can transform its hands and feet into deadly blades of bone. Proteans can leap over walls, stretch their limbs to strike distant foes, and perform other bizarre physical feats.

**Hit Die:** d8

### Requirements

The qualify to become a protean warrior a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

*Race:* Doppelganger

*Base Attack Bonus:* +3

*Disguise:* 6 ranks

*Constitution:* 14+

*Dexterity:* 14+

### Class Skills

The class skills (and the key ability for each skill) for protean warriors are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Thoughtweaving (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

### Class Features

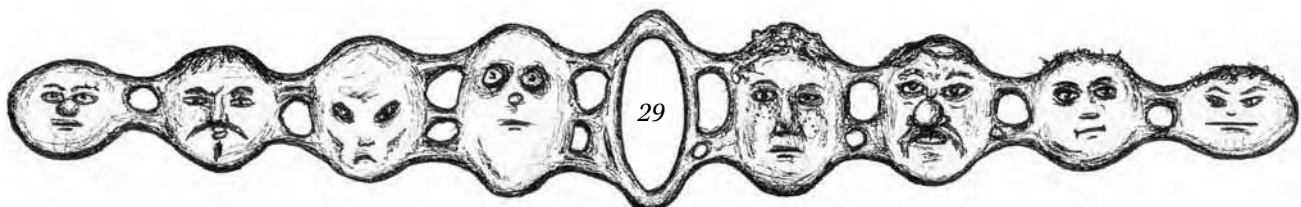
All of the following are class features of the protean warrior.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Protean warriors focus on the development of martial arts and natural abilities as opposed to the use of weapons. As a result, they are not proficient with any sort of armor or weaponry.

**Bonus Feats:** A protean warrior devotes its energy to mastering the martial applications of shapeshifting. At each of these levels, it may choose one of the following feats: Acid Immunity, Adhesive Slime, Bioplasmic Healing, Bonehammer, Chameleon, Divert Mass, Expertise, Extend Limbs, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Trip, Slippery, Springheels, Weapon

Finesse, Weapon Focus (Unarmed Strike), or Wings.

**Unarmed Damage:** A protean warrior strives to master unarmed combat. In part this damage reflects the warrior's training and skill. But it is also a result of



shapeshifting. To inflict 1d10 or more points of damage with an unarmed attack, the protean must create specialized striking surfaces — blades or clubs formed from bone and horn. These will stand out to the naked eye; anyone who makes a Spot check (DC 14) or is struck by the warrior’s unarmed attack will notice the unnatural nature of it.

A rustic protean should use the damage shown on the table or the unarmed damage of its current form, whichever is higher. A doppelganger with monk and protean warrior levels should add these levels together and then look at the protean warrior table to determine the amount of damage it inflicts.

**Boneblades:** An urban doppelganger normally inflicts bludgeoning damage with an unarmed attack. A rustic doppelganger inflicts slashing damage. At this stage, the doppelganger can take a move-equivalent action to alter the type of damage it inflicts, choosing from bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing. Protean warriors can use this ability to mimic the natural weapons of creatures they are impersonating, like the teeth of a werewolf; however, the damage is always based on class level, not current form.

**AC Modification:** Over time a protean warrior learns to increase the density of its skin. This bonus is added to the doppelganger’s existing natural armor bonus.

## Skills

### Thoughtweaving

(Wis, Trained Only, Doppelganger Only)

Doppelgangers use the memory wells to draw on the experiences of other members of their gestalt. For most this is a way to share in the history of their people. But some learn to reshape their thoughts as well as their flesh, channeling the personalities or skills of those that have gone before.

**Check:** A Doppelganger can use this skill to access the knowledge in any memory well that belongs to its gestalt. By making the appropriate check, a Doppelganger can exchange ranks in an existing language, Craft, Profession, or Knowledge skill for ranks in another skill of the same type (however, Craft and Profession skills are interchangeable). It may only exchange a number of ranks equal to its skill in Thoughtweaving. It is up to the gamemaster to decide what skills are available in the memory wells of the local gestalt.

A doppelganger who possesses the Avatar feat (page 31) can serve as a conduit for the personality of another doppelganger. If the check is successful, the class levels, skills, and feats of the character are replaced by those of

the assumed personality; the only thing that remains are the statistics of the original host. The new personality has access to the general memories (though not the skills) of the host body. There are two ways for an Avatar to return to its original personality. The “rider” can be deposited in a memory well as part of a testimonial (see page 7); in this case, the personality retains the memories of its actions while in the body of the Avatar, and can gain experience and levels. Or the Avatar can release the rider as a standard action, in which case all record of its time in the host body is lost. In either case, the Avatar will not personally gain any experience for actions performed while channeling.

Task	Time	DC
Exchange Language	5 minutes	13
Exchange Knowledge Skill	15 minutes	18
Exchange Craft or Profession	30 minutes	23
Channel Personality*	1 hour	25

\*As per new spell; see page 28 for details

A Doppelganger must have physical access to a memory well or uninterrupted telepathic contact with the doppelstadt that contains the well for the duration of the check.

**Retry:** Yes, provided the Doppelganger still has access to the memory well.

**Special:** Thoughtweaving also helps a Doppelganger read minds. This can provide an edge in combat; see page 22 for details.

## Feats

With training a doppelganger can develop a range of physical abilities. This is the focus of the protean warrior class, but any doppelganger may use one of its level-based feat selection slots to choose one of these special feats, provided that it meets the prerequisites.

### ACID IMMUNITY (Special)

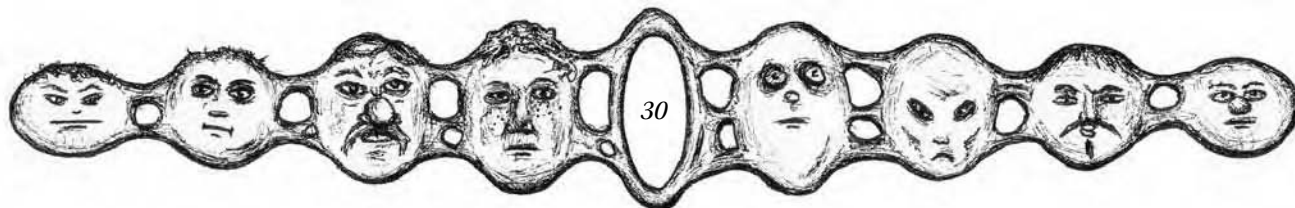
Corrosive substances cannot injure mimics. Doppelgangers can develop this ability while still in their mobile stage.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only.

**Benefits:** You take no damage from acid-based attacks.

### ADHESIVE SLIME (Special)

Another mimic trait that some doppelgangers acquire early in life, this allows you to secrete a powerful adhesive from your skin.



**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, Acid Immunity.

**Benefits:** While in your natural form you can coat your body with adhesive slime, up to three times per day. This is a standard action and the adhesive remains effective for 15 rounds. While sticky, you automatically grapple any creature you strike with an unarmed attack. A victim can attempt to escape once per round; you receive a +10 to your grapple check. While maintaining the grapple, you may also make one unarmed attack per round against your victim; this attack automatically hits.

Any weapon that strikes you while you are adhesive is automatically caught unless the wielder makes a successful Reflex save (DC 15). Removing the weapon requires a standard action and a successful Strength check (DC 15).

Strong alcohol dissolves the adhesive. A pint of wine weakens it; this negates your grapple bonus and provides +5 bonus to a Strength check to pull a weapon free. You can dissolve your slime at will.

#### **AVATAR (Special)**

While many doppelgangers can draw skills or languages from a memory well, few can submerge their thoughts to the degree required to channel the personality of another doppelganger. Prerequisites aside, Avatars are rare; it should be unusual to find one in a community, let alone more than one.



**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, 6+ ranks in Thoughtweaving, Wisdom 16+.

**Benefits:** You gain a +1 bonus to all Thoughtweaving checks and all Will saves. You can also attempt the Channel Personality action (see page 28).

#### **BIOPLASMIC HEALING (Special)**

A skilled protean warrior can seal its wounds and repair internal injuries.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, protean warrior level 3+.

**Benefits:** You can heal your own injuries. You can restore up to twice your character level (including doppelganger Hit Dice) in hit points per day, and may spread this healing out over multiple uses. This is a supernatural ability.

#### **BONEHAMMER (Special)**

You have a flair for creating natural weaponry.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, Constitution 15+.

