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Armies of the Abyss



Book of Fiends, Volume Two

BROM



By Erik Mona

GRR1012

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Armies of the Abyss

Book of Fiends Volume Two

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Chapter One: Into the Abyss

Some scholars believe that everything in the material world is but a representation of some intrinsically pure concept found in the Outer Planes. A castle, for example, is an echo of a perfect, archetypal castle that exists somewhere beyond the Astral Plane. The existence of the roiling Abyss lends credence to such theories. The seemingly infinite layers of this plane of chaos and evil house the "perfect" inspiration for countless acts of murder, betrayal, perversion, and decadence.

Whole cities rise and fall at the whims of distant masters in endless cycles that seem only to prove the inevitability of anarchy and decay. The aimless souls of mortals range from layer to layer, fearing capture from nigh-omnipotent lords eager to suck essence from their metaphysical marrow. Landscapes leach life, color, and nutrients from those who attempt to settle them, and wild beasts controlled only by hunger and lust haunt jungles infested with murderous plants and poisonous streams. Few foreigners survive long in the Abyss. The plane seems designed by a bickering assembly of insane but nonetheless brilliant architects for the sole purpose of punishing and destroying its inhabitants.

Certain creatures do manage to eke out an existence here, as their natures parallel that of the Abyss itself. These beings, commonly known as demons on the Material Plane, divide themselves into countless races, subraces, and breeds. The greatest demons bend the spirit of the plane itself to their will, becoming self-styled princes of certain layers, dominating hordes of demonic subjects just as human sovereigns command their vassals.

Notoriously disloyal, demons hold true allegiance only to their own chaotic, unpredictable nature. They war against one another, against the devils of the Nine Hells, and against the angelic choirs of the Upper Planes, sacrificing themselves in great numbers as if honoring the very concept of destruction, whether of themselves or of their enemies. Despite their propensity to die in huge numbers when facing better-organized foes, their sheer force of numbers propels the armies of the Abyss to victory as often as not. An infinite plane, after all, can produce an infinite number of demonic soldiers.

Yet not all demons prefer the cosmic battlefields of the Outer Planes. Some delight in tempting mortals to acts of chaos and evil, increasing the number of souls entering the Abyss with every foul corruption. Demon princes require mortal souls to maintain their hold on their personal layers, and their agents roam the physical world in search of converts for their infernal masters.

Some demons come to the Material Plane at the behest of amoral wizards, clerics, or sorcerers, who summon them from the Abyss to do their bidding. When under the command of a summoner, demons make powerful shock troops, cunning confidants, and skillful assassins. Certain magical practitioners, known as thaumaturges, have developed the practice of manipulating demonic forces and magic to a science. Just as the world has much to offer demons, demons have much to offer it.

Demons also have much to offer your campaign. They represent the ultimate challenge to the typical party of fantasy adventurers.

Nothing is more offensive to a paladin than a demonic paragon of ideals diametrically opposed to the standards of law and goodness. Druids and rangers rightly consider demons unnatural blights whose very presence on the Material Plane threatens the natural order.

For a fighter or barbarian, demons are the ultimate martial encounter, and

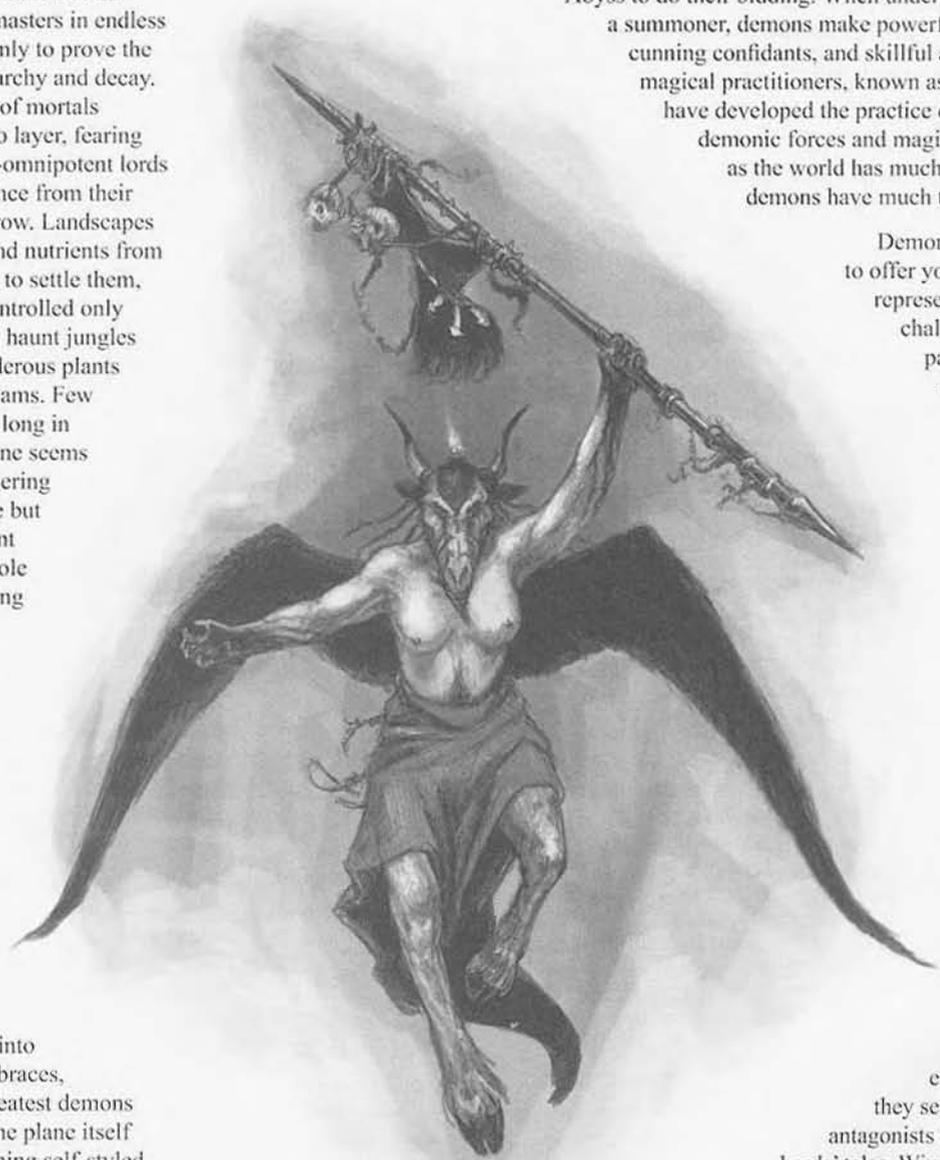
they serve as thrilling antagonists in countless

bards' tales. Wizards, sorcerers,

and clerics, on the other hand, might have much to learn from demonic denizens of the Outer Planes, viewing them as intriguing enemies who hold the key to important lore in their

inscrutable minds.

Even an adherence to chaos and evil, however, allows room for differences. Not all demons exist merely to frighten or eat mortals. Some can make for powerful (albeit very dangerous) allies, approaching an adventuring party with offers of mutual assistance. Some portray themselves as misunderstood victims of creation, benevolent advocates of philosophies not intrinsically "bad," but simply frowned upon by society at large. In the magical world of a fantasy roleplaying campaign, knowing the



difference between a silk-voiced demon who legitimately offers unknown pleasures and one who merely wants to feast on your innards is a valuable skill indeed. This book is the first step on that intriguing path of research.

For Gamemasters, this tome can mean the difference between a dreary campaign in which demons merely represent a "tougher ore," and a rich, complex world with a wide variety of demonic influences that will keep players guessing all the while.

On the Nature of Demons

Students of the arcane have cataloged at least as many different forms of demons as layers of the Abyss itself. Complicating matters, demonkind often exhibit numerous physical variants that nonetheless share a common racial lineage. Few adventurers examining the remains of a vulture-headed vrock and an alluring succubus would conclude that both share a heritage, but indeed both are tanar'ri, the largest and most politically dominant group of demons in the Abyss.

Countless centuries ago, the Abyss was dominated by the qliphoth [KLIP-awth], shadowy creatures often considered the effluvia of creation. Legends tell that when the Lords of Good created the celestials to serve them, the qliphoth formed as a byproduct, the stuff of metaphysical necessity. Sometimes referred to as the Hollow Ones, the insubstantial qliphoth were always beset by a great hunger they could not quench and a great thirst they could not slake.

The qliphoth ruled the first layer of the Abyss long before it became a repository for the souls of chaotic evil mortals (since mortals had not yet been created at the time of their apogee). Though the greatest among them braved the portals leading from the first layer to the realms below, the qliphoth lacked the tenacity required to dominate the plane itself, and their explorations into the heart of the Abyss seldom led to permanent gains.

The qliphoth subscribed to a form of evil so profound and primal that few mortals can conceive of their depravity. They initiated great genetic experiments, mixing magic and primitive technology to create dozens of "inferior" demonic races to serve them. Among these servitors were the multiformed tanar'ri, and dozens of others besides whose names have been lost to infernal history. The qliphoth meddled little outside the Abyss, preferring to construct a perfect dystopia in isolation on the plane's uppermost layer. The fantastic ruins of qliphoth foundry-cities litter the gates of the Abyss, forlorn monuments of a civilization destroyed in the final birthing pains of the multiverse.

The seeds of qliphoth destruction came in the form of the eladrin, chaotic good celestials born of idealism and hope. While their lawful-minded kin among the angelic choirs of the Seven Heavens strategized about the issues of temptation presented by the devils of the Nine Hells, the eladrin focused on the demonic qliphoth as their foes of choice. Under the leadership of powerful eladrin generals, legions of ghaele knights swarmed the Abyss, laying siege to the cities of the Hollow Ones with brutal efficiency. Unused to intrusions from outsiders, the qliphoth were savaged, their great works sundered and their servitors scattered.

The qliphoth's most tenacious slaves, the tanar'ri, fled the eladrin host through gates leading deeper into the Abyss. They held

out in those treacherous depths for the ensuing centuries, while the eladrin scoured the first layer in an attempt to completely eradicate the qliphoth. In the meantime, the creation of mortals inevitably led to the dispersion of mortal souls to the Outer Planes, which added further chaos to tumultuous Abyssal battlefields. Eventually, powerful tanar'ri managed to bend some lower layers to their will, gaining near-godlike powers in the process. Though these grim monarchs warred with each other from the start, their combined power was enough to expel the eladrin intruders and establish the tanar'ri as the preeminent demonic race in the Abyss. Worse, these demons had interests far beyond the infernal planes. They ventured into the Material Plane to tempt mortals to chaos and evil, revealing profane multiversal secrets and initiating countless unspeakable intrigues.

Remnants of the ancient qliphoth yet endure in hidden pockets of the deepest Abyssal layers, hatching vile plots to take back the mantle of demonic rulership that once was theirs. Tanar'ri roam nearly every layer of the Abyss and frequently visit the Material Plane. This volume contains representatives from both demonic races. Other races exist, but their influence seldom extends beyond a single layer. In the interest of brevity, no examples of these minor races have been included here.

Tanar'ri Qualities

Immunities (Ex): Tanar'ri are immune to poison and electricity.

Resistances (Ex): Tanar'ri have cold, fire, and acid resistance 20.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Most tanar'ri can summon other tanar'ri much as though casting a *summon monster* spell, but they have only a limited chance of success. Roll d%: On a failure, no tanar'ri answer the summons. Summoned creatures automatically return whence they came after 1 hour. A tanar'ri that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour. (The percentage chance of success and types of demons available for summoning are listed in individual entries.)

Telepathy (Su): Tanar'ri can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Qliphoth Qualities

Immunities (Ex): Qliphoth are immune to poison, cold, and mind-affecting charms.

Resistances (Ex): Qliphoth have electricity, fire, and acid resistance 20.

Fascination (Su): As a standard action, qliphoth may change their coloration and posture to create a mind-boggling display of shifting colors and forms that overloads the senses, rendering enemies helpless. Anyone within 30 feet who witnesses this effect must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the qliphoth's Hit Dice + the qliphoth's Charisma modifier) or be rendered helpless for 2d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting charm. Potential victims can attempt to avert their eyes by viewing the qliphoth through a mirrored surface, tracking its shadow, or using some similar trick. Each round, such opponents have a 50% chance to not need to make a saving throw against the fascination attack. Opponents who cannot see the creature at all, due to closed eyes, the use of a blindfold, and so on, treat the qliphoth as if it has total concealment.

Telepathy (Su): Qliphoth can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Demon Lords and Princes

Each demonic breed contains numerous physical and mental variations. The most powerful transcend the limitations of their original forms to become demon lords or princes. It is unknown precisely how a "standard" demon becomes a lord, though energy derived from mortal souls seems to play an important role in the transformation. Some lords prefer to retain vestiges of their original appearance, but many select a form without parallel in all of the underworld.

Less mysterious are the means by which a demon lord becomes a prince. Through arcane magic, warfare, and sheer force of will, some demon lords are able to "tame" a layer of the Abyss. Just as a god commands certain magical and mundane aspects of its home realm, so too can a demon prince shape and control the physical and metaphysical landscape of its personal domain. The greatest demon princes, such as the Vaz'zht and Demogorgon, command more than one contiguous layer, though such empire building is extremely rare. Of the 666 catalogued layers of the Abyss, fewer than one-third have been so dominated. Another third form battlegrounds for would-be princes hoping to gain control, and the rest are so hazardous that even the most appalling demon lords see little in them worth the trouble of conquest.

Dominating a layer of the Abyss brings with it a host of benefits. Demon princes need not fear death outside their home plane. If slain on another plane, the demon's essence returns to its domain and is reformed by the plane itself (usually in a familiar but somewhat different form) within six days. Thereafter, it is barred from returning to the plane of its destruction for a hundred years. While a century might seem a long time for a human or even an elf, most demon princes are willing to bide their time, plotting revenge against their murderer's progeny. And of course they remain free to send minions or mortal worshipers against their hated enemies from afar.

Gathering Souls

A demon prince requires energy to bend a layer of the Abyss to its will and maintain control over it, and it gains this energy from the souls of deceased mortals. Princes engage in two primary means of acquiring souls: sponsoring and harvesting.

Soul sponsoring involves making pacts with mortals. In return for some service, the demon prince lays claim to a mortal's soul upon that being's death. Rather than the complicated contracts prepared by their diabolical kin, demons favor a simple approach. When a

mortal calls out for a demon's aid, whether through thaumaturgical rituals (the usual method) or simple entreaty (a far less certain prospect), the prince gazes into the supplicant's heart. If the offer is in earnest, the bargain is accepted on the spot. If not, the demon ignores it, or sometimes punishes the mortal for wasting its time. The thaumaturge (see **Chapter 2: Those Who Serve**) is one example of a mortal who has gained tremendous advantage by offering its soul to a prince of the Abyss, albeit at terrible cost.

Not all souls find their way into a demon prince's domain willingly. Though sponsored souls have especial

succulence, the sovereigns of the Abyss gain some power from the destruction of souls harvested from the plane's uppermost layer. Agents of the demon princes, often powerful demon lords in their own right, scour the layer for newly arrived souls, who are "harvested" in great numbers and driven in packs through the many gates leading lower into the Abyss. The screams of these tortured, hunted souls fill the layer's skies with a grim cacophony, giving the place its most common sobriquet: the Howling Threshold.

Most souls given to demon princes are utterly destroyed and can never return to the world of the living (this process can take from a moment to several years' time, depending upon the disposition and methods of the prince in question). Some souls, however, achieve positions of power within a prince's hierarchy, acting as knowledgeable advisors, trusted guards, or lowly slaves. Some princes admire the souls of particularly devout followers or extremely debased individuals and allow them to exist for eternity. Others keep souls

merely to provide entertainment in the form of tortured screams that never end. Many seem to make such determinations purely at random. For some mortals, living forever in the service of a demon prince is more exciting and alluring than mortal life ever could have been. Others receive only horrific tortures, and so suffer the final justice that they eluded in life.

The Howling Threshold

The souls of sentient creatures who lived according to the tenets of chaos and evil (intentionally or otherwise) pass on to the Howling Threshold upon the moment of death. Soulforms usually appear much as the mortal did in life, although painted with a diseased brush. Such souls initially remember little of their previous existence, finding themselves thrust into a dangerous,



hostile terrain with little more power than the average mortal commoner. Great archwizards, vain kings, and vengeful slaves finally reach equality in the afterlife, each as powerless as the next to control its own destiny or to avoid the seemingly limitless number of demons who hunt them for food or for the machinations of distant masters.