**Benefits:** You receive a +2 damage bonus with all unarmed strikes.

#### **CHAMELEON (Special)**

You are skilled at altering your skin pigmentation to match the color of your surroundings.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only.

**Benefits:** When using this power you receive a +5 racial bonus to Hide checks. This causes your skin to change color; anyone who spots you will see that something unnatural is at work. This bonus has no effect on a creature that is using darkvision or blindsight. This is a supernatural ability.

#### **DIVERT MASS (Special)**

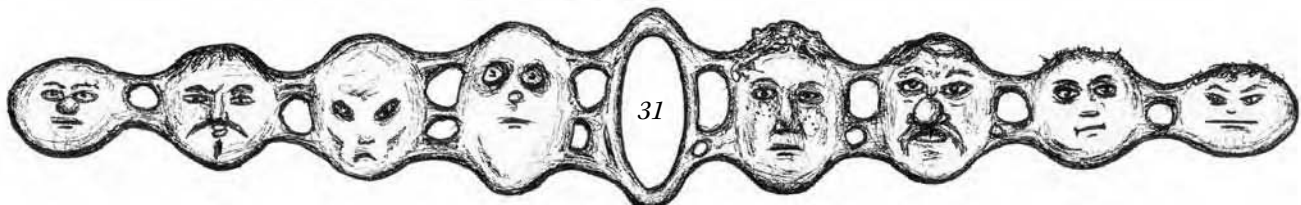
All doppelgangers can alter their mass while changing shape. Urban doppelgangers cannot reduce their mass below 50% of its original value, but rustic doppelgangers can learn to break this barrier.

**Prerequisites:** Rustic doppelganger only, protean warrior level 1+.

**Benefits:** You can assume the form of a Small or Tiny creature.

#### **EXTEND LIMBS (Special)**

You can stretch your limbs or neck to strike an opponent





from a distance. You can only maintain this extension for an instant; you cannot walk around on stilt-like legs, and while you can sneak a quick peek over a wall by extending your neck, you can't keep it extended.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, protean warrior level 2+.

**Benefits:** Your combat reach is increased by 5 feet. This is an optional ability, so you can attack adjacent foes without penalty. You cannot take this feat more than once.

### READ MEMORIES (Special)

You have talent for reading the thoughts of humanoid creatures. You can look beyond surface thoughts to study recent memories.

**Prerequisites:** Urban doppelganger only, Thoughtweaving ranks 3+, Wisdom 17+.

**Benefits:** If you are successfully reading the thoughts of a humanoid, you may attempt to look beyond the surface to draw on recent memories. You may take a standard action to seek the answer to a single question. You must make a successful Thoughtweaving check, opposed by the target's Will saving throw; you suffer an additional -1 modifier for every 30 minutes that have passed since the thought was formed. So the memory of an event that occurred three hours ago would carry a -6 penalty. However, you can continue to search for a memory as long as you wish, provided you can still detect the victim's thoughts. This is a supernatural ability.

### SLIPPERY (Special)

Some doppelgangers learn to secrete adhesive slime. Others are just slimy.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only.

**Benefits:** You can exude slippery slime as a move-equivalent action. For the next two rounds, you gain a +3 bonus to Escape Artist and to attempts to break free from grapples.

### SPRINGHEELS (Special)

A variant of the Extend Limb feat, this allows you to launch yourself into the air with tremendous force. However, it is quite conspicuous; your legs compress and stretch to an unnatural length whenever using this feat.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, Dexterity 15+.

**Benefits:** When you choose to use this ability, you gain a +10 bonus to Jump checks and ignore the usual limitations on maximum distance. This is a supernatural ability.

### TANGLED THOUGHTS (Special)

A critical part of the Thoughtweaving skill is learning to suppress thoughts and compartmentalize one's mind. Doppelgangers who focus on these techniques learn to keep their true intentions hidden behind a mental partition—which can be vital if the doppelganger comes under mental scrutiny.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, Thoughtweaving ranks 2+.

**Benefits:** You receive a racial bonus to all saving throws against *detect thoughts*, *discern lies*, *zone of truth*, or any items or effects that mimic these spells. This bonus is equal to half your Thoughtweaving ranks, with a maximum bonus of +8. This bonus only covers direct lies and surface thoughts; deeper probes—like *mind probe*—bypass this defense.

### WINGS (Special)

As a protean warrior masters its powers, it can develop the ability to grow wings. A doppelganger is not an expert flyer, but it is more capable than a wizard using *alter self*.

**Prerequisites:** Doppelganger only, Dexterity 15+, protean warrior level 2+.

**Benefits:** A winged doppelganger can fly 30 feet per round with average maneuverability. Growing or removing wings is a standard action. Manifesting wings is a supernatural ability; using them is not.

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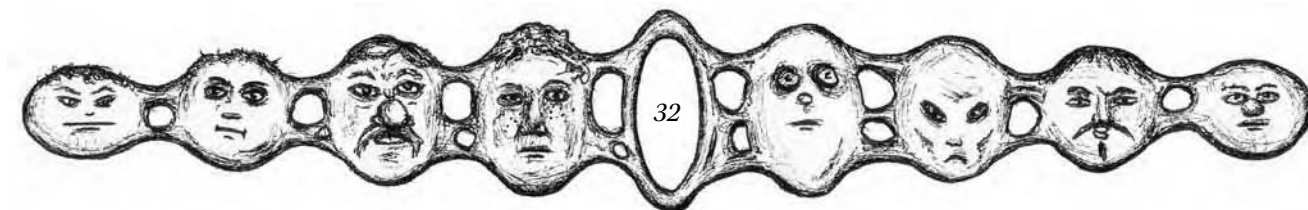
## Campaigns

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### Settings

This book has focused on the use of Doppelgangers in a fantasy setting. However, sinister shapeshifters can fit into almost any genre:

🕸 *Modern Horror:* Urban doppelgangers have infiltrated the slums of major cities. A well-known street gang is actually a front for the doppelgangers; their condemned tenements and armored drughouses are living doppelstadte. The Doppelgangers have developed a drug that speeds up the maturation process of mimics, but it has the unfortunate side effect of turning normal humans into protoplasm. Can the characters discover the source of the drug and why anyone would make it?



- 🌀 *Espionage*: Doppelganger gestalts have infiltrated the governments of multiple nations (or planets). Now one gestalt is pushing its nation towards war, in order to eliminate an enemy gestalt. Can the characters discover the conspiracy manipulating their government? And if so, will they recognize that the opposing nation is also a puppet?
- 🌀 *Science Fiction*: Characters discover a world populated entirely by Doppelgangers. Do they make contact with its Zeitgeist—in which case this living world may become a player in interstellar politics, selling the services of its telepathic spies to other races? Or do they unknowingly bring a mimic and a few doppelgangers aboard their ship, leading to a deep-space witch-hunt as the doppelgangers pick them off one by one?

These are just a few ideas. Any of the adventure hooks provided below could be converted to work in other settings. Take a look at the campaign world and ask yourself—how do you know who's real and who isn't?

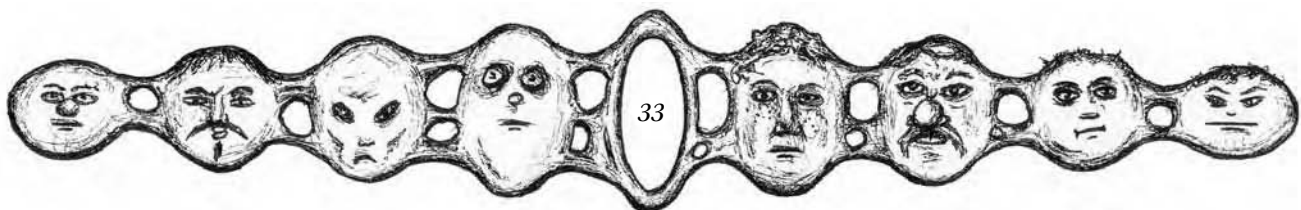
## Adventure Hooks

Doppelgangers can serve many roles in a campaign. The question is whether doppelganger encounters will be random and mysterious, or whether players will be drawn into their secret world and discover the true extent and power of the gestalts.

The gamemaster should examine the campaign world and decide if any prominent NPCs are doppelgangers, and what locations contain hidden colonies. Once a party gets involved with doppelgangers, they should have to question everything they know. Any sort of theft, assassination, kidnapping—is it just what it seems, or is there a hidden agenda? Just because the Captain of the Qeus Guard has always been their ally, does that mean that he's human? Doppelgangers are careful and patient, and their primary goal is simply to exist and continue to spread across the world. Anyone the party works with could be a doppelganger—whether it's a lover, an ally, or a hireling.