Some souls manage to survive as fugitives on the Howling Threshold for years, gaining powers and abilities just as they did in their previous lives. As the months pass, they begin to recall more and more of their former existence, perhaps remembering the name and face of their murderer and pining for final revenge. Their very existence, however, is predicated on the nature of the Abyss itself. They can never leave, consigned for all eternity to a plane designed to destroy them utterly. If killed in any way, these souls are eradicated forever.

As might be expected, souls that survive more than a year on the Howling Threshold are hardened by the experience. They've learned to trust no one but themselves and have killed more than their share of demons. Rarely, groups of survivors band together to form nomadic communities, occasionally inhabiting abandoned caves or the ruined outposts of long-forgotten demon lords. The only significant, long-standing independent soul enclave is the cyclopean city of Amalrehtan, abandoned by the qliphoth at the height of the war against the eladrin.

Situated near the center of the layer, Amalrehtan sports hundreds of partially ruined towers, great bulbous domes, and mostly destroyed genetic foundries. Tanar'ri avoid the city and its extensive dungeons, which occasionally belch forth aeons-old horrors that savage any foolish enough to let down their guards for even a moment. Because most demons shun it, Amalrehtan has become a haven for travelers from other planes, including the Material, and rumors tell of great marketplaces filled with transplanar lore and treasure unavailable anywhere else in the multiverse.

Though soulforms make up the majority of the Howling Threshold's populace, the place is rightly feared for its demonic inhabitants. Millions of demons fly its turbid skies and roam its vast plains. Most of these creatures serve no master, feasting upon souls simply because it gives them pleasure to do so. Countless tanar'ri live out near-immortal lifespans with goals no more complicated than killing, eating, and fornicating (sometimes all with the same victim). Thousands of demon lords live in vaunted fortresses spaced irregularly throughout the layer, commanding infernal armies in their quest to corrupt the mortal world or establish themselves as princes in the lower Abyss. These beings include the diseased Ahazu the Seizer, calculating Aldinach of the Thirty-Three Terrors, desiccated Baltazo the Pitiless, and the errant lord Laraic of the Unerring Bow.

In addition to independent demon lords, unique, powerful tanar'ri in service to demon princes roam the plains of the Howling Threshold, seeking captives for their dread masters. These beings and the countless servitor creatures that aid them gather huge groups of souls, prodding them toward the conduits that lead to the realms below. These portals are heavily fortified for miles around and are known as Harvest Gates by demons and souls alike. Few captives who are thrust into these grim passages ever emerge to tell the tale of their travels. Some Harvest Gates lead to the personal domains of demon princes such as Demogorgon or Abraxas, but just as many open to vistas of indescribable horror untamable by even the fiercest demonic lord. Certain self-described scholars in the city of Amalrehtan claim to have cataloged the known Harvest Gates, but whether or not they can be trusted, and what they charge for such information, is a matter of rank speculation.

The Lower Layers

Nowhere is it more apparent that evil has many forms than in the lower realms of the Abyss. Some layers present alien landscapes rife with malevolent vegetation and even more harmful inhabitants. Others contain no atmosphere, or air crackling with poisonous fire that consumes all who breathe it. Certain layers seem to be sentient creatures in and of themselves.

Simply choosing a gate at random and wandering to some unknown lower layer is as good a form of suicide as any available across the Outer Planes. Ironically, the safest layers are often those dominated by a particular demon prince, as these nobles must force their realms to be hospitable enough for their legions of demonic followers and soulform chattel. Details on the home layer or layers of more than twenty demon princes can be found in **Chapter 3: Those Who Rule**.

Demons and the Material Plane

Demons haunt the dark corners of the Material Plane (sometimes called the Prime). They are often tasked to guard a site of great power or summoned via a *gate*, *planar ally*, or *planar binding* spell and left to wander after their original purpose has been fulfilled. Most demons have a love-hate relationship with the mortal realm. They delight in scaring, torturing, and corrupting mortals, but many have a difficult time adapting to its social mores and inherent lawfulness (from their decidedly relative point of view). Rare is the demon who can live in seclusion in a mortal city for any length of time without giving in to its base desires. Only the most disciplined, on a specific task for a demon lord or prince, or those specifically created to tempt mortals to wickedness (such as succubi and incubi) can remain on the Material without great psychological strain.

Happily for them, most demons visit the mortal world but briefly. They respond to a *summon monster* spell, kill the enemies of their summoner, and return home to the welcome chaos of the treacherous Abyss.

Customizing Your Demons

Armies of the Abyss presents the weakest and most common specimen of each demon. For the most part, the demons in this book have a CR of 20 or lower. Each entry contains an advancement range, which you can use as a guide to making more powerful versions.

This book also contains some examples of demon lords who already are quite powerful. Each has a few magic items listed, most commonly weapons and items of protection. As powerful entities, however, these demons have access to virtually unlimited magical stores, so you should customize them for your campaign before unleashing them on your players. Resist the urge to throw a demon lord against the party as a one-off encounter—defeating such an opponent should form the cornerstone of a campaign, and with careful preparation your players will be talking about their hard-earned victory for years to come.

Chapter Two: Those Who Serve

An injured young girl whimpers in the fetid waters of an abandoned well. A calumnious traitor stares through a barred window at the forlorn rope dangling from a makeshift gibbet erected just for him. A power-hungry politician eyes the exposed back of a well-regarded superior, itching equally for a weapon and an alibi.

When the aloof gods remain impassive to appeals for help or guidance, the desperate and ambitious turn their pleas to the demon princes of the Abyss. Unlike deities, who maintain their metaphysical status through complex, occluded means, demon princes derive vigor through corrupting mortal souls. All demon princes require souls, whether sworn or consigned, to preserve or increase their standing in the Abyssal underworld. Some gain power from consuming or annihilating them, while others draft the spirits of evildoers into unthinkable huge armies. While the gods rarely intervene in the affairs of worshipers, demon princes keep one ear open to the Material Plane at all times, for it offers the most savory soulstuff.

The thaumaturge is a new character class that exploits the relationship between mortals and the princes of the Abyss. While it is a natural for evil cult leaders and dastardly villains, it also works for player characters—even though all demon princes are chaotic evil, some of their followers are more altruistic and can function with most adventuring parties.

The Thaumaturge

Perceptive mortals benefit from the demons' need by offering their own immortal souls in exchange for enhanced powers in the mortal realm. Rarely, such exchanges are made in the heat of the moment—a desperate plea, often to no one in particular, that finds its way to the ears of an understanding demon prince. More often, the path of the thaumaturge begins with rigorous study of how best to draw the attention of an infernal lord and ends with a supplication to a specific being according to ancient traditions and lore.

Not all demons are rapacious, thoughtless avatars of destruction and mayhem. Accordingly, thaumaturges differ widely in nature, from kind and patient to domineering and merciless. Neutral thaumaturges are pragmatic, judging the enormous benefits granted to them in life to outweigh the threat of eternal damnation that might await them upon death. Some believe they eventually will discover a method of outsmarting their demonic patron, but just as many hope to so impress him or her that they will be elevated to a place of prominence immediately upon death. No one can guess at the motives of an evil thaumaturge. A good number are accurately described as psychopaths. All covet power over all else, and are willing to cut moral corners (and often mortal throats) to achieve a position of honor and importance in the material world.

Adventures

Thaumaturges adventure for a variety of reasons, often informed by the motivations of their patron demon prince. Some acquire wealth, magical lore, and prestige in an attempt to impress or ultimately defeat their master, while others visit strange cities and far-off lands to undermine religious authority and spread the reputation of their fell lord. In youth, many would-be thaumaturges lust for magical power, but they often manifest a desire for political power

as they grow older; adventuring is one of the few methods of propelling a member of any social class into the upper echelons of society. Elderly, more experienced thaumaturges often adventure to gain the secret of prolonging their lives through lichdom, cheating their patron demon of its prize by refusing to die at all.

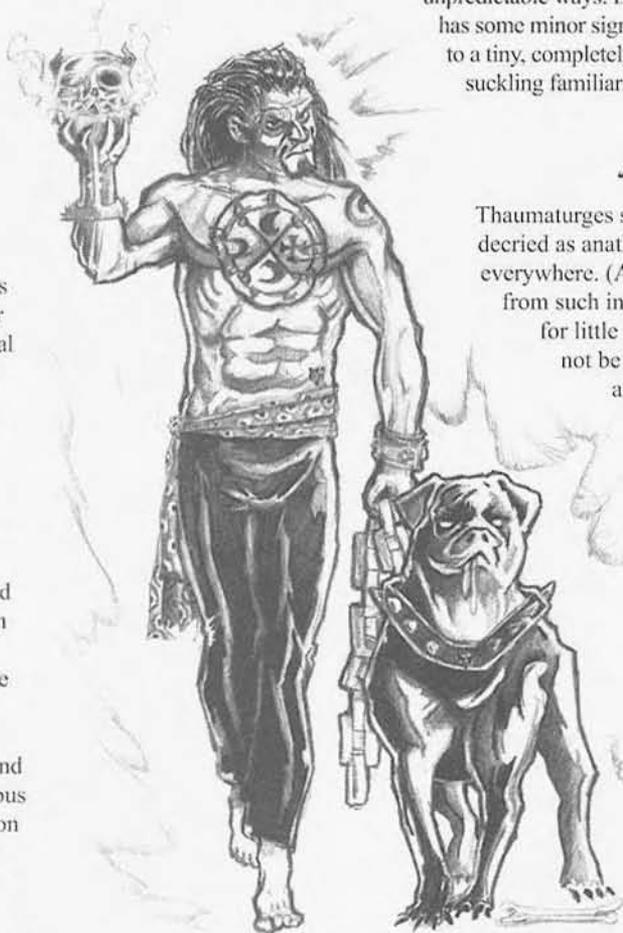
Characteristics

Thaumaturges cast divine spells much as clerics do, though they get their spells from dealing with Abyssal patrons rather than gods. Like wizards and sorcerers, they may attract familiars. The chaos-soaked magic granted to them tends to corrupt thaumaturges as they become more familiar with it, warping their bodies and minds in unpredictable ways. Even the least experienced thaumaturge has some minor sign of corruption, from a strange mole to a tiny, completely insensitive spot to a third nipple for suckling familiars.

Alignment

Thaumaturges serve unspeakably evil beings decried as anathema by reasonable, good religions everywhere. (A world that regularly endures attacks from such intrinsically wicked creatures allows for little moral relativism.) Though they need not be evil, no thaumaturges may be of good alignment.

The unpredictable, irrational nature of Abyssal nobility is alien to those of lawful mindset. They simply cannot process the terrible rituals needed to invoke the power of a demon prince. Thus, lawful characters may not be thaumaturges. Since they have chosen to serve creatures of evil and of chaos (even if they themselves do not subscribe to such a rigid ethos), thaumaturges cannot choose the "true" neutral alignment. They may be chaotic neutral or neutral evil, however.



Thaumaturge Archetypes

Though the reasons why someone might choose to become a thaumaturge are as varied as the layers of the Abyss itself, several personality types and backgrounds lend themselves particularly well to the left-hand path. Players looking to flesh out their character's past or GMs developing thaumaturge villains for their campaign might consider some of the following thaumaturge archetypes.

The Anarchist

Far more dedicated to chaos than to evil, the anarchist comes to demonology because demons represent the ultimate in chaos, the epitome of the anti-establishment. An anarchist thaumaturge might use his powers to undermine the local governmental authority, embarrassing the nobility and making those in power appear petty and vain by revealing them as self-interested cowards. An anarchist probably has few compunctions about killing in order to further the cause of dissent and anarchy. Just as a too-tall stack of glass plates tempts a child to destruction, so too does a lawful society tempt the anarchist into harmful action. Anarchists enjoy their work, seeing it as their personal mission to upset the status quo.

The Blasphemer

In a world in which the gods are demonstrably real, perhaps those who choose to ridicule and scorn true deities are the bravest souls of all. Often intellectuals, they admit the gods are powerful beings but dispute their divinity or right to be worshiped. Blasphemers revel in pointing out the hypocrisies of official church doctrine or the hokiness of time-honored religious practices, hoping to discredit the notion of gods as beings worthy of respect and terrestrial religion as something that deserves any serious attention at all. Blasphemers might conduct parodies of popular religious ceremonies, mocking the faithful through humorous though hurtful barbs. At the worst, they actively work to subvert divine religions, spreading doubt through the populace and undermining morality, which only helps to feed the ever-hungry Abyss.

The Desperate

Often, a thaumaturge enters a relationship with a demon prince because he has no other choice. Perhaps to avoid death, the loss of property, or harm to himself or those he cares about, he came to the demon prince because no one else would help him. Now aware of his mistaken judgment and the terrible price he must eventually pay, a desperate thaumaturge might tend toward sullenness, regretting the past and falling into a sort of numb acceptance of the present, and ultimately of the final future. Still, even folk with the best of intentions appreciate a little power now and again, so the desperate thaumaturge eventually learns to accept his fate. However haltingly, he progresses in the thaumaturgical arts simply because it propels him ever forward to his final reckoning, the only thing about which he can be absolutely sure in a world controlled by chaos.

The Power-Grubber

Most thaumaturges chose their path because they wanted power regardless of the price. Brazen social and political climbers, the power-grubber thaumaturge steps on whomever he can to further his own lot in life. He'll kill and betray whomever he must betray to ensure that his own ever-expanding goals are met. No form of magic is too profane, no taboo too exotic for his tastes, provided it is a means to the end of advancement.

The Sociopath

And then there are the crazies. These wretched dregs of society—the murderers, rapists, child abductors, and worse—populate the world's most depressing corners. Such individuals measure time as the space between victims, gaining satisfaction or perhaps a moment's respite or control from killing or violating others. Certainly some such folk were created by their environments, unintentionally trained into a life of horrible violence due to years of abuse or neglect. Others, on the other hand, clearly know right from wrong, and choose wrong simply because it gets them off. These are the most dangerous, unpredictable thaumaturges, and the poisoned blood that runs through their body is like ambrosia to the debased princes of the infinite Abyss.

Religion

Though many thaumaturges pay lip service to the gods, most disdain the path of the divine as prostrating oneself before absent, uncaring patrons. Thaumaturges prefer to look into the eyes of a demon rather than guess at the motivations of an all-too-distant deity. They consider themselves the equals—or even better—of their demonic patrons. Accordingly, clerics (even chaotic evil ones) tend to view thaumaturges as dangerous cheats who have subverted the traditional means of channeling divine power for purely selfish, wicked motives. In some kingdoms, clerics lead vicious pogroms against them; whole village populations have been tied to stakes and burned in attempts to flush out a single thaumaturge.

Background

Some choose the path of the thaumaturge out of despair, pleading their hopeless case before a demon prince to save their lives, families, wealth, or something else of great value to them. Others swear fealty to the lords of the Abyss after careful consideration and long years of study, weighing the value of the powers gained against the measure of their mortal soul and finding the bargain more than worth the price. Either way, all thaumaturges are bound in a terrible pact that, while offering a great deal of power in the short term, eventually consumes them completely, as their souls fuel the power and dominion of their chosen Abyssal sovereign.

All thaumaturges display some form of unusual behavior that makes them stand out from the average member of society. They

Table 2-1: The Thaumaturge

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day*														
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9					
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Soulbound, summon familiar	3	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	+1	+0	+0	+3		4	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Lesser corruption	4	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	+2	+1	+1	+4		5	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	+2	+1	+1	+4		5	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	+3	+2	+2	+5		5	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Lesser corruption	6	4+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	+4	+2	+2	+6		6	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	+4	+3	+3	+6		6	4+1	4+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	+5	+3	+3	+7		6	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	Lesser corruption	6	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		6	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		6	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9		6	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Lesser corruption	6	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—	—
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		6	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—	—
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		6	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	1+1	—	—	—	—
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Greater corruption	6	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—	—
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		6	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	3+1	3+1	2+1	—	—	—	—
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Greater corruption	6	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	5+1	4+1	4+1	4+1	4+1	4+1	—	—	—	—

*In addition to the stated number of spells per day for 1st- through 9th-level spells, a thaumaturge gets a domain spell for each spell level, starting at 1st. The "+1" on this list represents that. These spells are in addition to any bonus spells for having a high Charisma.

have a presence that makes others take notice of (and often fear) them. Thaumaturges seldom cooperate with one another, as all have very forceful personalities. Demons do make alliances among themselves, despite their vile natures, so thaumaturges sworn to allied demon princes can get along, if grudgingly.

Races

Most of the thaumaturgical art derives from the work of human mystics, who ages ago were the first to pierce the planar boundaries leading to the Abyss. Human cities provide the easiest source of further converts, sacrifices, and secret meeting places, solidifying the race's predominance among thaumaturges. Half-elves and half-ores, who live on the periphery of human society, make up a significant percentage of thaumaturges as well.

Very few elves, halflings, or gnomes choose the dark path, preferring to devote themselves to gods who further their race or assist with the specific challenges encountered by their kin. Dwarves, slightly more inclined toward law than the other common races, abhor the art of the thaumaturge and seldom tolerate the company of those they know to honor princes of the Abyss.

Thaumaturges are uncommon among the savage humanoid races, although the feral gods they worship are often misidentified as demons.

Other Classes

A thaumaturge works well with fighters and barbarians, which he often manipulates as living shields to protect him or his familiar. Most thaumaturges are intrigued by arcane spellcasters (leading many to multiclass as sorcerers), who for their part enjoy the insight a thaumaturge can bring to discussions of magical theory and practice. Only chaotic evil clerics might interact with thaumaturges, though they tend to resent them. Interactions between thaumaturges and paladins usually end in puddles of blood.

Ex-Thaumaturges

A thaumaturge who grossly violates the code of conduct expected by his patron (generally acting against the patron's plans or showing a propensity toward law or goodness) loses all spells and class features and cannot gain levels as a thaumaturge until he atones (see the spell *atonement* for more details). Once a thaumaturge has sworn his soul to a patron demon, no other demon will sponsor him. Thaumaturges may not "switch" patrons.

Any thaumaturge who gains divine power from a deity (such as adding a cleric level as a multiclass) becomes an ex-thaumaturge and cannot regain his old abilities in any way.

Demon princes, however, have no compunction about enforcing the surrender of the ex-thaumaturge's soul.

Game Rule Information

Thaumaturges have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Charisma determines how powerful a spell a thaumaturge can cast, how many spells the thaumaturge can cast per day, and how hard those spells are to resist. To cast a spell, a thaumaturge must have a Charisma score of 10 + the spell's level. A thaumaturge gets bonus spells based on Charisma. The Difficulty Class of a saving throw against a thaumaturge's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the thaumaturge's Charisma modifier. High Constitution and Dexterity scores enhance the thaumaturge's relatively weak saving throws, whereas a high Intelligence score helps a thaumaturge learn and retain knowledge regarding the Abyss and its inhabitants.

Alignment: Chaotic neutral, neutral evil, or chaotic evil.

Abbreviation: Thu

Hit Die: d6.

Table 2-2: Demonic Patrons

Patron	Domains	Typical Worshipers
Abaddon	Catastrophe, Chaos, Death, Evil	Nihilists, fatalists
Abraxas	Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Magic, Protection	Paranoïds, arcane spellcasters
Anarazel	Chaos, Evil, Earth, Fear	Adventurers, the foolhardy
Arachnadia	Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Trickery	Dark elves, poisoners
Astaroth	Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Prophecy	Prophets, scholars, librarians
Azazel	Animal, Chaos, Disease, Evil	The betrayed, the condemned, prisoners, the downtrodden
Azidahaka	Chaos, Evil, Fear, Pain	Torturers, psychopaths, murderers
Baphomet	Chaos, Evil, Strength, Protection	Guardians, minotaurs
Behemoth	Animal, Chaos, Evil, Strength	Gluttons, the morbidly obese
Decarabia	Air, Chaos, Evil, Subterfuge	Spies, those obsessed with flight, bird-lovers
Demogorgon	Chaos, Evil, Fear, Pain	Despots, dictators
Eligor	Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, War	Cowardly knights, knaves, jealous warriors
Flauros	Chaos, Evil, Fire, Sun	Arsonists
Gamigin	Chaos, Death, Evil, Knowledge	Morticians, those obsessed with death
Haagenti	Change, Chaos, Evil, Earth	Alchemists, surgeons, the greedy
Ipos	Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Trickery	Actors, dilettantes, those posing as something they are not
Kostchtchie	Chaos, Crippling, Evil, Strength	Brutes living in cold lands
Lord of Many Forms	Change, Chaos, Evil, Pain	The wildly insane
Marbas	Change, Chaos, Disease, Evil	The diseased and disease-obsessed
Orcus	Chaos, Death, Destruction, Evil	Necromancers, necrophiles
Nocticula	Chaos, Evil, Healing, Luck, Plant	Rural women, free-thinkers
Pazuzu	Air, Animal, Chaos, Evil	Winged predators
Raum	Catastrophe, Chaos, Evil, Prophecy	Prophets
Sabnach	Chaos, Disease, Evil, Protection	The besieged, besiegers, masons, architects
Seere	Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Travel	Travelers, anarchists, caravaners
Shax	Chaos, Crippling, Evil, Subterfuge	Murderous dilettantes, street surgeons, murderers
Socothbenoth	Chaos, Evil, Pleasure, Trickery	Whores, pimps, the sex-obsessed
Vaz' zht	Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Subterfuge	Calculating leaders, spies
Vepar	Chaos, Evil, Travel, Water	Sailors, fishers, survivors of ocean catastrophes
Yughooragh	Animal, Chaos, Death, Evil	Scavengers, gnolls
Zhar'Ub-Luur	Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Trickery	Liars, politicians

Class Skills

The thaumaturge's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (Wis), Stry (Int, exclusive skill), and Spellcraft (Int). See **Chapter 4: Skills** of the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains and Class Skills: A thaumaturge who chooses Animal or Plant as a domain also has Knowledge (nature) (Int) as a class skill. A thaumaturge who chooses Knowledge as a domain also has all Knowledge (Int) skills as class skills. A thaumaturge who chooses the Travel domain also has Wilderness Lore (Wis) as a class skill. A thaumaturge who chooses the Trickery domain also has Bluff (Cha), Disguise (Cha), and Hide (Dex) as class skills. See Demonic Patron, Domains, and Domain Spells, below, for more information.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the thaumaturge.

Armor and Weapon Proficiency

Thaumaturges are proficient with all simple weapons. They are not proficient with any type of armor nor with shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the

skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket, and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

Some demon princes have favored weapons, and many thaumaturges consider it a point of pride to wield the chosen weapon of their patron. A thaumaturge whose patron's favored weapon is a martial weapon and who chooses War as a domain receives the Martial Weapon Proficiency feat related to that weapon for free, as well as the Weapon Focus feat related to that weapon. See **Chapter 5: Feats** in the *PH* for more information.

Spells

A thaumaturge casts divine spells according to Table 2-1: The Thaumaturge. A thaumaturge may prepare and cast any spell on the cleric spell list (see the *PH*), provided he can cast spells of that level. (Alignment restrictions mean that casting some spells may have unpleasant consequences.) The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a thaumaturge's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the thaumaturge's Charisma modifier.

Thaumaturges do not acquire spells from books or scrolls, nor do they prepare them through study. Instead, they participate in a daily ritual known as an obedience, a short ceremony required of them by their Abyssal patron. The obedience takes one hour to perform. At the end of the ceremony, the thaumaturge receives his full daily complement of spells. Time spent resting has no effect on whether a thaumaturge can prepare spells, though he cannot replenish his spell allotment until 24 hours have passed since he last began his obedience ritual.

Table 2-3: Corruptions

Roll d% to determine how your thaumaturge's immersion in chaos magic has corrupted his body. (See Corruptions on page 12.) This roll cannot be modified in any way. Some mutations involve specific game effects (often a modifier to Charisma or to certain skill checks), but others are simply cosmetic mutations without any associated game rules. All corruption bonuses or penalties are cumulative with each other and with other sorts of bonuses. Those corruptions that may be gained multiple times are noted as such in their description. Otherwise, reroll duplicated corruptions.

Corruptions cannot be healed in any way short of a *miracle*, *wish*, or divine intervention. Demon princes consider these to be badges of honor, and any thaumaturge who willingly acts to rid himself of a corruption instantly becomes an ex-thaumaturge.

Lesser Corruptions

d% Roll	Effect
01–05	Raspy Voice: Your voice becomes harsh and unpleasant. You suffer a –2 corruption penalty on all Perform checks involving singing or oratory.
06–10	Club Foot: One of your feet becomes badly deformed. The arch rises and ultimately buckles, and the ankle turns inward, making walking extremely difficult. Reduce your base speed by 5 feet. You may gain this corruption as many times as you have feet.
11–15	Fangs: Your canines and incisors sharpen slightly, giving you a more fearsome appearance. You gain a +2 corruption bonus on all Intimidate checks.
16–20	Milky Eye: One of your eyes becomes clouded and milky. Reduce your Charisma score by 1. You may gain this corruption as many times as you have eyes. If all eyes become corrupted, you are completely blind.
21–25	Lose All Hair: Your exposure to chaos magic has caused all of your hair to fall out. It never will regrow.
26–30	Vestigial Horns: A pair of small horns grows from your forehead, giving you a demonic appearance. Reduce your Charisma score by 1.
31–35	Fingernails Fall Out: Your fingernails fall from your fingers, leaving behind tender flesh that never fully hardens. The affliction will remain a minor inconvenience for the rest of your life.
36–40	Unpleasant Odor: Your body emits a rank, pungent odor that can be masked only by the sweetest perfumes. Reduce your Charisma score by 1.
41–45	Forked Tongue: Your tongue becomes forked like that of a snake. You gain a +2 corruption bonus on all Bluff checks.
46–50	Spotty Skin: Your skin develops unsightly splotches of bright red rash from head to toe. Reduce your Charisma score by 1.
51–55	Irises of Fire: Your irises glow with a faint red radiance, granting you a +2 corruption bonus on all Intimidate checks.
56–60	Unsettling Presence: The taint of chaos has grown so strong in you that animals have trouble controlling themselves in your presence. All animals within 30 feet of you must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + half your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become hostile (see NPC Attitudes in the <i>DMG</i>).
61–65	Spine Ridges: The vertebrae in your spine become slightly spiky, giving your back a ridged contour.
66–70	Unseemly Girth: You instantly gain 100 pounds of body fat. You can gain this corruption any number of times.
71–75	Pointed Ears: Your ears become elongated and jagged, growing to about twice as long as those of the average elf.
76–80	Terrible Breath: Something within you has become very, very rotten, and it makes itself known every time you open your mouth. You suffer a –2 corruption penalty on all Bluff and Diplomacy checks.
81–85	Tail Spur: A fleshy growth about 2 inches long and 1 inch thick emerges from the base of your spine. When riding without using a special custom-made saddle, you suffer a –2 corruption penalty on Ride checks.
86–90	Webbed Fingers: Your hands grow a thin film of skin between each finger and thumb, granting you a +4 corruption bonus on Swim checks. However, due to an excess of flesh, you can no longer wear rings.
91–95	Shifty Eyes: You have extraordinary trouble focusing your eyes for longer than a moment, giving others the impression that you are untrustworthy. You suffer a –2 corruption penalty on Diplomacy checks.
96–00	No Corruption: Somehow, your body has managed to stave off the corrupting influence of chaos—for now.

Greater Corruptions

d% Roll	Effect
01–10	Bestial Snout: Your nose twists and warps wildly, taking on an animalistic appearance. You gain the scent special quality, as described in the <i>MM</i> .
11–20	Cloven Foot: Your toes curl into the sole of your foot, which hardens into a cloven hoof. You can no longer wear boots of any kind. Reduce your Charisma score by 2. You can gain this corruption as many times as you have feet. Should all of your feet become cloven, you may wear magical horseshoes.
21–30	Forked Tail: You gain a fiendishly barbed tail. It's relatively easy to conceal the tail by dressing carefully. If it is exposed, you suffer a –2 corruption penalty on Bluff and Diplomacy checks and a +2 corruption bonus on Intimidate checks against opponents who are superstitious about demons and their ilk.
31–40	Melted Eye: One of your eyes liquefies and completely melts, leaving behind a fleshy empty socket. Reduce your Charisma score by 2. You can gain this corruption as many times as you have eyes. If all of your eyes have been corrupted, you are completely blind.
41–50	Third Eye: You develop a third eye, situated in the middle of your forehead. You gain a +4 corruption bonus on Search or Spot checks.
51–60	Mark of the Beast: A large birthmark appears in a prominent location on your body, such as on your face or hands, that marks you as an agent of the Abyss. Clerics of lawful or good gods recognize the mark as anathema, and never will willingly aid you for any reason so long as they know about the mark. You gain a +2 corruption bonus on Diplomacy checks made against chaotic evil creatures aware of the mark.
61–70	Scaly Skin: Your skin grows a thin layer of transparent scales. You gain a +2 natural armor bonus to AC.
71–80	Tears of Blood: You no longer weep ordinary tears. Instead, stinging blood flows from your tear ducts. You suffer a –4 corruption penalty on Diplomacy checks against any good-aligned creature who has witnessed you cry bloody tears.
81–90	Appetite Loss: You've lost the ability to eat and process foods or drink liquids, and are kept sustained only through the magical link to your demonic patron. Should that link be interrupted, such as if you enter an <i>antimagic field</i> , you immediately begin to starve.
91–95	Cursed Progeny: Your obsession with chaos has so warped your body that it now passes on to future generations. Your sexual fluid becomes ice cold to the touch. Any child sired or birthed by you gains the half-fiend template.
96–00	No Corruption: Somehow, your body has managed to stave off the corrupting influence of chaos—for now.

In addition to his standard spells, a thaumaturge gains gets one domain spell of each spell level he can cast, starting at 1st. When a thaumaturge prepares a domain spell, it must come from one of his two chosen domains (see below for details).

Demonic Patrons, Domains, and Domain Spells: Choose a demonic patron for your thaumaturge. A list of thirty-one available patrons appears in **Table 2–2: Demonic Patrons**. A thaumaturge's chosen patron determines his motivations, ambitions, and the details of his obedience ritual. Refer to **Chapter 3: Those Who Rule** for complete details on most of these demon princes.

When you have chosen a patron and an alignment for your thaumaturge, choose two from among the patron's domains for your thaumaturge's domains. You can only select a demon prince's alignment domain (Chaos or Evil) if your thaumaturge's alignment matches that domain.

Each domain gives your thaumaturge access to a domain spell at each spell level, from 1st on up, as well as a granted power. Your thaumaturge gets the granted power of all the domains selected. With access to two domain spells at a given spell level, a thaumaturge prepares one or the other each day. If a domain spell is not on the cleric spell list, a thaumaturge can only prepare it in his domain slot. Domain spells and granted powers are detailed in **Chapter 11: Spells** of the *PH*. Additional domains and granted powers can be found in **Appendix I** of this book.

Chaotic, Evil, Good, and Lawful Spells: A thaumaturge cannot cast spells of an alignment opposed to his own or to his chosen patron's (always chaotic evil).

Bonus Language

In addition to the bonus languages available to a thaumaturge according to the rules for his race, all thaumaturses may learn Abyssal, the language of demons.

Soulbound

The agreement that grants the thaumaturge his power also binds his soul to the fate of his chosen patron. Upon death, the thaumaturge's soul travels to the home layer of that demon prince (regardless of whether or not the thaumaturge is himself chaotic evil). *Resurrection* spells and the like can return the soul to its mortal host, but barring such magics, the thaumaturge then serves forever at the whim of his Abyssal lord. The soul might be consumed or destroyed, or even elevated to a position of respect and power (though always, of course, subservient to the demon prince). However, it is never released for any reason.

Familiars

A thaumaturge can summon a familiar in exactly the same way as a sorcerer or wizard can, as explained in **Chapter 3: Classes** of

the *PH*. Thaumaturges wishing for a more powerful familiar may select the Abyssal Familiar feat detailed at the end of this chapter.

Corruptions

At 3rd, 7th, 11th, and 15th level, the thaumaturge's exposure to the chaos energy that powers his magic alters his body in a random lesser corruption (a physical mutation). At 18th and 20th level, the chaos taint is so deep that much more serious mutations arise. In each case, roll d% and consult the appropriate chart on Table 2-3: Corruptions, applying the result to your character.