A few starting points are provided below.

- 🌀 Any major villain could be a doppelganger Avatar acting as a scapegoat. His schemes could be covering attacks against other gestalts; when the warlord burns down the forest or sacks the city, he could be striking against other doppelgangers.
- 🌀 A group of dark elves (or vampires, or wererats) set up a subterranean base beneath a major city, only to be overrun and replaced by doppelgangers. The drow realize that the base has been compromised and intend to destroy it. The party stumbles into the middle of this vendetta. The doppelgangers may try to trick the party into helping: a trusted friend of the party shows up and asks them to assist the “renegade drow, who have abandoned the traditions of their people.” Or the doppelgangers might reveal their true nature—but point out that unlike the drow, they mean the city no harm.
- 🌀 A series of brutal murders strikes a quiet part of town, and the captain of the guard asks the party to help catch the murderer. But the killer is a fanatical hunter of shapeshifters and the victims are all doppelgangers. This can be a good way for the party to learn that there are more doppelgangers around than they know; when they finally confront the killer, he can explain how he hasn't killed anyone *human...* can't they see that? If he is turned over to the (doppelganger) guard, he could have a sudden change of heart, recanting all of his wild stories and confessing to his horrible crimes—because now he's been replaced by a doppelganger.
- 🌀 While in a coastal town, the party hears that the local sea elves have been acting strangely. This aquatic village has broken off contact with the surface-dwellers, and they are mining a nearby coral reef. If the adventurers investigate underwater, the aloof elves tell the landwalkers to mind their own business. The truth is that the sea elf village has been subsumed by urban doppelgangers, while the reef is a rustic doppelstadt. The “elves” are attempting to find and destroy the hidden memory wells, but the villagers believe that they are looking for hidden treasure. Will the adventurers interfere?
- 🌀 An orphan doppelstadt makes the perfect haunted house. Add a few mimic or doppelganger offspring hiding about, and you have all the tools for a classic horror scenario. After a group of people die mysteriously in a mansion, a relative asks the party to investigate and find some personal belongings of the deceased. While exploring the house they encounter “ghosts” of the previous occupants and their own lost loved ones, and see horrible murders reenacted; they may also find hidden chambers containing the memory well and the spawning



chamber. As it turns out, the orphan doppelstadt actually lived in peace with the family, who were murdered by the same person who hired the PCs; this individual wants to acquire an artifact the doppelstadt has hidden away. This scenario is an excellent way to introduce players to the idea of a doppelstadt; once the concept of living buildings has been suggested, it's easy to reveal that part of their city is alive and scheming against them.

- ☞ A party encounters a village under attack by wild elves and savage beasts — a grugach/rustic Doppelganger alliance. Do they follow the elves back to the living forest? What do they do if the voice of the forest tells them that the village is infested with Doppelgangers? How will a PC druid respond to this forest that seems to have a mind of its own?

## Conversing with Doppelgangers

An encounter with a creature can be more interesting if the players can recognize the creature by the way the gamemaster speaks or presents information. Doppelgangers have no distinguishing features when they are in disguise. But if a doppelganger's true identity has been exposed, it may drop its human façade. Here are a few ideas for roleplaying doppelgangers.

- ☞ Highlight the fact that a doppelganger knows what the characters are thinking. It will address characters by name, and it will immediately pick up on any line of conversation that makes a character uncomfortable.
- ☞ Urban doppelgangers love to play psychological games with people. If a doppelganger discovers an embarrassing secret a character has hidden from the rest of the party, it will constantly drop hints about this to the character, subtly threatening to reveal the information. No secrets? Then the doppelganger will *imply* the existence of secrets, to try to turn the party against one another. It might call into question the behavior of former allies. It may suggest that the characters are being targeted by a vast conspiracy. Keep the extremely high Bluff skill of a doppelganger in mind; it can be very convincing.
- ☞ Doppelgangers can telepathically communicate with a doppelstadt while maintaining a verbal conversation. This can allow a doppelganger to

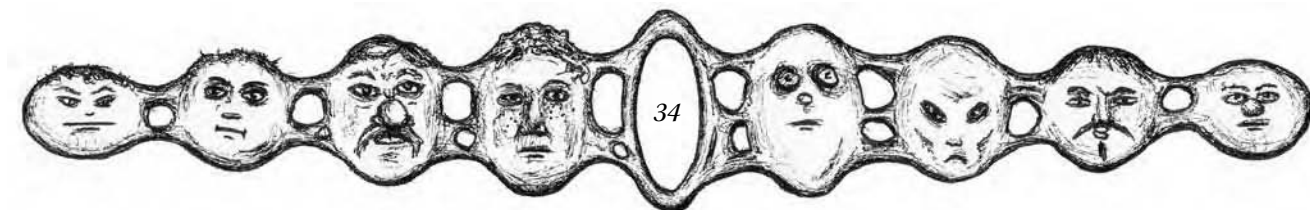
receive updates about distant events; it may say something like "It's too bad about the count," if it has just been told that an assassination has occurred.

- ☞ If a doppelganger's identity has been exposed, it will use its shapeshifting abilities as part of its psychological games. It may assume the form of an old enemy, a loved one, a dead friend, or anything else that will get a response from the party. In these cases, the gamemaster should play the doppelganger as if it was the character in question. With its Bluff skill and telepathic abilities, the creature can be very convincing, seeming to possess the actual memories of its current form. Not that players will fall for the trick — but it can be an excellent opportunity to bring out an old, well-known NPC and twist an emotional knife on the party. And what if that NPC really *was* a doppelganger?

## Designing Doppelganger Communities

A Doppelganger community will begin with a group of *settlers*. This is a band of 8-12 doppelgangers. Urban doppelgangers traditionally take the form of merchant caravans, traveling to establish a business in a new location; they will carry 2-4 mimics in the form of trade goods, and the doppelgangers will take the forms of merchants and guards. Rustic doppelgangers will assume the form of a pack of wolves or herd of deer. They have difficulty carrying mimics, so two of the settlers will convert to mimics once they have reached the desired location. In either case, settlers are usually capable individuals. 50% will be unclassed, 30% will have 2 character levels, and 20% will have 4 or more character levels. Classes will be weighted towards scouts and warriors (fighters, protean warriors, rangers, and rogues).

A newly established Doppelganger community is known as a *seed*. Additional Doppelgangers show up to support the growing doppelstadt. A seed will have between 10-30 doppelgangers, with one mimic for every six doppelgangers. In addition, it will either have one weak doppelstadt or six additional mimics, who are preparing to merge. 70% of the doppelgangers will be unclassed, 20% will have 2 character levels, and 10% will have 4 or more character levels. Characters will have a wider variety of classes, including druids, geistspeakers, and sorcerers. Urban doppelgangers may not have had time to replace government officials or obtain other influential positions.



The most common doppelganger colony is a *node*. A node has between 40-120 doppelgangers. It includes two mimics for every seven doppelgangers, and up to 40 HD of doppelstadte. In the case of urban Doppelgangers, this could be a hamlet or thorp that has been completely subsumed, or it could be part of a larger city; in either case, the doppelgangers will be firmly established and hold positions of power in the community. The class breakdown for a node is the same as for a seed. Once a node reaches the maximum size, it will either continue to grow into a breeding colony or begin shipping excess doppelgangers off as settlers.

The largest doppelganger communities are *breeding colonies*. These are designed to produce as many doppelgangers as possible. Breeding colonies will be hundreds of miles apart; the gestalt will only establish a new one when the old one is too far from the front lines to be useful. There is no size limit to a breeding colony; it might include thousands of doppelgangers, and encompass an entire city. 80% of the doppelgangers will be unclassed, 12% will have 2 character levels, 6% will have 4 character levels, and 2% will have 6 or more character levels.

In addition to these categories, colonies that directly border on the territory of other gestalts will be defined as *garrisons*. Increase the doppelganger population by 10%; these individuals will be 2nd-level characters — rangers, fighters, rogues, or protean warriors. These warriors will guard the colony from attack and fight enemy Doppelgangers.