New Thaumaturge Feats

The following special feats are available only to thaumaturge characters.

Abyssal Familiar (Special)

You may call a special creature, affiliated with the dark powers, to serve as your familiar.

Prerequisites: No existing familiar, at least one corruption.

Benefit: You may choose from the special list of familiars presented below. You and the Abyssal familiar share a magical bond, as with a normal familiar, and the creature follows all general rules for familiars as presented in **Chapter 3: Classes** of the *PH* with the following exceptions.

- The familiar uses the statistics for a normal creature of its type (as presented in the *MM* or in **Chapter 4: Creatures of the Abyss** of this tome), and has either one-half the master's total hit points or the creature's normal total, whichever is higher.
- Use either the master or the familiar's base attack bonus, whichever is higher. Use the greater of the familiar's Strength or Dexterity modifier to get the familiar's melee attack bonus with natural attacks. Base damage is that of a normal creature of the familiar's type.
- The familiar has all the special attacks, special qualities, base saving throws (unless the master's are better), and skills of its kind.
- Some Abyssal familiars grant special abilities to their master. Such abilities are noted in parentheses in the following list: Black dog (see Dog in the *MM*; Master gains a +2 bonus on Will saves), Giant bee: Master gains a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves. Boar, Giant praying mantis, Giant wasp, Mandragoras (see **Chapter 4**), Monstrous spider (Medium-size: Poisonous bite, master gains a +2 bonus on Balance checks), Quasit, Wolf, Wolverine.

Adept Summoner (Special)

Your dabbling in the ways of chaos has given you abnormal command over summoned creatures but has also triggered a bizarre mutation.

Prerequisite: None.

Benefit: Creatures you summon via *summon monster* spells remain a number of extra rounds equal to your Charisma modifier (or until dismissed) before disappearing. In addition, you must make a roll on the Lesser Corruption section of Table 2-3: Corruptions and apply the result to your character. If you roll the "No corruption" result, roll again.

Starting Gold

1st-level thaumaturges receive 3d4 x 10 gold pieces upon character creation.

Advancement

For rules on experience points and advancing a thaumaturge character, refer to **Chapter 3: Classes** in the *PH*.

Normal: Summoned creatures last for 1 round per level or until dismissed.

Special: A thaumaturge may take this feat a number of times equal to his Charisma modifier. In addition to gaining an extra lesser corruption each time the feat is chosen, the caster adds 1 to the total rounds a creature summoned by a *summon monster* spell remains. Future loss of Charisma does not cause the character to "lose" this feat or the associated corruption.

Master Summoner (Special)

Your studies of chaos magic have enhanced your summoning ability but have twisted your natural form.

Prerequisite: Adept Summoner.

Benefit: *Summon monster* spells cast by you have a range of Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level). In addition, you must make a roll on the Greater Corruption section of **Table 2-3: Corruptions** and apply the result to your character. If you roll the "No corruption" result, roll again.

Normal: *Summon monster* spells have a range of Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels).

Special: A thaumaturge may take this feat a number of times equal to one-half his Charisma modifier, rounded down. Additional selections of this feat have no effect upon the summoning ability of the character, but do result in additional rolls on the Greater Corruption section of **Table 2-3: Corruptions**. Future loss of Charisma does not cause the character to "lose" this feat or the associated corruption.

Influence Chaos Warp (Special)

Through careful study or force of will alone, you've achieved a great understanding of the structure of magical chaos—and how to subtly influence it to your benefit.

Prerequisite: None.

Benefit: Whenever you make a roll on **Table 2-3: Corruptions**, you may select the corruption immediately above or immediately below your rolled result, should you prefer. If the rolled result does not have an entry above or below it, your choice is correspondingly limited. This feat does not allow you to retake a corruption you already have unless that corruption can ordinarily be taken more than once. You cannot choose a corruption you already have in order to get another roll—treat that corruption as if it did not exist, limiting your possibilities accordingly.

Chapter Three: Those Who Rule

Demon princes command at least one-third of the 666 recorded layers of the infinite Abyss. Princes in the Machiavellian sense, they answer to no demonic ruler. Over the millennia, several have conquered enough Abyssal real estate or swayed the affections of enough of their kin to claim dominion over all of demonkind (the most recent being Demogorgon, who still holds his self-proclaimed title). The greatest and best-known demon princes command the respect of their peers through brute force, skillful negotiation, or the ability to unleash sheer, unimaginable terror. Such princes include the legendary Oreus, brooding Pazuzu, scheming Arachnadia, and the unnamable Lord of Many Forms. Students of the Abyssal arts know of resources in existing tomes or librams yet to come regarding these famous beings. The present volume concentrates on entities less well known but no less dangerous.

This chapter fully details twenty-one demon princes, providing notes on their appearance, motivations, and Abyssal dominions. Information on domains and favored weapons has been included, should you wish to use the thaumaturge character class from the previous chapter in your campaign. The demons presented here represent a more or less "complete" pantheon—lacking only entities that grant their servants access to the Good and Law domains. Should you wish, you can substitute the demons in this chapter for the pantheon presented in the core rulebooks, setting up a campaign in which the gods have died or turned their backs on the world, leaving the depraved lords of the Abyss to serve the spiritual needs of the populace. Should the thaumaturge character class not appeal, you'll find the demon princes in this chapter suitable for use as patrons of amoral clerics, as well.

Each description opens with the name most commonly associated with the entity in question. This isn't the being's "true" secret name, but rather its most commonly used moniker. (In nearly all cases, this is the name by which the being refers to itself.) Danger comes in speaking even the common name of a demon prince. At the discretion of the Gamemaster, speaking its name aloud elicits a cumulative 1% chance that the named demon prince will take notice of the speaker. This doesn't mean it'll act, or even act in the speaker's best interest, but if not otherwise indisposed the entity might take a peek into the Material Plane to see what's going on. For this reason, most of the known demon princes have descriptive titles, such as Lord of the Bottomless Pit, Diabolus, and so on. It is considered an ill omen to speak or write the names of demon princes, and those who do not rely upon these titles when discussing them are seen as dangerous fools by the learned.

All demon princes exemplify the ideals of chaos and evil (albeit in very different ways), and share the alignment of the Abyss itself. Attempts by lawful fiends to wrest an Abyssal layer and claim it for themselves have invariably met with failure—the plane rejects would-be rulers who do not share its debased ideals. Likewise, no qliphoth demon has yet managed to conquer a layer of the Abyss. Generally, the most frightening and powerful members of that race are extremely advanced variations of the core qliphoth types. **Chapter 4: Creatures of the Abyss** presents an example qliphoth, Shigarreb, who has a power level equivalent to that of tanar'ri demon lords.

Each demon prince concentrates the bulk of his or her attention upon one or more ideals, known collectively as "areas of concern." Haagenti, the so-called Ultimate Alchemist, delights in inspiring his subjects to mix dangerous chemicals and create artificial life, while the only chemicals that interest the sensual Nocticula are those that grant her followers access to unheralded hallucinogenic plateaus. The Great Crippling Gaze known as Shax, on the other hand, cares only for those liquids that pour from the opened bellies of his still-squirming victims.

Generally, those who follow a specific demon prince share its unholy interests. Immoral alchemists flock to Haagenti, hoping his great wisdom will guide their brazen experiments. Nocticula's devotees gather under the light of the moon to celebrate erotic pleasures while indulging in the psychotropic bounty of the natural world. Erudite scholars of the macabre abduct, murder, and mutilate in the name of the Great Crippling Gaze, tracing intricate patterns in skin with surgical razors, hoping to discover the secret of life in the spaces between the flesh.

Abaddon

The Destroyer, Minister of Death and Havoc, Lord of the Bottomless Pit, King of Locusts

Layer: The Bottomless Pit

Areas of Concern: Anarchy, locusts, havoc, famine

Domains: Catastrophe, Chaos, Death, Evil

Favored Weapon: Longsword

One day soon, all existence will end in a great multiversal apocalypse. When the final angelic trumpets sound out the death knell of the mortal world, untold legions of locust demons will boil forth from the depths of the Abyss, ravaging everything in their path and laying ruin to the great works of humanity. Abaddon, demon prince of the apocalypse, will stand at the vanguard of this unthinkable army. Laughing.

Students of the occult arts know Abaddon as one of the oldest tanar'ri, a being of such incalculable power that even his demonic contemporaries work to ensure that he never leaves his home layer, a chilling void known simply as the Bottomless Pit. Abaddon is destruction personified, a completely amoral, unfeeling agent of calamity who has a hand in most of the great natural catastrophes of the mortal realm. While Anarazel gives violent life to the cold ground in the form of terrible earthquakes, and Vepar encourages great floods and waves, learned occultists see the grim smile of Abaddon in the corpses left after these tragedies. His handiwork reveals itself in the famines and blights that follow natural disasters. Though his insectoid legions thrum with demonic blood, few doubt Abaddon's dominion over ordinary locusts and grasshoppers, who honor him by plaguing crops in a metaphorical mirror of the destruction that soon will be visited upon all the world. In some lands, Abaddon is known as Apollyon.

Abaddon has not been seen in the mortal realm since shortly after the tanar'ri defeated the eladrin occupying the Abyss. The few remaining accounts describe a towering, hideous figure with scales like a fish, draconic "hooked" wings, and great feet and paws like those of a bear. Segmented, insectoid eyes dominate the demon prince's cruel face, set just above a double set of razor-sharp mandibles. Fire peeks through the rotten holes in his belly, casting off acrid, cloying smoke.

The Bottomless Pit forms a great maw nearly three miles wide near the geographic center of the Howling Threshold. Rumors suggest that the rent formed in the earliest days of the qliphoth-eladrin conflict, when some unknowable horror unleashed by the plane's original masters backfired and tore a hole in the Abyss. Eventually, the plane fused its own infernal energy with the nullspace in the void, in a sense "adopting" its own wound as a full-blown Abyssal layer. Shortly thereafter, Abaddon constructed the great palace of Gulthrax as an homage to himself and cast the structure, himself, and his entire demonic entourage into the chasm. The lore of demon and angel alike claims that Gulthrax eventually will pass out of the pit to land upon the Material

Plane, at which point the prophesied apocalypse will begin in earnest and Abaddon's locust demons will flood the world.

Gulthrax maintains its own gravity and sense of stability, though it constantly spins and bounces off the layer's walls. The fortress contains a large variety of demons, most of whom look forward to the End Times with utter devotion to their liege. Locust demons dominate nearly every part of the shaft—seldom will a traveler falling or flying down the Bottomless Pit come across a spot where she cannot see at least a dozen of the creatures. Perhaps a hundred brave vrock fly throughout the chasm, dining on the souls who fall or are thrown into the pit (the locust demons ignore such provender).

Mortal followers of Abaddon generally believe that the apocalypse will occur within their lifetimes, and go about fomenting anarchy and unrest in an attempt to speed along the decay of the world. End Times-obsessed nihilists, cultists, and especially thaumaturges of Abaddon believe that by doing the work of the Minister of Death and Havoc they will be spared the consuming fury of the coming locust legions. Not all who follow Abaddon do so with such calculation, however. Common among those who honor him is the competitive farmer who, coveting the harvest of his neighbor, sends a small sacrifice to Abaddon to befoul the greater crop.

Obedience

For one hour each day, a thaumaturge in service to Abaddon must whisper to a live locust an account of all that he has done to speed along the course of multiversal decay within the last 24 hours. These reports include updates on the status of the thaumaturge's enemies (often excuses for why they have not yet been killed), details on recently discovered magical secrets or ancient lore, and the thaumaturge's plans for the day ahead. At the end of the ritual, the thaumaturge consumes the locust, which mystically transmits all it has heard to the mind of the Lord of the Bottomless Pit. Thereafter, the thaumaturge's daily allotment of spells is replenished.

Abraxas

The Supreme Unknown

Layer: Pleroma

Areas of Concern: Magic, occult lore, dangerous secrets

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Magic, Protection

Favored Weapon: Whip

Abraxas represents a rarity among demon princes in that his devotees are tolerated, if not altogether welcomed, in civilized lands throughout the mortal realm. Commoners and nobles alike honor Abraxas for his ability to protect them from ill luck and magical curses and hexes.

Followers of Abraxas fund their cult by selling medallions enchanted with the word "Abracadabra," a talisman that guards its wearer against all manner of calamities. Abraxans claim that the gods are evil beings who have trapped the souls of their mortal followers in all-too-fragile physical shells, isolating them from a world of absolute spirit (known as Pleroma) where joy is

boundless and there are no limits to the pleasure and indulgence experienced by all. The concept of harm does not exist in such a world, and it is from this absolute, Abraxans claim, that their trinkets and amulets draw their protective powers.

Whatever the source, the charms work. The word of power "Abracadabra" appears at the top and is written in an inverted triangle of eleven lines. Each line consists of one letter fewer than the one above it, until the word disappears completely. The shrinking of the word represents, in metaphysical terms, the fading of potential harm to the wearer. The wordplay is emblematic of most of the teachings of Abraxas, which consist of intense magical theory and complex numerical formulae meant to give the practitioner a greater understanding of the material world and how to manipulate it through arcane magic.

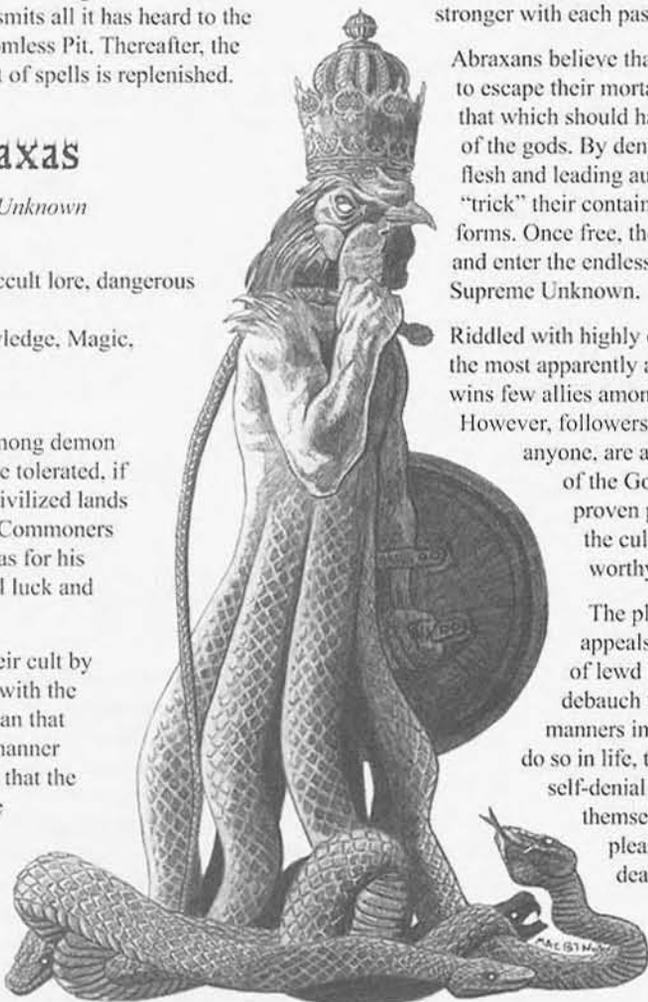
Abraxas appears as a powerful, bare-chested humanoid man with the head of a rooster topped by an elaborate golden crown (which, according to his followers, represents the reward of Pleroma, in which everyone is king). He carries a shield in one hand and a long, corded leather whip in the other. Below the waist, his body consists of several constantly writhing snakes.

Abraxas's Abyssal realm, Pleroma, is very much as advertised in his cult's literature. There, souls are transformed into beings of light who experience nothing but pure pleasure and ecstasy. Boundless joy is theirs from the moment they enter the afterlife to the moment ten years later when they are completely consumed by bliss—their souls utterly annihilated and absorbed into the landscape of the Abyss. By the time souls enslaved to Pleromic rapture realize the terminality of their situation, they've long since surrendered the ability to do anything about it in exchange for greater and greater feelings of euphoria. The transaction fuels Abraxas's power, which appears to grow stronger with each passing year.

Abraxans believe that the only way to achieve Pleroma is to escape their mortal shells by living a life opposite to that which should have been theirs, but for the duplicity of the gods. By denying themselves the pleasures of the flesh and leading austere, faultless lives, they hope to "trick" their containers (bodies) into releasing their spirit forms. Once free, their souls transcend the material world and enter the endless pleasures promised to them by the Supreme Unknown.

Riddled with highly offensive condemnations of even the most apparently altruistic deities, the cult's doctrine wins few allies among the clergy of the civilized world. However, followers of Abraxas don't physically hurt anyone, are as chaste as the most devout nuns of the God of Healing, and sell amulets of proven protective value, so most rulers view the cult as a strange but harmless sect more worthy of praise than prosecution.

The plain lifestyle espoused by Abraxans appeals to commoners who disapprove of lewd behavior but who secretly wish to debauch themselves in the most obscene manners imaginable. Lacking the courage to do so in life, they instead punish themselves with self-denial and self-abuse, withholding from themselves in life of exactly the type of pleasures they hope to indulge in after death. Flagellation plays a significant role in the cult's observances (Abraxas's favored weapon is a whip for a reason). Many multiclass as wizards or sorcerers



to further explore arcane magic, which they interpret as the mortal world's sole tie to the realm of Pleroma. Abraxans determine for themselves when they have finally tricked their body-prisons into releasing their spirit forms—a journey that invariably commences with suicide.

Obedience

Each morning, thaumaturges dedicated to Abraxas spend 30 minutes in self-flagellation with a small whip or tree branch. Collecting his own blood into an inkwell, the thaumaturge spends the rest of the hour inscribing the “Abracadabra” pyramid as many times as possible—on rocks, paper, amulets, or even the walls of buildings—all to further the notoriety of the cult. While writing the pyramid, the thaumaturge quietly imagines himself enjoying debauchery of all sorts. After 30 minutes of this, the thaumaturge's spell selection is replenished for the day.

Anarazel

Guardian of a Thousand Terrors

Layer: The Caves of Chaos

Areas of Concern: Fear, bravery, material wealth, adventurers

Domains: Chaos, Earth, Evil, Fear

Favored Weapon: Short sword

The earth below your feet holds wondrous treasures just waiting to be claimed by those with the courage to take them. Ancient, long-dead cultures tunneled beneath the ground when the world was young, scattering the riches of entire races in forlorn caves and mines. Natural veins of precious metals and countless gems and minerals line the world's strata. But those caverns hold unthinkable terror as well, time-lost beings too dangerous for the world of light and unfathomable remnants of primordial cultures now sunken into morose insanity. Those who would gain the riches of the earth must also brave the evils of the world below, the servants of Anarazel who await explorers with gnashing teeth and terrible, claspings claws. Those who risk Anarazel's wrath and escape with the plunder of the earth are rich indeed.

Anarazel represents the duality of the unknowable horrors of the Underdark and those who face such terrors in search of excitement or material wealth. Devotees refer to the arrangement as “the thrill,” a constant tempting of the depths for just one more gem, for another frisson of terror that much more exciting than the one before. To Anarazel and his followers, the abandoned underground cities and cisterns and mineral-rich caverns of the Underdark represent a great game board where risks are measured against possible rewards, with the advantage always going to those who tempt fate a little further than their peers. Adventurers, unsurprisingly, make up the bulk of his clergy.

The Guardian of a Thousand Terrors is a massive humanoid with diaphanous wings supported by blood-red cartilage that thrums with the natural heat of the subterranean world. His demonic armor of plates and scales melds

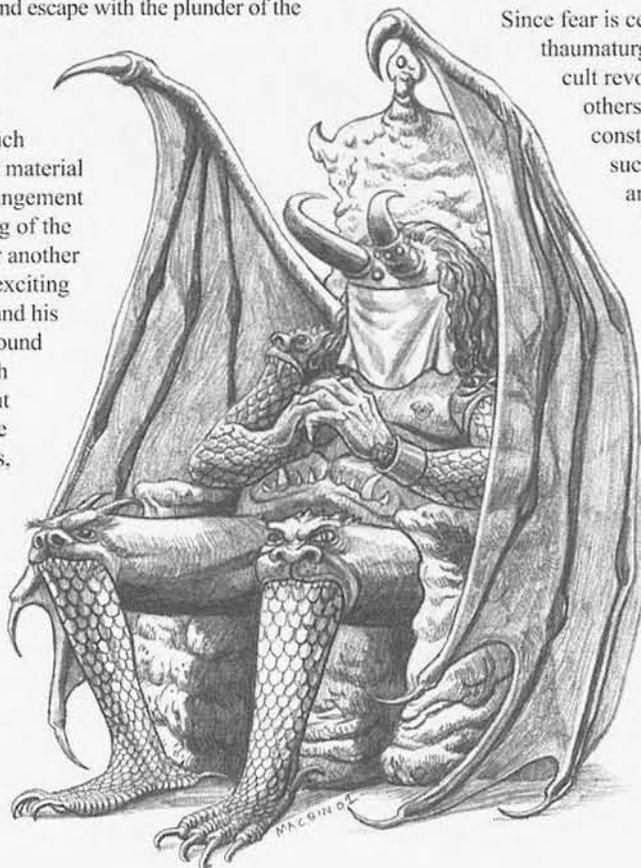
so well with his natural form that it's difficult to determine which portions of his panoply are living parts of his body. Two impressive horns jut from his forehead; a mane of greasy black hair begins just above the horns and continues to the middle of his muscular back. Anarazel wears a veil of deep vermilion at all times, covering what is said to be the most horrific visage the Abyss has ever known.

Anarazel's lair, a sprawling underground complex of natural caverns and trap-filled corridors called the Caves of Chaos, is thought by many to comprise the most extensive dungeon works in the Lower Planes. Cult lore reports that a copy of every valuable ever sacrificed in the demon prince's name can be found within Anarazel's dungeons. Countless artifacts long thought destroyed are in fact secreted within the Caves, protected by a host of grotesque creatures born in the most wretched bowels of the lightless Underdark. The most honored souls sworn to Anarazel—those who died while seeking treasure underground without an ounce of fear in their hearts—are transformed into such guardians. Unworthy souls or those captured on the Howling Threshold are brought to Anarazel himself, who dwells at the center of the layer. There the Guardian of a Thousand Terrors reveals his true face to them, drawing strength from their horror in a metaphysical transaction that leaves Anarazel more powerful and that utterly destroys the souls.

In the mortal world, Anarazel is served by the demon lords Gaziel and Fécor, who cause earthquakes, ring bells at midnight, cause spectres to appear, and inspire countless terrors. Though he is honored by miners and prospectors, adventurers make up Anarazel's greatest constituency. His philosophy of life as little more than a game appeals to those who seek vast rewards in exchange for great risk. Anarazelite adventurers tend toward brashness and favor spells or items that induce fear in others, partially to congratulate themselves on their own sense of bravery.

Obedience

Since fear is central to the faith of Anarazelite thaumaturges, the obedience ritual of the cult revolves around causing fear in others. Each morning, the thaumaturge constructs a mask (usually of wood, but such materials as leather and flesh are not uncommon) of something terrible and frightening, which he then wears until his next obedience ritual. At the beginning of that ritual, the old mask is burned and a new one constructed using a wholly different, wholly original design. In order to inspire his followers to always innovate in the realm of terror, Anarazel forbids his servants from using the same design twice. Such visionary imaginings feed the creative mind of Anarazel, inspiring him to greater wickedness. When the previous day's mask is burnt following the creation of a new mask, the thaumaturge's spell selection for the day is replenished.



Astaroth

Diabolus

Layer: The Terminal Archive

Areas of Concern: Liberal sciences, knowledge, learning, memory

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Prophecy

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Knowledge separates humans from the animals, allowing them to reflect upon their status and, using the lessons of those who came before, to improve upon it. Astaroth personifies the philosophy of knowledge gained at any cost. The demon prince known as Diabolus is the patron of revolutionary thinkers and those willing to push against the forces of propriety and the *status quo* to break into truly innovative paths of thought. He discounts the “hard” sciences as too rigid to accommodate original concepts.

Astaroth also has become associated with prophecy, though his philosophy is more about consulting written lore and making a prediction based upon the past than peering into the unknowable future.

Like Abaddon and Raum, Astaroth’s purpose is tied to the coming multiversal apocalypse. Since the rise of the tanar’ri, he has collected all the written works of humanity; ritual burning of the accumulated lore will herald the beginning of the End Times. In the meantime, Astaroth has become extremely fond of his collection, priding himself on the completeness of his libraries and his ability to recall historical facts and human philosophies from memory. Though dedicated to the role he must eventually play, the great librarian is in no hurry to destroy his books—he’s even become so fond of some human scholars and philosophers that he tracked them down and brought them to his lair (willing or not) to engage in friendly debate. Astaroth mourns the destruction of anyone of intellectual worth, necessary though it be, and has a greater appreciation for mortal life than most of his demonic fellows.

His natural form is that of a beautiful angel astride a terrible dragon. He carries a viper in his right hand and usually reads from an open book held in his left. The snake represents knowledge gained through forbidden means, which Astaroth considers the most valuable of all. Knowledge protected by religious taboo and strictures must, after all, be more worth knowing than what is sitting around for everyone to devour.

The Terminal Archive, Astaroth’s sprawling library, forms the entirety of an always-expanding Abyssal layer. The place comprises countless wings, which contain a copy of every written work put to paper since the birth of mortals and which are staffed by an army of bodak librarians. Astaroth invites any and all to

study within his halls, naming the Archive as neutral ground in any conflict between demons. Remarkably, he even allows devils access to his collection, though few brave the journey to get there. Occasionally battles between rivals do break out, but these are quickly quelled by a cadre of half-flesh called the Ardent Archivists, who maintain order in the stacks. Given the relative peace offered by the Archive, many expect to find a given item easily. Unfortunately, Astaroth enforces no organization upon his collection at all, so finding a particular volume can be an adventure in itself.

Followers of Astaroth fancy themselves revolutionary thinkers. Many do in fact push forward the liberal sciences by challenging conventions and daring to dream without worrying about such limits as morality. Even more, though, are best classified as lunatics, “visionaries” only in the sense that they believe their insane (albeit generally well-informed) babblings mean something to anyone other than themselves.

Those who honor Diabolus will do anything to learn previously unknown lore. They’ll use

anyone, even friends and relatives, to further their own knowledge, and won’t hesitate to kill whoever stands in the way of some juicy bit of information.

Astaroth demands that his followers sacrifice their first-born child to him to prove their dedication to casting away even their most cherished possessions in the pursuit of learning.

Obedience

Every morning, a thaumaturge dedicated to Astaroth writes the experiences of the previous day into a personal journal of reflections, finishing with three philosophical

questions to think upon as the day goes

on. The following day, he writes his conclusions or progress toward conclusions in the book. After spending an hour in such transcription, the thaumaturge regains his full complement of spells.

Azazel

Guardian of the Goat

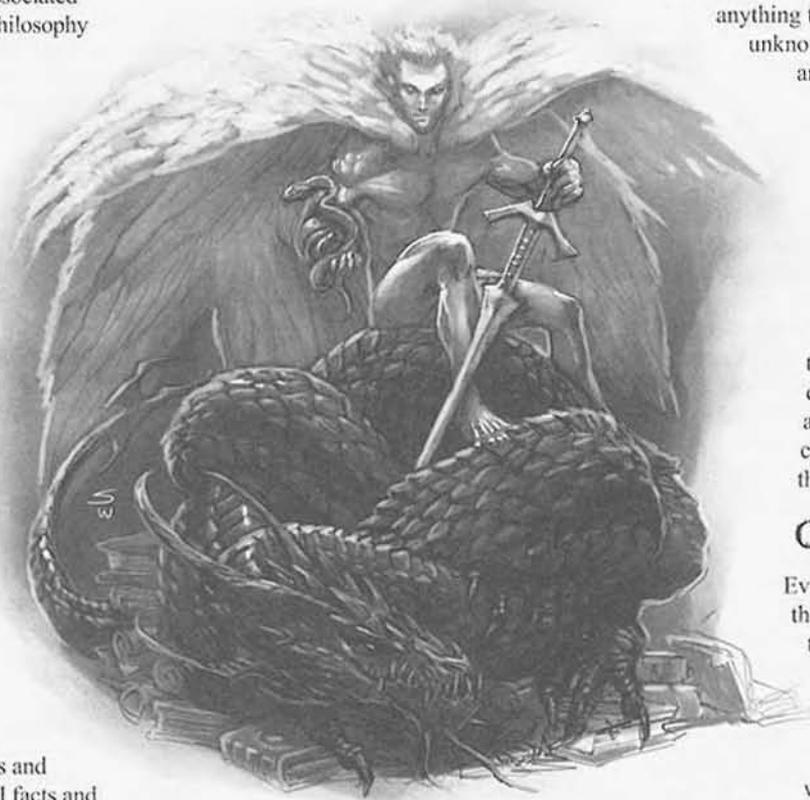
Layer: Maldinach, the Desert of Broken Dreams

Areas of Concern: Scapegoats, the betrayed, pestilence, revenge

Domains: Animal, Chaos, Disease, Evil

Favored Weapon: Halberd

The doctrine of Azazel holds that every successful civilization is built upon the broken backs of the betrayed. Society itself is inherently corrupt: Some must suffer so that others can seat themselves upon the throne of propriety. To make things right, the high and mighty must be overthrown by those they have betrayed. Only when the lowly have tasted the blood of the powerful will the world be healed.



Such words hold a powerful allure to the downtrodden members of the lower classes, as well as to prisoners, exiles, or others who have unfairly felt the lash of the law. Ranging from violent revolutionaries to quietly dissatisfied servants, followers of Azazel work to thwart the plans of the privileged classes through calculated campaigns of larceny, arson, and murder. Azazel, the so-called Guardian of the Goat, took his title to honor the “scapegoat,” an animal who in ancient times was saddled with the sins of a tribe and cast into the wild in a ritual of absolution. His servitor race, the schirim, carry out most of his plans on the Material Plane. Azazel is sometimes known as Urian.

The Guardian of the Goat possesses many forms. To some, he is a great avenging angel with smoldering eyes of dark crimson and seven seeping wounds upon his powerful back. Demonologists often describe Azazel as a mighty schir, a four-eyed, goat-headed, bare-chested monstrosity bearing the standard of the armies of the Abyss. His true form, which few have seen, boasts seven serpentine necks, fourteen hideous faces, and twelve looming wings.

The forlorn desert of Maldinach howls with the keening of souls dedicated to Azazel. Chained upon immense, sharp rocks and left to bake in the unforgiving blaze of a sun that never sets, the tortured souls have an eternity to seethe over their final betrayal—at the hands of Azazel himself. Schirim and vrocks wander the desert in abundance, reveling in the suffering of their mortal charges. Their liege prefers the solitude of an isolated valley at the center of the layer, attended by his personal servant, a powerful balor named Mullin (see cover illustration).

Prior to passing on to the Abyss in death, few followers of Azazel know what awaits them in the afterlife. Most prefer to focus on the here and now, their blood boiling with thoughts of revenge for slights both real and imagined. Nobles and those who have dedicated their lives to preserving the law hate and fear the cult of Azazel, though the demon enjoys great popularity among vigilantes, who often see themselves as protectors of the downtrodden. Though Azazelites preach a doctrine many in the lower classes find attractive, their methods are so brutal, so unthinkably ruthless, that only the most heartless stay with the cult for long.

Obedience

Azazelites never forget those who have wronged them. Accordingly, the obedience ritual of thaumaturges sworn to the Guardian of the Goat involves carving the name of the thaumaturge’s greatest enemy into the flesh of the inside left forearm while whispering fantasies of revenge over a small fire. Only when the chosen enemy has been destroyed can the wound be allowed to heal, at which point the thaumaturge chooses a new enemy, and the process begins anew. The ritual involves a full hour of opening old wounds and letting the blood drip into the fire, after which the thaumaturge’s spell complement is replenished.