### Sample Node: Blackborough

**Power Center:** Conventional/Monstrous (Doppelstadte)  
**Alignment:** True Neutral  
**Community Authorities:** The Ironbelly Brewery (24 HD doppelstadt)  
**Population:** 81 urban doppelgangers, 22 mimics, 2 doppelstadte  
**NPCs in the Community:** (No spoken name), mimic 8th-level sorcerer; "Tyran Shae", doppelganger 7th-level protean warrior; "Garth Ironbelly", doppelganger 7th-level cleric (geistspeaker); "Jessie Black", doppelganger 5th-level rogue/1st-level protean warrior; "Minister Ulrich", doppelganger 6th-level rogue (All names are those of the most commonly used humanoid form)

Blackborough is a node — a mid-sized urban Doppelganger colony that maintains part of the gestalt's telepathic network. While statistics have been provided for the colony, it is a district that could be placed within any humanoid town, city, or metropolis.

As far as the town is concerned, Blackborough is a quiet, working-class area. The biggest business in the neighborhood is the Ironbelly Brewery. Most of the people in the district work either at the brewery or at the nearby Ironbelly Inn, and shipments of Ironbelly ale are sent to nearby towns on a regular basis. The people of Blackborough are often referred to as "ironbellies"; they focus on their work and seem slow to grasp other concepts. Some say that it's the result of having ale for breakfast and ale for lunch....

The truth is that the people of Blackborough are all doppelgangers. They are not slow-witted at all, but have found that the dour, stolid "ironbelly" persona keeps people out of the district. The primary doppelstadt is the Ironbelly Brewery and the attached inn; there is also a smaller doppelstadt that takes the form of a row of houses across from the brewery. The brewery is a fully functioning business, but the doppelgangers also use the Ironbelly wagons to ship mimics to seed colonies.

Most of the mimics of Blackborough are scattered inside the brewery or the inn. One room in the Ironbelly Inn contains a mimic wardrobe and a mimic four-poster bed; if the doppelgangers want to dispose of a guest, they will give him that room. The mimic sorcerer guards the brewery's main memory well.

### Blackborough NPCs

Here are statistics for the prominent doppelgangers of Blackborough:

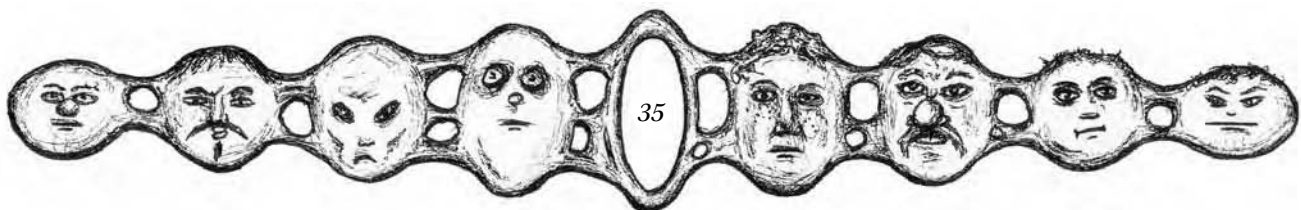
#### Garth Ironbelly

**Garth Ironbelly, doppelganger Clr7 (geistspeaker):** CR 10; Medium-size Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger); HD 11d8+11; hp 60; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +9 melee (1d6+2, slam) or +9 melee (by weapon); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+2 slam) or +9/+4 melee (by weapon); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Detect thoughts, turn undead; SQ Change shape, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +13; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 16.

**Skills:** Bluff +16, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +16, Escape Artist +5, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +10, Profession (brewer) +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Thoughtweaving +8.  
**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Read Memories, Silent Spell.

**Spells Prepared (6/6/5/4/3):** 0-level — detect magic(x2), guidance(x2), resistance(x2); 1st level — comprehend languages, death-watch, disguise self, divine favor, obscuring mist, shield of faith; 2nd level — augury, darkness, hold person, invisibility, silence; 3rd level — create food and water, deeper darkness, meld into stone, nondetection; 4th level — confusion, divination, imbue with spell ability.

**Equipment:** ring of invisibility.



An accomplished geistspeaker, this doppelganger's most common form is the dour patriarch of the wealthy Ironbelly family, which supposedly owns the inn and the brewery. The members of the Ironbelly family are the most prominent citizens of Blackborough and they may be invited to social events.

"Garth's" domains are Gestalt and Trickery. If forced into combat, it will use *deeper darkness* and *silence* to disorient its enemies, then slip away or *meld into stone*. It uses *create food and water* to keep the doppelstade fed, and *darkness* and *deeper darkness* to fill the memory wells and spawning chambers of the doppelstade with shadows. Finally, it will use *imbue with spell ability* to assign specific powers to other doppelgangers to meet the needs of a specific mission.

### Jessie Black

**Jessie Black, doppelganger Rog5/Pro1:** CR 9; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger); HD 5d6+5d8+10; hp 50; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +4 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d8+1, slam) or +9 melee (by weapon); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+1 slam) or +9/+4 melee (by weapon); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Detect thoughts, +3d6 sneak attack; SQ Blindsight, change shape, evasion, immunities, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +14, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16.

*Skills:* Bluff +18, Climb +6, Craft (locksmith) +5, Disable Device +9, Disguise +17, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +7, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +8, Thoughtweaving +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Chameleon, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Slippery.

*Equipment:* ring of mind shielding.

"Jessie Black" is one of Blackborough's sleeper agents — a spy placed in the most powerful criminal organization in the city. She will have a position that gives her the ear of the leader without placing too much responsibility on her shoulders. The original Jessie was an old, trusted confidante of the leader.

Blackborough has other agents scattered throughout the underworld, monitoring smaller gangs and placed to protect "Jessie." These include a few 2nd-level rogues and one 4th-level rogue.

### Minister Ulrich

**Minister Ulrich, doppelganger Rog6:** CR 9; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger); HD 4d8+6d6+10; hp 50; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, slam) or +9 melee (by weapon); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+1 slam) or +9/+4 melee (by weapon); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Detect thoughts, +3d6 sneak attack; SQ Blindsight, change shape, evasion, immunities,

trapfinding, trap sense, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 17.

*Skills:* Bluff +20, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +18, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Listen +12, Perform +8, Profession (government official) +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Thoughtweaving +10, Use Magic Device +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Read Memories, Tangled Thoughts.

"Ulrich" is a specialist in political impersonation. Depending on the nature of the local government, "Ulrich" may have replaced a powerful aristocrat, a bureaucratic functionary, or a courtier with the ear of the ruler. It is exceptionally skilled at all forms of oratory and dialogue, and it can conceal its own thoughts from surface scans while prying into the memories of others. Ulrich is a capable assassin, but its value as a sleeper agent is such that it will rarely be put at risk.

### Tyran Shae

**Tyran Shae, doppelganger Pro7:** CR 10; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger); HD 11d8+33; hp 82; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, +2 ring of protection), touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +11; Grp +14; Atk +14 melee (2d6+3, unarmed strike) or +14 melee (by weapon); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (2d6+3 unarmed strike) or +14/+9 melee (by weapon); Space/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Detect thoughts; SQ Blindsight, boneblades, change shape, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 13.

*Skills:* Bluff +18, Climb +5, Disguise +18, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Profession (merchant) +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Thoughtweaving +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Avatar, Bioplasmic Healing, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Extend Limbs, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip.

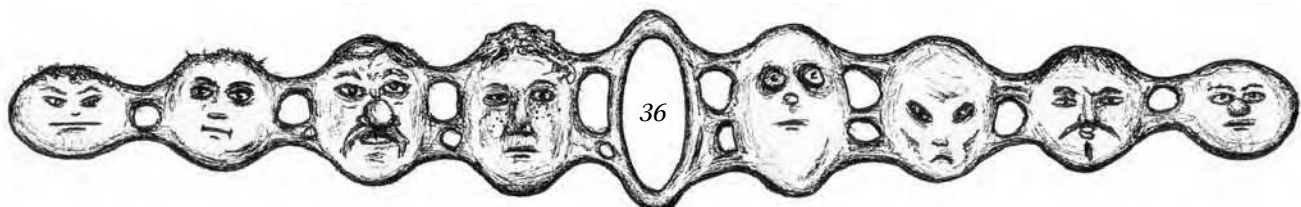
*Equipment:* ring of blinking, ring of protection +2.

This doppelganger is a troubleshooter for the gestalt, only loosely attached to Blackborough. It is a highly effective scapegoat; using its protean abilities, it can mimic the natural weapons of any monstrous form it might assume. In addition, it is an Avatar and can channel other personalities to match the needs of a particular assignment; all in all, "Tyran" can become whatever the situation calls for.