Azidahaka

The Dragon of the Lie

Layer: Sraosha

Areas of Concern: Torture, truth, lies

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Fear, Pain

Favored Weapon: Falchion

Aeons ago, not long after the solar Iblis fell from the Seven Heavens for refusing to serve mortals (see *Legions of Hell*), a fierce king named Zohak ruled one of the most prominent early human kingdoms. Once a powerful and chaste noble who served the Lords of Good as a paragon of truth, Zohak achieved

his position after murdering his predecessor, Jamshid, who had become so corrupt with power that he forced his subjects to worship him as a god. Despite his greatness, Zohak knew he would not be able to defeat the god-king alone. Instead, he employed the mighty Iblis, who granted him the service of an army of divs, fire-based outsiders who had inhabited the world prior to the rise of humanity but who had been cast out by the Lords of Good for their arrogance. Zohak gained the throne and freed his people from the tyranny of Jamshid, but at a terrible cost.

Iblis planted a seed of paranoia within his ally’s heart. Shortly after becoming king, Zohak came to believe that his subjects secretly schemed against him. Whereas the king had previously sworn himself to defend the truth, now he attempted to wrest it from the hearts of his assumed enemies by subjecting them to gruesome tortures. Unsurprisingly, these tortures brought more and more confessions, confirming Zohak’s fears and fueling more seizures of enemies and greater and more perverse means of getting the truth from them. Within two years, Zohak’s fears had manifested in the form of twin snakes growing from his shoulders. These terrible beasts kept Zohak alive through the singular means of devouring the brains of his victims. Finally beset by enemies on all sides (enemies he had created thanks to his vicious pogroms), Zohak realized he had been betrayed the moment he joined forces with Iblis. Shamed, broken, and alone, Zohak hanged himself from his castle’s highest tower. His name went down in the lore of his people as a watchword for the corrupting influence of power.

Moments after dying, Zohak emerged upon the Howling Threshold. Seeing his rebirth in the afterlife as a second chance, he took the name Azidahaka and vowed to create in the Abyss that which he could not maintain in the material world—a kingdom of subjects who honored him for his character and his dedication to truth. Eventually, he became a demon. Centuries later, he wrested a layer of the Abyss for himself (Sraosha, a term meaning “obedience,” or “discipline”) and set his plans into motion. The Abyss being the Abyss, however, he came up somewhat short of his goal.

Sraosha boasts as many traitors and schemers as his human kingdom ever did, but as Azidahaka’s current subjects are demons and the souls of the chaotic evil dead, the dangers posed by his enemies are a thousand times greater than they were on the Material Plane. To protect his rulership he’s again turned to torture—indeed, the layer seems dedicated to perfecting that ancient art. Souls and demons alike hang on great metal hooks from the kingdom’s parapets. Body parts and unidentifiable fluids stain the cobblestones of great cities, and countless screams issue forth from countless chambers filled with racks, brazen bulls, iron maidens, and worse.

Such perfection has brought with it the respect of mortal torturers the world over, as well as (ironically) pleas of guidance from those about to go under the torturer’s knife. Both tormentor and tormented are equally likely to pray to Azidahaka—one for the skill to extract the truth, and the other in hopes of easing inevitable pain.

Azidahaka appears much as he did in life. A regal warrior of handsome (if worry-worn) features, the so-called Dragon of the Lie decks himself in the finest garments of royalty. Blood and ichor stain his vestments, however, revealing the means to which he must resort, to which he has always had to resort, to maintain his tenuous grasp on power and status. The only being Azidahaka truly trusts is his head torturer, the demon lord Rahu the Tormentor, who seems tailor-made for the nightmarish parody that is the Kingdom of Sraosha. Azidahaka’s heart still burns for revenge against the traitorous liar Iblis, whom he has sworn to put to the blade in payment for his ancient betrayal.

Obedience

All thaumaturges devoted to Azidahaka possess a dried heart extracted from a sentient creature killed through an overzealous application of torture (usually, but not always, at the hands of the thaumaturge). By channeling divine power into the heart during a daily ritual, the thaumaturge causes it to once again beat with life and seep with diseased blood. The thaumaturge manipulates the organ with jagged stickpins and sharp needles, opening a direct link to the cursed power of his patron. After the ritual, which lasts an hour, the thaumaturge's spells are replenished. Should the heart be lost or destroyed, a replacement must be harvested. The organ must undergo a special immersion for three hours in a preparation of spices and juices sacred to the Dragon of the Lie, costing 200 gp.

Behemoth

The Great Beast

Layer: Duidan

Areas of Concern: Gluttony, despair, bestial instincts

Domains: Animal, Chaos, Evil, Strength

Favored Weapon: Longspear

If the archdevil Leviathan represents the most powerful sea creature the multiverse has ever known, the imposing Behemoth stands as its land-dwelling double. A creature of immense proportions, Behemoth represents the worst qualities of the mortal creatures that walk upon the world—ferocity, rage, sloth, and most of all, insatiable hunger.

Behemoth's death has been preordained since the beginning of time, increasing its appeal as a patron of despair and lost causes. According to the oldest prophecies and scriptures (works that predate and predict the creation of Behemoth), when the mortal realm stands within days of utter destruction Behemoth and Leviathan will meet in a final conflict to shake the foundation of the world. The two great beasts will kill each other in this great battle, and righteous mortals will be allowed to dine on their flesh forever in Paradise—a fitting end for exemplars of unrelenting gluttony.

Behemoth stands more than a mile tall, appearing as a corpulent humanoid giant with the head of a four-tusked elephant, powerful arms, and trunklike legs that end in clawed feet. Rot grubs the size of purple worms crawl in and out of vast tunnels bored throughout its distended belly, and it reeks of foul digestive juices and days-old rotting meat. The tip of its awesome trunk bears a terrible toothy maw, which the Great Beast uses to devour anything that fits within it (which is to say, nearly everything). Like its infernal relative, Behemoth's favorite meal is the soulstuff of the mortal dead.

Behemoth's personal Abyssal layer, the monstrous Duidan, consists of endless veldt built to the proportions of the Great Beast. Fiendish dire animals of all varieties roam the plains, seeking souls and other animals to devour. Few edible plants grow on the veldt, as such species were eaten into extinction millennia ago. Everything consumed on Duidan must be hunted—and given the girth and hunger of the layer's prince, even the fiercest of hunters might become a meal at a moment's notice. The lumbering master of the veldt sleeps most of the time, wandering short distances in order to feed itself a few times a week. The ground shakes violently when Behemoth is on the hunt, allowing smarter inhabitants to flee well in advance of the Great Beast's arrival. Its hunts can last for a whole day or more, however, as Behemoth never seems to tire of eating and never seems to reach its limit.

Though many hunters make offerings to Behemoth as a patron of wild animals, the Great Beast enjoys relatively few followers. Those it does have tend to be slovenly, morbidly obese hedonists who have turned to gluttony in a final bid for self-destruction. Behemoth's cultists virtually sexualize the act of eating, playing up the erotic impact of food and bathing in grease and gristle as if anointing themselves with fragrant perfumes and massage oils.

Obedience

Thaumaturges dedicated to Behemoth do just one thing to regain their spells—eat. Once a day for a full hour (and often even longer for particularly zealous followers), Behemothite thaumaturges gorge themselves with whatever foodstuffs are available, paying no attention to the niceties of etiquette or table manners. In fact, many consider eating at a table something of an extravagance, preferring to hold their food in their hands, grease and fat sliding between their pudgy fingers. They have little use for napkins or tablecloths of any kind, and revel in leftovers falling from overstuffed mouths to folds in their clothes and skin, to remain buried like treasure until the next spontaneous meal. At the end of the gustatory ritual, the thaumaturge's spell complement is rejuvenated.

Decarabia

Sovereign of the Seventy-Seven Airts

Layer: The Landless Aerie

Areas of Concern: Flying creatures, the firmament, spies

Domains: Air, Chaos, Evil, Subterfuge

Favored Weapon: Spiked chain

When a mortal prince fears spies in his court, there's no telling how far he'll go to protect his reign. As his once-trusted advisors burn on pyres of suspicion and terror, the sovereign puffs up with self-admiration for his difficult task. He pays little attention to the flock of crows perched on the gallows crossbar or the gulls circling overhead, waiting for the fires to die down so that they might duck in for a quick meal. The birds, however, are more attentive. They see in the monarch a growing desperation. They know which of his advisors have been consumed by flame and which by fear, noting which survivors might sell out their unstable leader in exchange for a return to sanity. The birds see all, and all that the birds see is seen by their patron, Decarabia, Sovereign of the Seventy-Seven Airts.

Decarabia claims all the skies as her personal domain and sees the birds that inhabit the firmament as her subjects. To her, birds are not only spies and messengers but paragons of beauty, for Decarabia believes that nothing is more lovely than a living creature in natural flight. Served by paranoid cranks who wish to learn what birds see and eccentric inventors attempting to establish a means by which humans might fly, she seems more meddlesome than dangerous. But by providing amoral political advisors with reconnaissance in the form of servitor birds, Decarabia presents as great a challenge to the mortal world as any of her peers at the top of the demonic echelon.

In form, Decarabia seems more human than most demon princes, though a number of features reveal her as a creature of the Lower Planes. A cold, harshly beautiful face is marred by four unusually twisted horns that emerge from her forehead and just above her ears. Her alabaster skin is mirrored by milky white eyes that bear no pupils or color of any kind. Blood-red lips and luxurious long black hair contrast her complexion in an unwholesome manner. Unsettling jagged wings flare from her elbows, granting her far more graceful flight than their appearance might suggest. Decarabia uses her sexuality as a

tool and comports herself in as little clothing as possible; she favors tight skirts and fetishized belts of black leather. She loves flight, spending her entire existence in the air. Years ago, she amputated her own legs to prove her dedication to the sky and its inhabitants.

Her personal layer, the Landless Aerie, reflects her interest in winged creatures and her disdain for solid earth. The layer's "ground" is a flat, featureless plain of solid metal that extends for leagues in all directions. Above, however, countless rock-islands float upon the winds, ranging in size from a few dozen feet in diameter to several miles wide. They serve as landing points for the fiendish birds and flying demons that make their homes here, and many sport impressive castles or towns upon their surface. Should its inhabitants displease Decarabia, though, she can cause an island to hurtle downward and smash upon the floor of the Aerie with crushing finality.

Decarabia's cult remains small, as she prefers to associate with flying creatures such as birds that have no real culture of their own. Still, she is a patron to spies and interlopers who employ birds in their subterfuges, and those hoping to create vehicles or items that bestow flight might offer an incantation to Decarabia before beginning their work. Decarabia's mortal servants often act as brokers to the rich and powerful, offering them the chance to eavesdrop on rivals using specially trained avian agents.

Obedience

Thaumaturges dedicated to Decarabia must choose a bird familiar. Every morning, the thaumaturge whispers to the bird, telling it all he has witnessed over the past twenty-four hours. The bird then whispers back to the thaumaturge using the voice of Decarabia herself, revealing to the practitioner the secret knowledge needed to successfully replenish his daily spell complement.

Eligor

The Goodly Knight

Layer: The Eternal Lists

Areas of Concern: War, strategy, dishonor, survival

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, War

Favored Weapon: Two-bladed sword

In a world of chivalry, well-mannered knights enjoy the affections of fair maidens, the appreciation of kings, and the admiration of nobles and paupers alike. The life of a knight is exciting, exhilarating, and rewarding. Unfortunately, it's also extremely dangerous. Eligor, demon prince of dishonor and survival, pledges that glory and honor need not always go together, and that it is far better to leave the battlefield alive than to leave it a hero.

But that's not in and of itself reason enough to give up on being heroic—or rather, on giving the impression of great heroism. The doctrine of Eligor, known colloquially as the *Widdershins Code*, teaches that if the knight leaves no witnesses or survivors he can tell the story of his victory himself, leaving out anything that would tarnish his reputation but that was nonetheless required to remain alive. Rather than flee a battle, Eligor's philosophy is to win by whatever dirty means necessary and leave the field with the appearance of honor and the admiration of one's peers.

Bedecked in viciously spiked, black full plate armor and a mighty shield and armed with a horrifically barbed two-bladed sword, the Goodly Knight often wears a great batwinged helmet that completely obscures his bestial face. He wears his hair in thick pleats gathered with tiny skull beads carved from human bone. Eligor's hideous, mocking smile reveals sharpened teeth stained red with the blood of his enemies.

The demon prince's ghastly realm is a parody of chivalric ideals, a blood-soaked fantasy in which every day is cause for a great festival and knightly tournament. Demons and souls combat one another in shows of gruesome violence without even a pretense of honor, much to the delight of legions of howling fans. Tanar'ri ladies give their scarves to the most treacherous knights, and great gifts of fine foods and enslaved mortals are granted to those with the highest body counts, regardless of how much they cheated to win (or perhaps to honor that cheating).

Eligor's followers know that discretion is often the better part of valor. Usually junior knights in the shadow of truly great warriors, Eligorans have seen the ugly side of armed conflict and refuse to fall to their enemies for any reason other than being outmatched in weaponplay. While they pay lip service to codes of chivalrous conduct and honorable warfare, they more often use their enemies' dedication to such strictures against them. An Eligoran knight might, for instance, challenge an enemy to a one-on-one combat using only nonmagical weapons, luring him to fight in a secluded spot where allies are hiding with poisoned crossbow bolts at the ready. If none see the treachery, they'll simply assume the best, granting the knight notoriety and fame he doesn't really deserve but that he enjoys all the same. Most gods of war, regardless of culture or alignment, loathe Eligor and his followers, and admitting to following the Goodly Knight at a knightly conclave is grounds for an instant challenge from the entire assembly. Wise Eligorans tend to keep their demonic affiliation a well-guarded secret.

Obedience

Every morning, Eligoran thaumaturges spend an hour dreaming up tales and songs of self-aggrandizement. They invent exploits to further their reputation and perfect their performance in hopes that these stories or tunes will catch on with local bards and spread throughout the land. After an hour of such creation, their spell selection is replenished.



Flauros

The Son of Suns

Layer: The Bloodypyre Fields

Areas of Concern: The purifying light of the sun, fire, burn victims, arsonists

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Fire, Sun

Favored Weapon: Kukri

The world of mortals is but a shadowy reflection of pure potential. Everything that exists, from the smith's anvil to the flesh of a newborn babe, takes its shape from corruption. That which has form betrays the perfect element from which all matter gains its animating force—fire. To set something (or someone) ablaze is to bless it, returning it to its ideal state in an act of compassionate emancipation. So preaches the burgeoning cult of Flauros, which holds that the secrets of the multiverse can be found through the deconstruction of fire and light.

Such a heady philosophy attracts truth-seeking ascetic contemplatives who see wisdom in a doctrine riddled with references to the purifying aspect of fire. The litany of the Son of Suns also encourages spreading fire as a reward for both people and objects; the more important or valuable, the greater the service provided. This celebration of fire's awesome capability for destruction attracts more than a few arsonists and rank psychopaths.

Flauros's many forms shift like the flames of a raging inferno. His very philosophy decries physical solidity as an insult to the natural order of things, so the Son of Suns prefers to change his image constantly. One shape, however, seems to predominate in his few appearances in the mortal realm and may in fact be his natural one. In this form, Flauros appears as an incredibly muscular giant having a skeletal bull's head with sharp teeth and impressive horns. Crackling fire surrounds the figure's head and shoulders, casting off voluminous clouds of malodorous smoke. Instead of legs, Flauros's body ends at the waist in six jagged claws surrounding a toothy sphincter for ingesting flesh and souls (Flauros prefers both extremely well done).

Smoke and heat dominate the Bloodypyre Fields, Flauros's personal Abyssal domain. Volcanoes, lakes of fire, and rivers of liquid magma pose numerous natural dangers here, giving the place a hellish cast common in many of the most basic images of a tormented afterlife. Searing hot winds blast the entire layer, crisping flesh from bone. Breathing there is impossible for mortals without the assistance of magic or technology—even many demons find the place distasteful. Flauros himself wanders the plains, granting "release from the confines of physical form" to visitors and inhabitants alike, burning them with a fire so intense it leaves behind naught but a shadow of its target.

Something about fire attracts the most depraved, destructive members of society. Despite the seemingly altruistic goal of "freedom from form" that drives the leaders of Flauros's cult, the fact remains that most of his followers are absolute loons who get an indescribable thrill from lighting things on fire, philosophy be damned. Flaurans set fire to buildings, hoping that sparks will ignite neighboring structures in a kind of natural evangelism. They burn helpless victims (often children) because they like the smell of cooked flesh. Above all, their obsession is as much about power as it is about fire. Whoever sets things aflame has power over them, changing their form to ash in an act of almost divine transformation.