"Tyran Shae" is one of a number of disposable identities — an elven purchasing agent who frequents the Ironbelly Inn while discussing business. "Tyran" will cycle through an assortment of traveling identities.

### Warrior

**Warrior, doppelganger Pro2:** CR 5; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger); HD 6d8+12; hp 39; Init +3 (Dex);



Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, unarmed strike) or +8 melee (by weapon); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8+4 unarmed strike) or +8/+3 melee (by weapon); Space/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Detect thoughts; SQ Blindsight, change shape, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

**Skills:** Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +7, Hide +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Profession (any cover) +4, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7, Thoughtweaving +6. **Feats:** Alertness, Bonehammer, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Extend Limbs.

This is one of Blackborough's skilled defenders. The colony has six of these warriors; they are generally kept in reserve as guard and assassins, as opposed to being placed in the human community as moles. At any given time, one will be in the Ironbelly Inn, two will be in the brewery, two will be patrolling the neighborhood in the civilian form, and one will be in trance.

### Blackborough Adventures

Blackborough is a quiet area, populated by stolid, hard-working people. Unless one of the characters is a connoisseur of local ales, a party of adventurers will have little reason to pass through the neighborhood. Here are a few ways that the doppelgangers of Blackborough can come into play.

- ☞ A vicious crime war breaks out—but all of the guilds and gangs believe that the others started the vendetta. In truth, Jessie Black and her contacts in the other gangs are trying to weaken the power of the underworld. If any of the characters are rogues, they may get caught up in the action—but can they find out how it started?
- ☞ In a wacky mishap, a barrel that was supposed to be sent to a nearby seed colony is sent to the party's favorite tavern. The "barrel" is actually a dormant mimic, which comes to life when the bartender tries to tap it. Will the party investigate the brewery?

## Appendix I

### Doppelganger Variations

#### Doppelganger, Rustic

Where urban doppelgangers adapt to interact with humanoids, rustic doppelgangers bond with the natural

world. A rustic doppelganger is larger than its urban counterpart; in its natural form, it looks like a hairless tiger with slick gray skin. Its wedge-shaped head is similar to that of a dire rat, but has no mouth, nostrils, or ears; its only features are two bulging white eyes. A rustic doppelganger is most comfortable in the Animal forms, but it can assume the shapes of Magical Beasts.

Rustic doppelgangers cannot read the thoughts of humanoids, and only a few understand any human tongue. They prefer to avoid contact with humans, and will generally use their shapeshifting abilities to lay low unless one of their communities is threatened.

Rustic doppelgangers who develop class levels typically become druids, rangers, or barbarians. Spellcasters learn to channel natural forces, allowing doppelganger druids and rangers to perform magic without a need for gestures or speech.

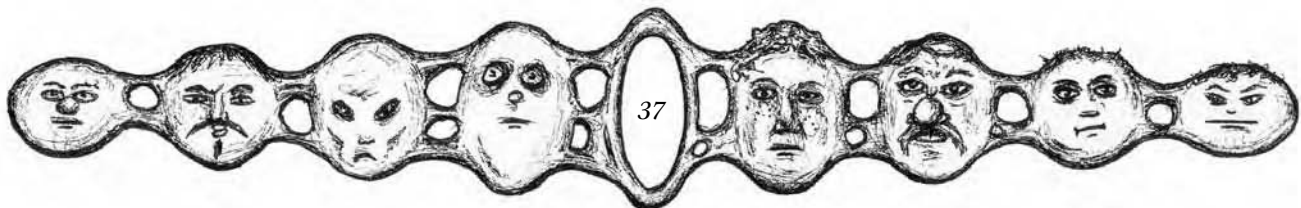
#### Rustic Doppelganger

Large Magical Beast (Shapechanger)

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	4d10+12 (34 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0
<b>Speed:</b>	40 feet (8 squares) or by creature
<b>AC:</b>	15 (-1 size, +6 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 15
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+4/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Claw +8 melee (1d8+5) or by creature type
<b>Full Attack:</b>	2 claws +8 melee (1d8+5) or by creature type
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	10 ft./5 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Animal telepathy
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Animal form, blindsight 60 ft., channel spell, immunities, scent, wild empathy
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 20, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +11*, Disguise +11*, Listen +10, Spot +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Dodge
<b>Environment:</b>	Any land or underground
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary, pair, or pack (3-6)
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	3
<b>Treasure:</b>	Usually none
<b>Alignment:</b>	Usually neutral
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class
<b>Level Adjustment:</b>	—

Rustic doppelgangers possess the following special qualities and abilities:

**Animal Form (Su):** As a standard action, a rustic doppelganger can assume the shape of any Large or Medium-sized Animal. This is similar to *alter self* in



that the statistics of the doppelganger do not change and it does not heal any damage as a result of the shift. However, it can make use of the movement abilities and natural attacks of its new form. A doppelganger can remain in a new form indefinitely.

The doppelganger can also assume the form of any Large or Medium-sized Magical Beast that does not have humanoid features (that is, it can assume the shape of a giant owl, but not a lamia or sphinx). However, it is uncomfortable in such forms and will suffer a -1 morale penalty to all attack and damage roles while in such a form.

Here are a few commonly used forms:

*Wolf:* Speed 50 feet; bite +8 melee (1d6+5)

*Tiger:* Speed 40 feet; 2 claws +8 melee (1d8+5), 1 bite +3 melee (1d6+2)

*Giant Owl:* Speed 10 feet, fly 70 feet (average), 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4), 1 bite +2 melee (1d8+1)

**Animal Telepathy (Su):** A rustic doppelganger can continuously sense the presence of nearby minds. This is identical to the spell *detect thoughts* as if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, except that the doppelganger can only read the surface thoughts of other Doppelgangers and creatures of animal intelligence (though it can still sense the presence of other minds). The saving throw for this effect is 12 + the doppelganger's Charisma modifier. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

This ability also allows the creature to telepathically communicate with Doppelgangers or natural animals within 60 feet. This allows the doppelganger to *speak with animals* as per the spell.

**Blindsight (Su):** A doppelganger can perceive its surroundings using its telepathic senses, giving it blindsight with a range of 60 feet. The doppelganger can ignore darkness, invisibility, or blinding spells. If it somehow loses the use of its telepathic abilities, it temporarily loses this power.

**Channel Spell (Ex):** Rustic doppelgangers that develop the ability to cast druid or ranger spells may ignore any components that these spells usually require, including verbal or somatic components.

**Immunities (Ex):** Doppelgangers are immune to *sleep* and *charm* effects.

**Wild Empathy (Ex):** Rustic doppelgangers gain the wild empathy special ability as a druid of the same level as the doppelganger's Hit Dice.

**Skills:** A rustic doppelganger receives a +4 racial bonus to Bluff and Disguise. When using Animal Form,

a doppelganger receives a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If it can detect the thoughts of an opponent, it receives an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

## Doppelganger, Urban

Adapted to coexist with sentient humanoids, the urban doppelganger can read human thoughts and assume any sort of generally humanoid form.

### Urban Doppelganger

Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Shapechanger)

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+4 (22 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**AC:** 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+5

**Attack:** Slam +5 melee (1d6+1) or +5 melee (by weapon)

**Full Attack:** Slam +5 melee (1d6+1) or +5 melee (by weapon)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Telepathy

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight 60 ft., change shape, immunities

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

**Skills:** Bluff +10\*, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +9\* (+11 acting), Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +3, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6

**Feats:** Dodge, Great Fortitude

**Environment:** Any land or underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or gang (3-6)

**Challenge Rating:** 3

**Treasure:** Double standard

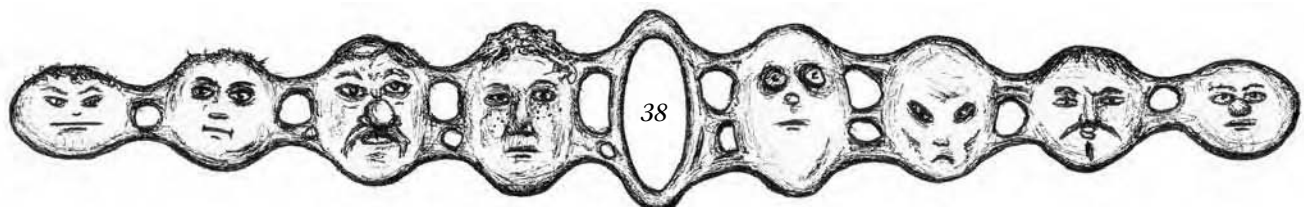
**Alignment:** Usually neutral

**Advancement:** By character class

**Level Adjustment:** +4

Urban doppelgangers possess the following special qualities and abilities:

**Change Shape (Su):** As a standard action, an urban doppelganger can assume the shape of any Small or Medium-sized humanoid. This refers to general body shape, not creature type; a doppelganger can shift into the form of a choker or minotaur, even though these creatures are Aberrations and Monstrous Humanoids. This ability works like *alter self* cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the doppelganger can remain in a new form indefinitely. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but a doppelganger reverts to its natural form when killed. A *true seeing* spell or ability reveals its natural form.