Obedience

Each morning, Flauran thaumaturges engage in a ritual of cleansing and appeasement to the Son of Suns. Such rituals take one of two forms, depending upon the resources available. In most cases, the thaumaturge burns something valuable (worth at least 100 gp) as an offering; artifacts and certain magic items are immune to the ritual, and cannot be used for this purpose. The item is always consumed completely by the fire within the space of an hour. A better, more potent ritual involves the destruction of a living creature by fire. After the object or creature has been consumed, the thaumaturge reaches into the cooling embers and grabs a handful of ash, which he then vigorously rubs onto his face. Licking his blackened hand clean, the thaumaturge revels in the chalky taste of freedom. Thereafter, the Flauran receives his full complement of spells for the day.

Gamigin

The Soulcounter

Layer: Jagged Tor of Final Reckoning

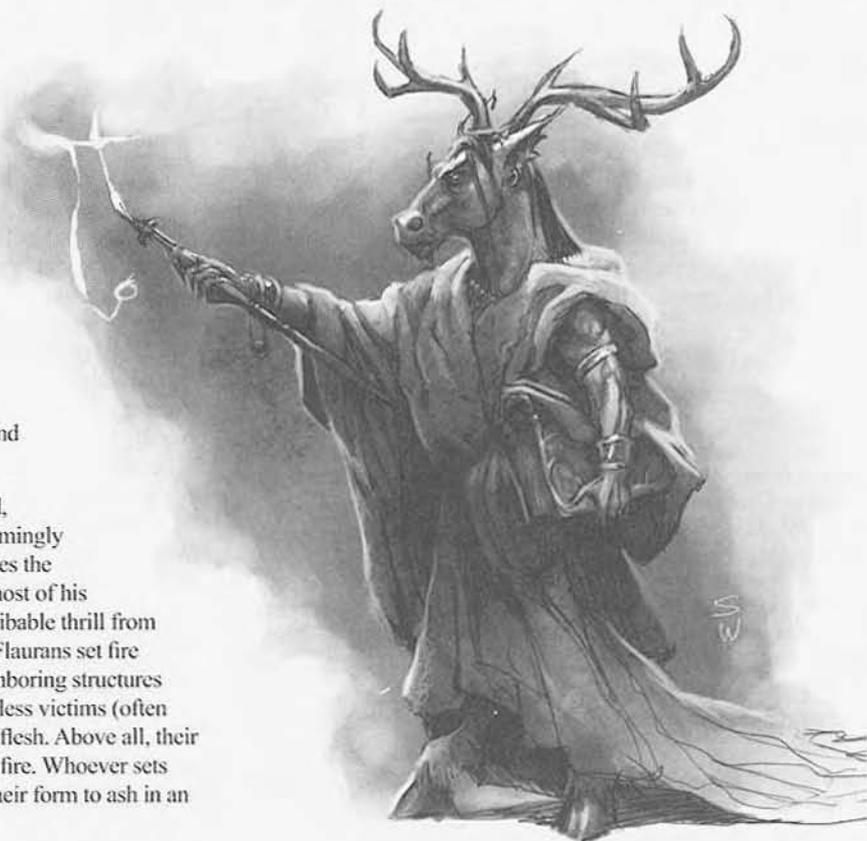
Areas of Concern: The dead, souls, undead, accountancy, numbers

Domains: Chaos, Death, Evil, Knowledge

Favored Weapon: Scythe

Few cynical students of the occult are surprised upon learning of Gamigin, demonic patron to the power of the universal constants, death and taxes. When a chaotic evil creature dies, its soul manifests in the Abyss, where it either quickly learns to protect itself or is consumed by ravenous hordes of tanar'ri. From the moment it arrives to the moment of its destruction, the soul's activities and whereabouts are monitored by Gamigin, the calculating demon prince known as the Soulcounter.

Gamigin weighs the value of each soul against archaic formulae, occasionally announcing an "imbalance" and dispatching a cadre of skullduggers (see **Chapter 4: Creatures of the Abyss**) to collect the debt owed to the Abyss. These servitors retrieve the



Haagenti

The Ultimate Alchemist

Layer: Cerebulim—The Hermetic Horizon

Areas of Concern: Alchemy, wealth, transmogrification, experimentation, progress, creation of artificial life

Domains: Change, Chaos, Earth, Evil

Favored Weapon: Dagger

soul and bring it to Gamigin's lair on the Jagged Tor of Final Reckoning, where it is fed into a boiling pit of magical tar known as the Last Morass. The process completely destroys the soul. While Gamigin seems to derive some satisfaction from the power transfer, the true beneficiary is the Abyss itself, which grows stronger with each consumed soul. Some claim that Gamigin is not truly a demon prince, but rather a puppet—the Soulcounter didn't dominate a layer of the Abyss so much as the Abyss dominated him.

The studious Gamigin wears the robes of a scholar and bears a volume known as the Spirit Ledger at all times. His sole weapon is an oversized brush, which he employs to paint disastrous symbols upon the air in front of him when threatened by enemies. At his command, the brush can transform into a scythe. Gamigin has the head of a horse crowned by an impressive array of antlers.

The Jagged Tor of Final Reckoning is little more than a massive stone citadel situated upon a mile-tall mesa formed of knotty, mutant flesh. Noxious clouds poisonous even to demons hug the layer's floor far below. Rumors of qliphoth infesting this occluded realm have never been substantiated. Gamigin's citadel features endless hallways open for several stories. Huge, meticulously arranged bookcases line the walls. Records of every soul ever to pass into the Abyss, as well as the fate of those souls, can be found within these cases, but Gamigin seldom allows strangers to peruse his records. His books show the current location of every creature in the Abyss, and he is well aware of the value of that information. Seventeen chambers contain treasure and material wealth granted to Gamigin in exchange for information on countless demons and mortal souls. He does not revel in this wealth, but he does take enormous pride in it and would prefer to see its growth continue.

Gamigin's followers on the Material Plane consist largely of liches or spellcasters well on the path to lichdom. Such beings have little use for the type of deals demon princes tend to offer. As undead creatures, their souls remain locked between the mortal world and the afterlife—safe, in a sense, from the attentions of demons. They approach Gamigin as equals, for he knows more about how to protect one's soul than perhaps anyone in the multiverse. The Soulcounter's cult is much more refined than the vile religion of Oreus, one of the most powerful demon princes in the Abyss. The rivalry between Gamigin and Oreus goes back to the rise of the tanar'ri, when each battled for greater influence over undeath. Gamigin lost that fight, ceding (for the most part) the administration of undeath on the Material Plane to his hated foe. Should Oreus show signs of weakness, however, Gamigin is more than willing to assume that coveted role.

Obedience

In an effort to better understand the process of death and the mindset of the undead, thaumaturges in service to the Soulcounter engage in a daily ritual few outsiders find watchable. Using specially prepared pins, oils, and unguents, the thaumaturge mortifies a one-inch-square portion of his own flesh (usually, but not always, on some part of his body normally covered by clothing). The process takes several days to complete, but eventually the dead flesh begins to rot, becoming infested with maggots and parasites. During the obedience ritual, the thaumaturge removes a maggot from his own dead flesh and pushes it into his eyesocket, allowing the tiny creature to wriggle around next to the eyeball. By doing so, he believes he gains insight into the world beyond the mortal realm. After a few minutes of exploring the thaumaturge's eye cavity, the maggot melts into his interior flesh, replenishing the spellcaster's daily complement of spells.

To transmute lead to gold or mold flesh like clay is to achieve the divine. The modern alchemist is the inheritor of a proud, ancient tradition that seeks ultimately to elevate mortals to the station of divinity by giving them power over the earth and over life itself. When base metals become precious by the application of sacred chemicals or when weird liquids and complex gestures ignite the spark of life in an artificial being, the alchemist has transcended mortality and has become a god of his own creation.

Nothing must stand in the way of the alchemist's pursuit—not morality, family, love, friendship, or the boundaries of propriety. Scientific advancement directs the alchemist's every move. Consequences are irrelevant to the forward march of progress. So holds the lore of Haagenti, and his teachings have great allure for arrogant scientists who would crown themselves enlightened victors over the bloodied corpse of traditional, repressive religion.

The Ultimate Alchemist appears as a great amber bull with smoldering red eyes that seem to pulsate with the beating heart of the natural world. His raspy voice echoes like wind through abandoned mines, recollecting the toil the uneducated must endure to achieve material wealth. Two great feathered wings, similar to those of a griffon, emerge from Haagenti's powerful back, representing the limitless bounds to which an alchemist might ascend if he successfully navigates the path to godhead.

Haagenti's personal Abyssal layer, Cerebulim, teems with the fruits of his followers' labors. Evidence of scientific progress abounds in the form of cyclopean metal buildings, fantastic vehicles of transport that convey demons and souls alike at frightening speeds, and weapons of unthinkable power that project alchemical bullets with the force of a hundred crossbows. All such technology, however, bears some sign of its terrible cost. Wailing mortals perch like gargoyles atop awe-inspiring skyscrapers and mourn as they consider their own intestines and vertebrae, hardened through arcane procedures and used as cable and mortar to strengthen the structural integrity of the towers upon which they sit. Putrid, cloying smoke plagues the air, blotting out natural light and giving the layer an acidic smell. Vast herds of mortals abducted from the Material Plane clog sanitariums and hospitals, where they are sliced apart by workmanlike, analytical doctors and scientists searching for the means to prolong life, no matter the cost of the research. Termed the Hermetic Horizon, Cerebulim gives a glimpse of a technological future unfettered by moral or ethical limitations upon progress.

Followers of Haagenti generally pursue tripartite goals: discover a process of transforming any metal to silver or gold; uncover an elixir to extend life indefinitely; and create artificial life in the form of constructed beings. The concept of change fascinates them, as any transformation from one form to another might hold the key to attaining their sacred goals. Their stated ambition—to become divine through transformative power—predictably outrages members of more conservative religions, who hold that certain practices by their nature fall outside the realm of mortals. True practitioners of the faith exhibit a great deal of medical and alchemical skill, however, and can be of great assistance to those who don't know or care to know exactly how they gained their helpful knowledge. Haagentian alchemists view charlatans as a serious threat to their respectability, and persecute them to the best of their ability whenever possible.

Obedience

Thaumaturges dedicated to Haagenti engage in a daily obedience known as the Divine Experiment. In this ritual they attempt, through the use of quicksilver, to separate gold and silver from the "native matrix" of some base substance (ranging from lead to elven flesh). Each day they must perform the ritual upon a new material. After doing so, the alchemist must write his observations upon a perfectly square piece of parchment, which is then burned, transferring all that he has learned to a great depository of knowledge on Cerebulim. At the end of the hour-long ritual, the thaumaturge's spell complement is replenished.

The ritual consumes about 3 gp worth of materials per day. Such materials are easily attainable in any settlement large enough to be considered a town (see the *DMG* for more details on settlement sizes).

Note: Thaumaturges dedicated to Haagenti treat Alchemy as a class skill. They often create one or more homunculi to act as personal assistants.

Ipos

Lord of Masques

Layer: The Festive Everlasting

Areas of Concern: Actors, comedians, entertainers

Domains: Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Trickery

Favored Weapon: Rapier

Throughout the mortal realm, certain sovereigns ban actors from entering their cities or performing in their lands. Men and women of loose morals and even looser reputations, actors receive treatment similar to that given lepers or heretics in some quarters. The craftiest find secret patronage from members of the effete nobility; the unlucky end up in stocks or worse. If more rulers knew about the decadent cult of Ipos and its pervasive popularity among performers, the actor's lot might be even harder.

Instead of scrounging to find an appreciative audience, she might find herself before a much more hostile group of spectators—a mob of torch-bearing zealots just itching to cast her into the flames of redemption.

The cunning Ipos whispers knowingly to his enraptured audience of performers that life is but a grand production, that "identity" is nothing more than a role to be cast away at a moment's notice when necessary for the plot of life to proceed to another act. While this philosophy encourages useful lessons of reinvention and discourages mulling over failure, it also teaches a disdain for morality: If nothing is truly real, there can be no consequences for one's actions. To ensure that their performances are memorable (for to make no impression at all is the greatest of mortal failings), followers of the Lord of Masques will cross any line. No sin is too perverse, no risk too great that it can't be endured for the sake of the show.

As befits his title, Ipos can assume numerous forms, ranging from a terrible

draconic beast to a simple dung-covered pauper. He seems to favor one guise in particular, however—that of a tall, well-dressed rake with a lion's head, the feet of a goose, and the tail of a hare. Actors often paint such a figure onto their tents and stageworks, waving their demonic affiliation under the noses of appreciative fans who see the animalistic image as a simple caricature meant to please children and the simple-minded.

The Festive Everlasting, Ipos's bizarre Abyssal realm, resembles an immense outdoor theatrical festival held in a beautiful vale lit by an early afternoon sun. Eager souls play the part of groundlings near the plane's thirty-three connected stages, while a host of demonic nobility flock to the bleachers and private boxes. The entertainers themselves are recently deceased actors, sworn to Ipos during mortal life, who revel in the chance to perform for all eternity. Hawkers of pleasures both simple and sublime roam the crowds, ensuring that all present sate themselves upon some sort of mind-enhancing (or occasionally mind-numbing) concoction.

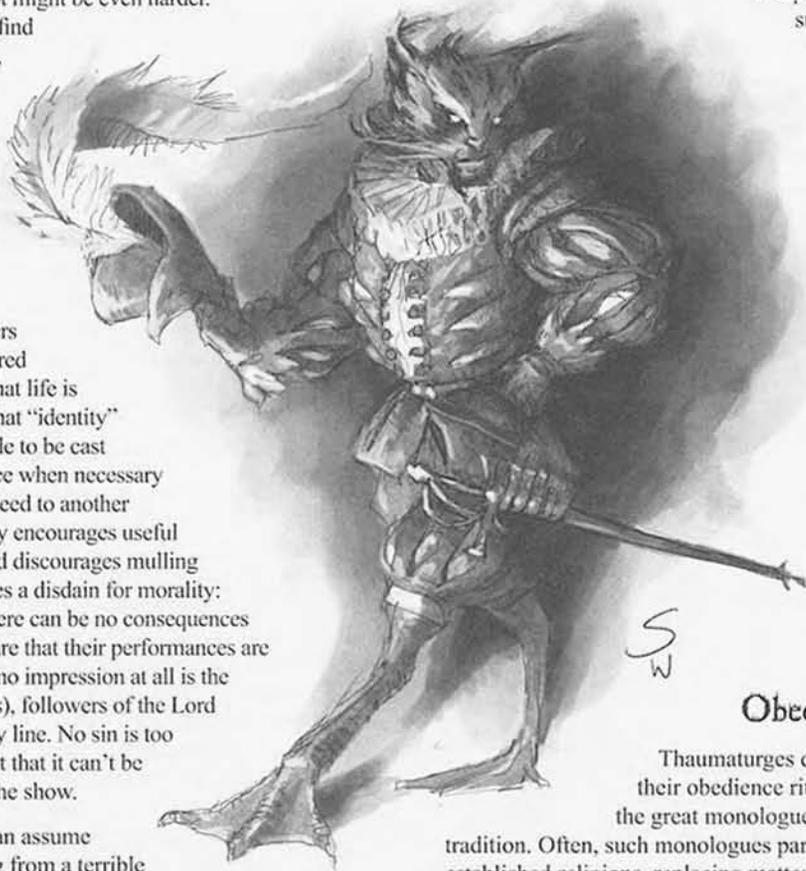
The Festive Everlasting possesses an air of idyll, but a competitive desperation permeates the theatrical atmosphere, noticeable to all who know to look for it. At the end of each three-hour performance, the crowd displays by show of applause its appreciation for each actor in turn. The five entertainers (out of about seven hundred) adjudged to have engaged in the worst or least memorable performance are erased from existence, their souls totally consumed by the Abyssal stage upon which they stood only moments before. Those actors who survive a year on the stage join the jeering crowd as demons, only slightly more sympathetic to the plight of the actors than the catty, demanding drama critics sitting next to them.

Ipos's decadent doctrine appeals to sensualist performers who live for the false existence they portray upon the stage. Boiling down the whole of mortal experience to the familiar rules of performance makes sense to such *bon vivants*, who generally

don't think far beyond making an impression upon the

everpresent crowd. Ironically, such performers eventually disdain their audiences,

seeing them as constantly demanding "mundanes" whose rigid ways allow them to live only through observing those willing to assume roles that they cannot. Performers sworn to Ipos pity those who have but one face, but one voice, but one role to offer the world. Theirs is a much more vibrant experience, leading to much more fulfilling applause in the afterlife. Amoral bards adore the Lord of Masques.