**Blindsight (Su):** A doppelganger can perceive its surroundings using its telepathic senses, giving it blindsight with a range of 60 feet. The doppelganger can ignore darkness, invisibility, or blinding spells. If it somehow loses the use of its telepathic abilities, it temporarily loses this power.

**Telepathy (Su):** An urban doppelganger can continuously *detect thoughts*. This is identical to the spell, as if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer. The saving throw for this effect is 12+the doppelganger's Charisma modifier. A doppelganger may sense the presence of creatures of animal intelligence, but cannot interpret their thoughts. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

The doppelganger may also use this ability to transmit telepathic messages to any other Doppelganger (including mimics and doppelstadte) within 60 feet.

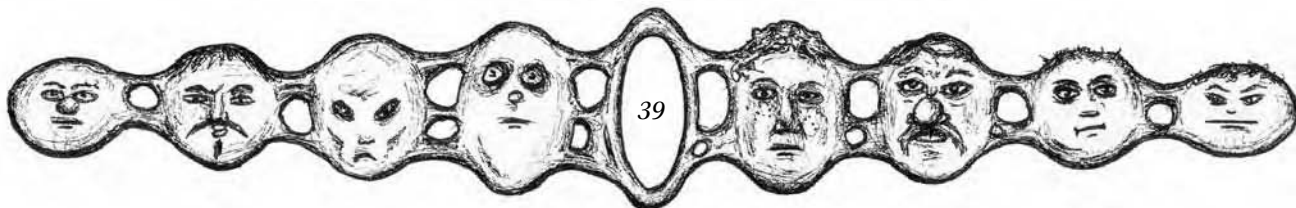
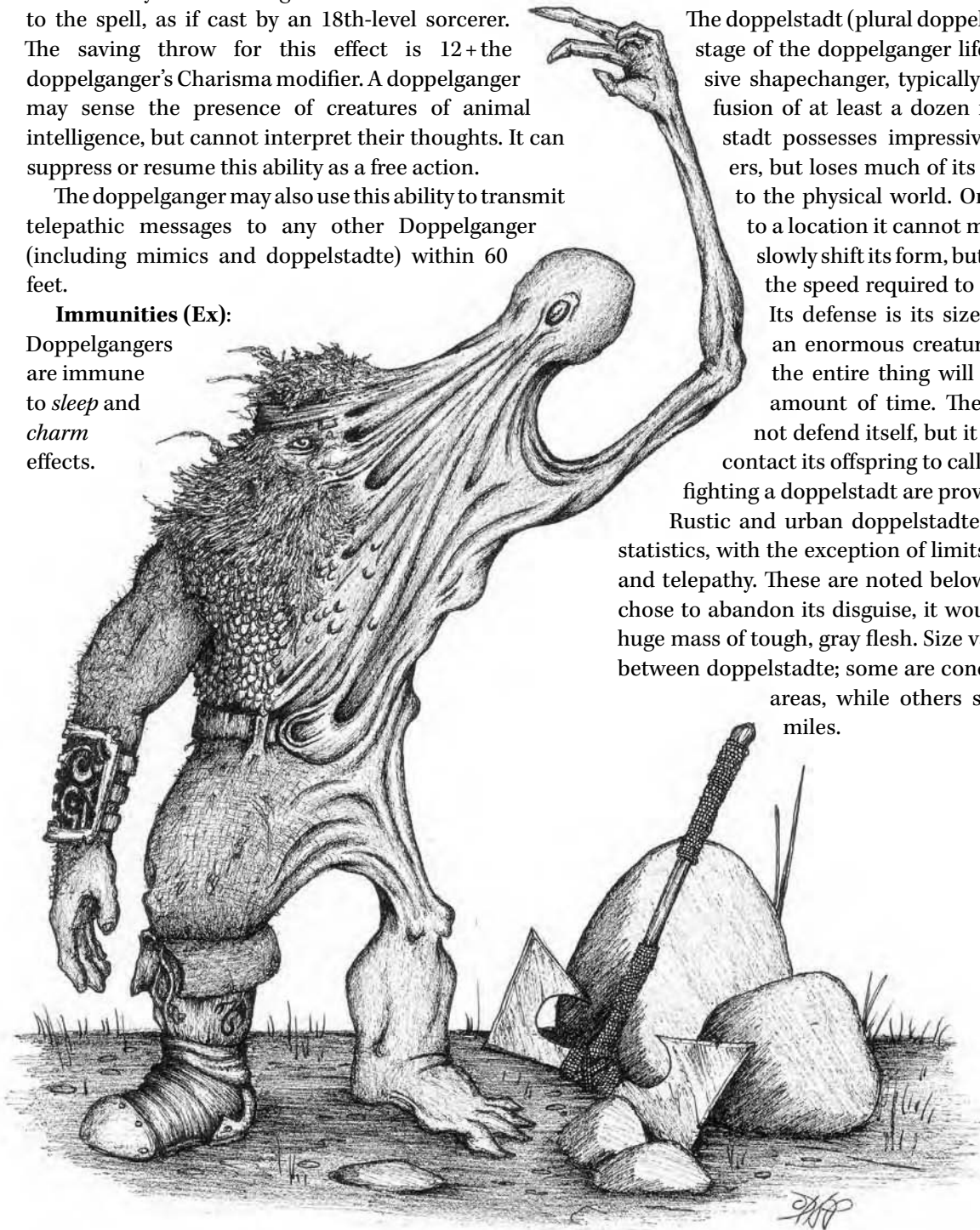
**Immunities (Ex):**  
Doppelgangers are immune to *sleep* and *charm* effects.

**Skills:** An urban doppelganger receives a +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Disguise, and Escape Artist. When using its change shape ability, a doppelganger receives a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If it can detect the thoughts of an opponent, it receives an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

## Doppelstadt

The doppelstadt (plural doppelstadte) is the final stage of the doppelganger lifecycle. It is a massive shapechanger, typically formed from the fusion of at least a dozen mimics. A doppelstadt possesses impressive telepathic powers, but loses much of its ability to respond to the physical world. Once it has bonded to a location it cannot move from it. It can slowly shift its form, but it cannot act with the speed required to engage in combat. Its defense is its size; a doppelstadt is an enormous creature, and destroying the entire thing will take a significant amount of time. The doppelstadt cannot defend itself, but it can telepathically contact its offspring to call for help. Rules for fighting a doppelstadt are provided below.

Rustic and urban doppelstadte possess identical statistics, with the exception of limits on shapeshifting and telepathy. These are noted below. If a doppelstadt chose to abandon its disguise, it would appear to be a huge mass of tough, gray flesh. Size varies considerably between doppelstadte; some are concentrated in small areas, while others stretch out across miles.





## Doppelstadt

Gargantuan Aberration (Shapechanger)

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	16d8+112 (184 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0 (-4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
<b>Speed:</b>	0 ft.
<b>AC:</b>	0 (Special)
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	—/—
<b>Attack:</b>	None
<b>Full Attack:</b>	None
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	20 ft./0 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Telepathy
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Acid immunity, blindsight 120 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, fluid structure, immunities, mental communion, mental partitions
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +14, Ref *, Will +18
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 34, Dex 2, Con 25, Int 18, Wis 23, Cha 19
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +30, Disguise +30*, Knowledge (local) +23, Listen +27, Sense Motive +23, Spot +19, Thoughtweaving +18
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (bluff), Skill Focus (disguise)
<b>Environment:</b>	Any
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary or Council (2-4)
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	3
<b>Treasure:</b>	Double standard
<b>Alignment:</b>	Usually neutral
<b>Advancement:</b>	17-32 HD (Gargantuan or Colossal)
<b>Level Adjustment:</b>	—

Doppelstadte possess the following special qualities and abilities:

**Blindsight (Su):** A doppelstadt has blindsight with a range of 120 feet. It can ignore darkness, invisibility, or blinding spells. If it loses the use of its telepathic abilities, it temporarily loses this power.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** It is difficult to injure a doppelstadt, both because of the toughness of its hide (which has the texture of wood or stone) and the vast mass of the creature. A doppelstadt possesses damage reduction 10/magic.

**Fluid Structure (Su):** A doppelstadt can slowly alter its shape or appearance. Over the course of a minute, it can alter the appearance of one square foot of matter. It can use this ability to seal or unseal chambers within its body. When using this power, it receives a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. Urban doppelstadte can mimic any sort of manmade structure; characters can use Spot or Knowledge (architecture) to penetrate the disguise. Rustic doppelstadte assume the forms of plants, caves, or other features of the local environment; Spot, Knowledge (nature), or Survival can counter the disguise.

**Immunities (Ex):** Doppelstadte are immune to sleep effects and any sort of charm or compulsion. The multiple minds of the doppelstadt reinforce one another and prevent any outside force from seizing control.

**Mental Communion (Su):** A doppelstadt spreads a telepathic net that allows it to touch the minds of other members of its gestalt. See page 6 for complete details on this power.

**Mental Partitions (Ex):** A doppelstadt is formed from the fusion of many minds, and it can split its consciousness to handle multiple tasks at once. A doppelstadt can perform one simultaneous task for every Hit Die that it possesses. These tasks include maintaining and using a mind link formed through mental communion; using telepathy to study the thoughts of another creature; or using fluid structure to begin to alter its shape.

**Telepathy (Su):** A doppelstadt can continuously sense the thoughts of creatures around it. This is similar to the spell *detect thoughts* as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer. The range of the power is 50 feet for every Hit Die of the creature; a 16-HD doppelstadt can detect thoughts up to 800 feet away. Studying the surface thoughts of a particular creature requires the use of one of the doppelstadt's mental partitions. The saving throw for this effect is 16 + the doppelstadt's Charisma modifier. Other Doppelgangers (regardless of gestalt) do not receive a saving throw versus this effect.

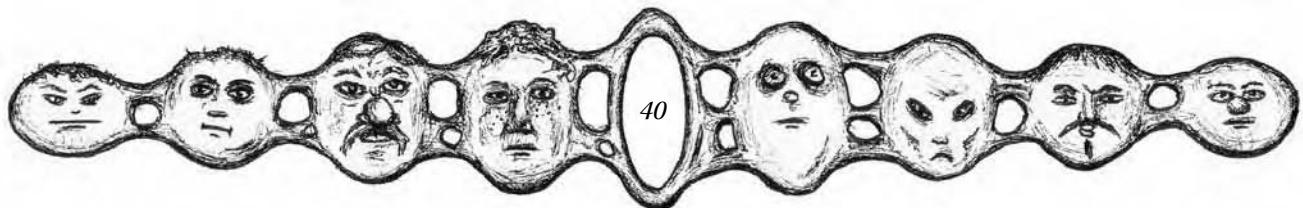
An urban doppelstadt may sense the presence of creatures of animal intelligence, but cannot interpret their thoughts. A rustic doppelstadt can only read the thoughts of creatures of animal intelligence, but can *speak with animals* with any animal within range.

A doppelstadt can use this ability to transmit telepathic messages to all other Doppelgangers (including mimics and doppelstadte) anywhere within the maximum radius of the effect. It may choose to transmit a message to a smaller area.

## Fighting Doppelstadte

Doppelstadte cannot move. The question is whether the character has enough time and firepower to complete the job. A doppelstadt's hit points are spread across a vast physical area; to completely destroy it, a hunter will have to spend a lot of time digging up roots or traveling from building to building.

When adventurers attack a doppelstadt, consider the area they have identified. What percentage is this of the creature's total mass? This is the percentage of the creature's hit points that will be lost if the area is



destroyed. 10% of the creature's mass will be dedicated to spawning chambers, and another 10% to memory wells. Destroying a memory well is the most effective way to damage a colony; even if the doppelstadt survives, the memories are permanently lost.

While doppelstadte are difficult to destroy, damaging a doppelstadt has some value. Every 8 hit points that a doppelstadt suffers reduces its effective Hit Dice by one for purposes of its mental communion and telepathy powers and its ability to produce doppelgangers. It is difficult to heal a doppelstadt; it heals at one-quarter the normal rate, and even healing spells will only restore one-quarter of their normal value.

A doppelstadt will slowly grow over time, but it can also increase its size and power by merging with mimics. To accomplish this act, a mimic must possess a certain level of mental discipline that may take years to attain. Every mimic that merges with a doppelstadt adds one Hit Die to the larger creature.

## Mimic, Gestalt

Adventurers are most familiar with dungeon mimics — orphans who have been cut off from the gestalts. Rustic and urban mimics are more intelligent than their dungeon counterparts. While their physical abilities are similar to those of traditional mimics, the gestalt mimics are more skilled at shapeshifting and can pursue character classes. A mimic maintains any class levels it developed as a doppelganger, and can continue to rise in level.

Gestalt mimics are passive creatures; as a rule they will only engage in combat when doppelgangers cannot handle a situation. They spend their time in contemplation, developing the discipline required to become part of a doppelstadt.

### Gestalt Mimic

Large Aberration (Shapechanger)

<b>Hit Dice:</b>	6d8+18 (45 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1 (Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	10 ft. (2 squares)
<b>AC:</b>	16 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15
<b>Base Attack/Grapple:</b>	+4/+12
<b>Attack:</b>	Slam +7 melee (1d8+6)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	2 slams +7 melee (1d8+6)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	10 ft./10 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Adhesive; animal telepathy (rustic) or telepathy (Urban)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Acid immunity, blindsight 120 ft., immunities, mimic shape
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +9

<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 16
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +14*, Climb +9, Disguise +14*, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +8, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Thoughtweaving +10
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes
<b>Environment:</b>	Any
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary or Pair
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	4
<b>Treasure:</b>	Standard
<b>Alignment:</b>	Usually neutral
<b>Advancement:</b>	7-8 HD (Large); 9-10 HD (Huge); and by character class
<b>Level Adjustment:</b>	—

Gestalt mimics possess the following special qualities and abilities:

**Adhesive (Ex):** Gestalt mimics can secrete the same adhesive as dungeon mimics. An adhesive-covered mimic automatically grapples any creature it strikes with its slam attack. A victim cannot get free until this adhesive is removed. Each round, a mimic can make one automatic slam attack against any creature that is stuck to it. A weapon that strikes an adhesive-coated mimic gets caught unless the wielder succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 16). If the weapon is trapped, a successful Strength check (DC 16) is required to pull it off.

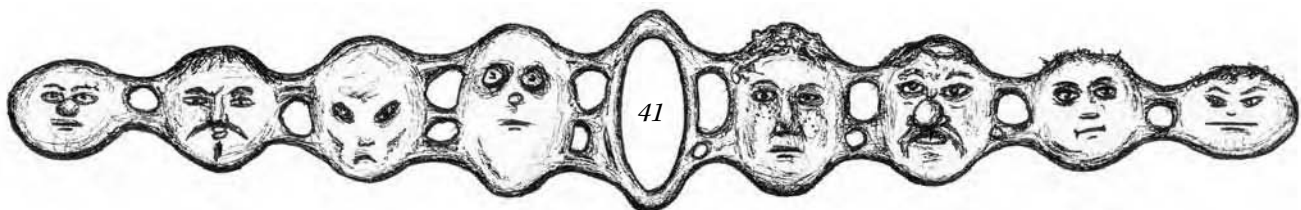
Strong alcohol will dissolve the adhesive. A pint of wine or a similar substance will weaken the adhesive, but the mimic still can grapple normally. A mimic can dissolve its adhesive at will, and the substance will break down 5 rounds after the mimic dies.

**Animal Telepathy (Su):** A rustic mimic can continuously sense the presence of nearby minds. This is identical to the spell *detect thoughts* as if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, except that the mimic can only read the surface thoughts of other Doppelgangers and creatures of animal intelligence within 200 feet (though it can still sense the presence of other minds). The saving throw for this effect is 12 + the mimic's Charisma modifier. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

This ability also allows the creature to telepathically communicate with Doppelgangers or natural animals within 200 ft. This allows the mimic to *speak with animals* as per the spell. Only rustic mimics possess this ability.

**Blindsight (Su):** A mimic has blindsight with a range of 120 feet. It can ignore darkness, invisibility, or blinding spells. If it loses the use of its telepathic abilities, it temporarily loses this power.

**Immunities (Ex):** Mimics are immune to sleep and charm effects.



**Mimic Shape (Su):** A mimic can alter its shape as a standard action. In the process of the change, it can double its mass or cut it in half. An urban mimic can assume the form of any sort of man-made inanimate object. A rustic mimic can take the shape of vegetation or inanimate natural objects. In either case, the mimic's Disguise check is opposed by a character's Spot check. In the case of a rustic mimic, an observer can use his Knowledge (nature) skill if it is better than his Spot skill. Unlike a dungeon mimic, a gestalt mimic can alter the texture of its skin as part of a disguise.

**Telepathy (Su):** An urban mimic can continuously *detect thoughts*. This is identical to the spell, as if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer. The saving throw for this effect is 12 + the mimic's Charisma modifier. A mimic may sense the presence of creatures of animal intelligence within 200 ft., but cannot interpret their thoughts. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

The mimic may also use this ability to transmit telepathic messages to any other Doppelganger (including other mimics and doppelstadte) within 200 feet. Only urban mimics possess this ability.

**Skills:** When using its mimic shape ability, a mimic receives a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks. If it can detect the thoughts of an opponent, it receives an additional +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks.

a secret. Altruistic firebrands wish to avoid causing panic; they worry about the innocent deaths that would ensue if a superstitious public learned that there were doppelgangers in its midst and start an inquisition. The thrill-seekers just want to enjoy the pleasure of the hunt and don't want anyone else to get in their way. Both seek to identify and eliminate their inhuman enemies without revealing their presence. They learn to be as inconspicuous as the creatures they hunt—slipping into an area, burning out their prey, and disappearing into the night. Firebrand rangers often hunt rustic doppelgangers and packs of wereboars or werewolves; firebrand rogues frequent cities, tracking down wererats and urban doppelgangers.

**Hit Die:** d8

## Requirements

The qualify to become a firebrand, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

*Alignment:* Non-lawful

*Base Attack Bonus:* +3

*Sense Motive:* 6 ranks

*Spot:* 6 ranks

*Special:* The character must have exposed and eliminated a creature with the shapechanger subtype, either alone or in the company of no more than five other people.

## Class Skills

The class skills (and the key ability for each skill) for firebrands are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (shapechangers) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the firebrand.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Firebrands are proficient with all simple weapons and light armor. While firebrands are skilled warriors, they spend little time learning to use new weapons and instead rely on the tools of their previous trade.

**Closed Mind:** Many shapechangers—like doppelgangers and rakshasas—use telepathic abilities to maintain a disguise. Firebrands learn to hide their thoughts below a shield of static. For each firebrand

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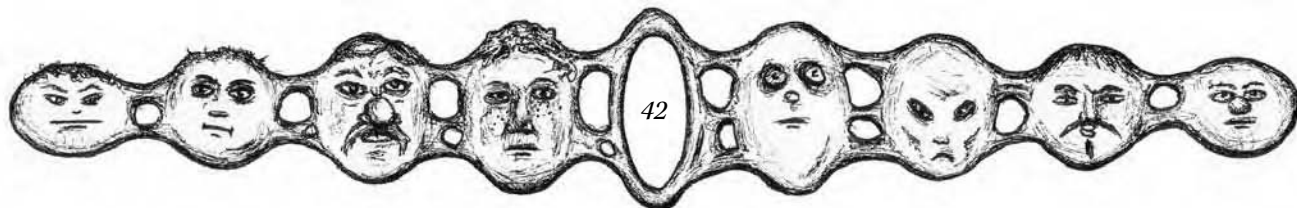
# Appendix II

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## The Firebrand

Doppelgangers are not the only creatures that hide behind false masks. Werewolves and wererats are a thorn in humanity's side. Rakshasas and other infernal creatures can hide in plain sight. Encountering these creatures—realizing the extent to which unnatural creatures have infiltrated humanoid society—can be a shocking and disturbing experience. For some, hunting down and destroying these shapeshifters becomes an obsession. These are the firebrands—warriors who use the fire of truth to destroy those who live by deception.

There are a variety of reasons that people become firebrands. Most seek to protect the innocent from what they perceive to be dangerous supernatural conspiracies. For others, it is more of a game—a chance to hunt the ultimate prey, creatures that can hide in plain sight. In either case, firebrands tend to keep their activities



**Table 2: Firebrand**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+1	+2	Closed Mind, Open Eyes
2	+2	+0	+2	+3	
3	+3	+1	+2	+3	Sense the Unnatural
4	+4	+1	+3	+4	Touch of Truth
5	+5	+1	+3	+4	Frozen Flesh

level that a character possesses, she receives a +1 bonus to saving throws made against *detect thoughts* or other objects or abilities that duplicate the effects of this and similar spells.

**Open Eyes:** The most important skill of the firebrand is the ability to cut through deception. For each firebrand level a character possesses, she receives a +1 bonus to Spot or Sense Motive checks for purposes of countering Bluff or Disguise. So a 4th-level firebrand will receive a +4 bonus to a Spot check when examining a mimic.

**Sense the Unnatural:** At 3rd level, a firebrand develops an innate sense for spotting disguised monsters. She can make a Wisdom check (DC 15) whenever she comes within 30 feet of a dragon, fey, outsider, undead, or creature with the shapechanger subtype that is concealing its true nature; she may add her firebrand levels to her roll. If the check is successful she senses that someone in the area is not what he appears to be, although she cannot pinpoint the individual. With a successful Knowledge (shapechangers) roll (DC 15) she can determine the type of creature that she sensed. She may only make one check against a particular individual per day. This is a supernatural ability.

**Touch of Truth:** At 4th level, a firebrand's mystical senses become more acute. By touching a target and maintaining the contact for a standard action (which may require a touch attack), the firebrand can sense whether the victim is what he appears to be. The firebrand must make a Wisdom check opposed by the target's Charisma check; the firebrand may add her class levels to her roll. If she succeeds, she may follow up with a Knowledge (shapechangers) check (DC 15) to determine the creature type of her target; if she fails, she knows that the target is an imposter, but not what he actually is. The firebrand must consciously choose to activate this ability, and she can only attempt to use it once per day on any single individual. Note that this has no effect on a humanoid disguised as another humanoid; it will only catch creatures that are hiding their fundamental nature. This is a supernatural ability.

**Frozen Flesh:** At 5th level, a firebrand develops the power to fix a shapeshifter in its current form, which may limit its combat abilities or prevent it from escaping. To perform this action the firebrand must make a touch attack against her intended victim. If she is successful, the victim must make a Will save (DC 16 + the firebrand's Wisdom modifier). If the victim fails his save, he cannot use any form of shapechanging magic (including spell-like abilities or supernatural powers) for the next 1d6 minutes. This is a supernatural ability that can be used up to five times per day.

Frozen flesh is effective against humanoids as well as monsters. It even affects involuntary transformations; someone who is under the influence of frozen flesh is completely immune to *baleful polymorph* or similar spells for the duration of the effect. Note, however, that it will not cancel a spell that is already in effect.

A doppelganger under the influence of frozen flesh cannot use any of the following feats: Bonehammer, Chameleon, Extend Limbs, Springheels, Wings.

## Dealing with Firebrands

A gamemaster may find that firebrands can spoil a carefully planned mystery. What is the point of coming up with a doppelganger conspiracy if Cedric is sure to spot them? How could the Doppelgangers have spread so far without being exposed by firebrands?

The first thing to remember is that a firebrand cannot share the information he gathers with his mystic senses with other people. Touch of truth may show him that Jessie Black is a doppelganger, but he can't prove it to anyone else — unless he somehow tricks her into exposing her true nature in front of witnesses. And if the shapechangers have influence within a local guard or government, a firebrand who voices his suspicions to the authorities may simply be exposing himself to danger.

The second thing is that if a firebrand *does* expose the presence of a vast conspiracy, he is most likely to trigger a panic — and a panic that the shapechangers will take advantage of. Wererats and doppelgangers are clever individuals, and if a firebrand starts an inquisition, one of the shapechangers may end up in charge of it. In which case, the end result may harm more innocent people than anyone else.

Together, these are the reasons most firebrands are silent vigilantes. They can identify conspiracies and hidden monsters, but generally, they have to handle these problems personally.