Obedience

Thaumaturges dedicated to Ipos spend their obedience ritual reciting from memory the great monologues of the theatrical tradition. Often, such monologues parody the liturgy of established religions, replacing matters of honorable ritual with

references (and frequently pantomimes) of the most disgusting vices imaginable. Though by no means required for the ritual to work, Iposian thaumaturges prefer to practice their obedience before an audience. At the end of the hour-long performance, the thaumaturge regains his spell complement for the day.

Note: Thaumaturges dedicated to Ipos treat Perform as a class skill.

Marbas

Master of Fetid Change

Layer: The Soaking Canyon of Malignancy

Areas of Concern: Disease, mutation, tumors, the deformed

Domains: Change, Chaos, Disease, Evil

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

Strip away the artificial strictures of civilization, challenge the “laws” of nature, cast off the limitations of mortal imagination that force all things into easily understood categories, and you reveal glorious chaos. The only true universal constant, chaos gives animating force to life, determines the fates of all living things, and guides the progression of time. According to the teachings of Marbas, Master of Fetid Change, that which openly proclaims its allegiance to chaos is closer to universal truth, unfettered by restrictions and free to float effortlessly and painlessly upon the undulating surface of fate. The deformed, diseased, and ugly, being variations of the norm, are the ultimate mortal representatives of chaos and should be honored as the harbingers of a new era in which chaos reigns eternal. In certain texts, Marbas is referred to as Barbas.

The Master of Fetid Change appears as an evershifting mass of tumorous flesh covered in crooked horns and misshapen mouths. Foul odors spew from numerous sphincters positioned randomly about its body, and enormous orifices and powerful internal organs allow Marbas to process what it has eaten (usually enemies) in an instant, spewing the remains upon itself in a torrent of bile.

Planar scholars know Marbas’s personal layer as the Soaking Canyon of Malignancy, a ghastly series of rifts and gulches composed of walls of constantly growing mutated tissue. Cancerous ichor seeps slowly from countless crevasses at which different types of flesh conjoin, pooling upon the canyon floor to form coagulating streams of reeking fluids. Oozes and molds dominate the layer’s moist corners, while ravenous chaos beasts roam on rare islands of solid ground. Marbas itself dwells in a confounding series of caverns known as the Dripping Darkness, a catacomb of oozing filth and digestive juices that can be harvested and used as the basis for potent magical elixirs. The odious demon lord Merihim (see **Chapter 4: Creatures of the Abyss**) stands guard at the gates of this unusual underworld, smothering would-be interlopers with his fleshy appendage tubes, which spew forth a multitude of disease-inducing vapors.

It’s difficult to guess what exactly attracts adherents to the Cult of Putrid Virtue, as Marbas’s worship is known, but all who swear allegiance to the prince share an appreciation for the uglier things in life. Many bear the scars of infection or suffer from some birth-related deformity, so perhaps the acceptance and honor they find within the cult makes up for the years of mistreatment by their “normal” fellows in society at large. Regardless of their motives for joining, most cultists display a level of fervor best described as fanatical. They will go to any lengths to locate and obtain information on new diseases (the more grisly and disgusting the symptoms the better) and to kidnap deformed children to be raised as exemplars of the Marbasian way of life. Many such children die, at which point followers of Marbas get surgical, grafting dead “freak flesh” to their own in an attempt to further deviate from the accepted norm.

Devotees of Marbas view themselves as protectors of the defenseless ugly and diseased, celebrating the unsightly aspects of life that others

would see healed, fixed, or eradicated. They know well the resentment and fear felt toward them by those who do not share their afflictions, and hope that by spreading disease and mutation they will in turn spread a greater understanding of their own plight.

Obedience

Each morning, thaumaturges in service to the Master of Fetid Change spend an hour in ritual self-scarring and body modification, often grafting the dead skin of their enemies to their own. Normally, such skin becomes gangrenous within a few days, but if taken from a deformed or diseased victim, it remains healthy so long as the thaumaturge tends to it at least once a week during the obedience ritual. While such modifications never provide a physical benefit (such as gaining an additional attack by grafting an extra “ugly” arm), they do much to enhance the thaumaturge’s unsettling presence. At the end of the ceremony, the thaumaturge’s daily spell allotment is replenished.

Nocticula

Princess of Moonlight

Layer: Ablinikarn, the Evershifting Vale

Areas of Concern: Women, dark fey, the natural world, psychotropic drugs, earthy sensuality

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Healing, Luck, Plant

Favored Weapon: Sickle

A woman’s empathic mind and bodily cycles hold the key to understanding the mysteries of the natural world. According to Nocticula, the sensual Princess of Moonlight, women alone possess the power to experience nature as it is meant to be experienced—a gloriously chaotic panorama so complete in its majesty that it cannot be fully appreciated by the mortal mind. Nocticula’s earthy cult, the so-called Sisterhood of Sensates, believes that the mind-altering properties of certain plants and fungi, coupled with the chemicals of a woman’s body, can grant higher understanding of the limitless possibilities presented by nature’s hidden landscapes. Members gather in secluded vales under the cover of moonlight to revel in erotic frolics enriched by the liberal ingestion of psychedelic drugs. To most, they represent harmless would-be faeries obsessed with self-indulgent pleasures. In fact they are members of a relentless, widespread cult whose deep perception of the natural world gives them a powerful advantage over their enemies.

Nocticula frequently appears to her worshipers in hallucinogenic visions as a voluptuous wild woman with dried mud between her toes and a feral look in her deep brown eyes. The wry smile of her full lips reveals cunning intelligence and guile, and while she sometimes clothes herself in leather pants or a thick fur cloak, she prefers to travel as naked as the animals who inhabit her beloved wild spaces. She paints simple circles and lines upon her face, chest, and stomach, using natural dyes to accentuate her pale complexion. She resembles a mortal human more than nearly any other prince of the Abyss, but her form occasionally morphs slightly without warning, and a dim, rapidly fading trail of light follows her every movement.

Nocticula loathes the devil queen Antaia, a powerful baatezu who inhabits the Fourth Circle of Hell and who passes herself off as a patron of witches on the Material Plane (see *Legions of Hell* for more details). True, Antaia’s doctrine distances her followers from the gods and hence furthers the corruption of their souls, but the Princess of Moonlight finds the devil’s rigid teachings a betrayal of the primal, chaotic force of nature that motivates true witches. Her greatest ally is undoubtedly the demon prince Socothbenoth, who as patron of prostitution and eroticism shares her zest for sensual living. That he also happens to be her brother only serves to strengthen their powerful bond.

A Sister Sensate in the full embrace of nature's image-inducing powers sees a world in constant change. Such is the case with the Evershifting Vale, Nocticula's forlorn, enchanting personal layer of the Abyss. There, in clearings ringed by autumnal trees, feminine demons and female souls join in common adulation of nature, painting their naked bodies with mud and dining upon psychedelic fungus a hundred times more potent than the most powerful drugs of the Material worlds. The layer itself warps, quivers, and shakes as if controlled by a mad, narcotic dream. Succubi generally manage individual covens in the Vale, while the insidious alrunes (see the entry in **Chapter 4: Creatures of the Abyss**) serve as Nocticula's personal agents of vengeance, a service that often takes them far from the Abyss.

Nocticula's cult is strongest in rural areas; many tribal or village wise women secretly honor her, and evil-aligned fey sometimes venerate the Princess of Moonlight over the queen of their own dark faerie court. Though the Sisterhood comprises females exclusively, the cult is far from dedicated to misandry. Nocticulans believe that men serve important roles in the wholeness of the natural world but that they cannot achieve complete understanding, with or without the aid of hallucinogens. Most of the order's more sensual ceremonies require the presence of at least one man, however, and several sympathetic males assist the cult whenever possible. Though her female thaumaturges vastly outnumber males, Nocticula welcomes members of both sexes to swear their eternal souls to her in exchange for thaumaturgical powers.

Should a Nocticulan learn of a man who has physically or sexually abused a woman or girl, however, she enlists the aid of her sisters to rain down merciless retribution upon him, often inviting the victim to join the Sisterhood after the man who has wronged her has been dealt with appropriately. What strikes a Nocticulan as "appropriate" often seems downright vicious to outsiders. The Sisterhood's reliance on torture and mutilation tears a wide rift between it and other feminine nature cults, who view Nocticulans as drug-addled psychopaths whose propensity for whimsy makes them no less frightening and dangerous.

Obedience

Once per day, thaumaturges in service to Nocticula ingest a small quantity of psychedelic plants or fungi, seeing in the resulting hallucinations the blessed, unholy instruction of the Princess of Moonlight. Generally, thaumaturges can locate a suitable plant with a successful Profession (herbalist) check (DC 10). If walled within a city or otherwise unable to find the appropriate material, a thaumaturge may purchase a daily dose for 10 gp. At the end of the ritual trip, the thaumaturge's daily spell allotment is replenished.

Note: Nocticulan thaumaturges treat Profession (herbalist) as a class skill.

Raum

Harbinger of the Apocalypse

Layer: Dizalakine, the Gate of Entropy

Areas of Concern: Finality, extinction, the future

Domains: Catastrophe, Chaos, Evil, Prophecy

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

Raum was born a full-fledged demon prince in the future, a breath before the multiversal apocalypse eagerly awaited by followers of Abaddon and Astaroth. Since then, he's aged in reverse—as time passes, Raum becomes more knowledgeable about the future that only he has experienced. Always honored as a herald of the coming doom and a patron of hopelessness, Raum's unique perspective on things to come has of late made him a paragon of prophecy. Soothsayers, prognosticators, and fortune tellers turn to Raum for information about the future—which he's willing to share, for a price.

The Harbinger of the Apocalypse obscures himself in voluminous gray robes, which hide a deteriorating form that grows more decrepit with each passing year. Raum doesn't understand why he's aging, but he expects to fade from existence entirely within the decade, and the suspicion that he has not yet fulfilled the "purpose" of his creation now drives virtually all of his decisions and actions. After centuries of contemplation, he's come to the conclusion that he was created by the Lords of Good to prevent the apocalypse as a sort of "sleeper" agent within the Abyss. His preferred means of doing so, however, reveals his chaotic evil nature.

Raum hopes to use his knowledge of future catastrophes to trigger an apocalypse in the present—a suicidal bid to prevent himself from ever having existed in the first place. The multiverse would be destroyed somewhat earlier, but at least Raum would have prevented the later annihilation of all that is.

Further, by erasing himself from creation he could be absolved of the sin of wiping out the multiverse. Already heavy with the guilt of being involved in any apocalypse at all, Raum views the absolution of nothingness as the only reward worth fighting for anymore.

He long ago stopped active defense of Dizalakine, his personal layer of the Abyss. No demonic armies guard its gate and borders, and the prince exerts none of his energies fortifying the layer's natural defenses. The place would be completely overrun by invaders if not for the fact that Dizalakine offers nothing to its occupier—no cities, no resources of great (or even



modest) value, and no indigenous life worth stealing or enslaving. Forlorn, windswept, and ignored, the flat plains of the so-called Gate of Entropy stand awaiting a new lord, passed over time and again by would-be usurpers simply because the current tenant allowed things to get so bad that the dregs are hardly worth bothering with. Raum himself occasionally strolls the darkened plains, crying softly to himself while engaging in sad conversations with remembered friends who have yet to be born.

Among the mad are some who have not so much lost their minds as touched upon a piece of information or vision of truth that forever changes the way they view the world. Often the madness manifests as strange voices, hallucinations, or paranoia. Sometimes it instead produces visions: hazy, half-understood images of the future. Those lunatics whose predictions bear fruit are known as Children of Raum, in homage to the demon prince's double patronage of the future and hopeless causes. The Children (those sane enough to function in society, at any rate) dominate Raum's cult, which also teems with seers and fortune tellers, including a fair number of charlatans. Few openly admire the Harbinger's apocalyptic goals (naïvely viewing these as a "minor" aspect of his patronage), but all adore chaos and anarchy. They frequently spur on natural and political catastrophes, directly in service of Raum or because it's simply their nature to do so.

Obedience

A thaumaturge in service to Raum must perform a daily card reading for one other sentient creature. The process takes at least an hour, at the end of which the thaumaturge chooses one random card from a 22-card subset to represent the "fate" card for the subject of the reading. (Use the Major Arcana of a modern Tarot deck to simulate decks specific to your character.) The card is seen as ominous, though the process does not in fact appear to be magical. After showing the card to the subject, the thaumaturge smears it in black ash and tears it in two. If the Death card is drawn, the thaumaturge must earnestly attempt to kill the subject within 24 hours or lose all spellcasting ability for 1d4 days. (Few Raumian thaumaturges advertise this aspect of their service.) When all 22 cards in the subset have been torn, the thaumaturge must replace them at a cost of 2 gp per deck. At the end of the reading, the thaumaturge's daily spell allotment is replenished.

Sabnach

The Wormworm Protector

Layer: Restarion, the Rotting Palace

Areas of Concern: Cities, walls, protection, vermin, disease, laziness

Domains: Chaos, Disease, Evil, Protection

Favored Weapon: Heavy pick

Sabnach is unusual for a demon prince in that he is honored widely in an aspect that only touches on his true nature. At the most superficial level, masons and architects view him as embodying protection through edifice, a brilliant extraplanar strategist who urges the strengthening of walls and reinforcement of natural defenses as the best fortification. More canny practitioners of the masonic arts know Sabnach represents the duality of fortifications and the natural forces of decay that work against their permanence. Walls and redoubts are sworn to the Wormworm Protector in hopes of prolonging their longevity and protection while at the same time recognizing (and hopefully placating) those natural forces that might work against them. Walled cities, the most obvious symbols of Sabnach's teachings, represent the apogee of mortal achievement in the masonic arts, and hence Sabnach has gained a role as a patron of civilization.

Devotees of the most perverse, most genuine aspect of Sabnach's cult, however, know that the demon prince urges the construction of walls and the development of cities because he also gains power from disease and laziness. The spread of civilization into wild lands brings with it a glorious promulgation of diseases upon the virginal landscape. They believe the safety of cities breeds overconfidence and laxity of defense, which in turn results in more prayers to Sabnach, as the desperate hope to make up for their masters' oversights by making ill-considered pacts with the underworld. Whether the city stands tall or is threatened by barbarians, Sabnach profits.

Sabnach has three favored forms, using each to communicate with a distinct body of followers. Those who honor the Wormworm Protector as a guardian of fortifications see him as an elegantly aging, heavily mustached human gentleman in well-crafted but battle-worn armor. Those who praise his civilizing aspect see a similarly armored figure, but with a thickly maned feline head. Sabnach's most devoted followers, who know his true agenda, see him as a gargantuan, corpulent rat sitting atop a mound of shattered columns. All three forms bear a simple iron crown atop their heads.

The whole of Sabnach's small Abyssal layer is taken up by Restarion, doubtless one of the largest castles in the multiverse. For millennia, the Wormworm Protector and the souls and demons sworn to him have toiled upon the unthinkable huge fortress. The work has gone on so long that portions of the castle have fallen into utter disrepair while construction begins on brand new levels and towers miles away. So much of Restarion has decayed that the castle has become known as the Rotting Palace. Tiny worms infest the entire fortress, tunneling their way through wood and stone and weakening the whole. Rats (normal, dire, and fiendish) roam Restarion with impunity, spreading so much disease throughout the fortification that the entire layer is harmful to those not immune to illness. Sabnach favors hezrou and nalfeshnee guardians, who protect the castle as best they can from the adventuring souls and mortals drawn by legends of fabulous treasure chambers secreted beneath Restarion's ever-increasing bulk.

To the average observer, Sabnach appears to have very few devoted followers, although incantations are often said to him even by clerics of other faiths to bestow protection upon a given locale or to bless a newly built redoubt, wall, or battlement. In fact, Sabnach's cult thrives in the cities of the mortal world, spreading disease and sloth under the shadows of civilization. Those advocating the expansion of city walls or national borders to include substantial wild lands, those pressing for more construction and the accommodation of more serfs and refugees within the populace of the city, and those calling for innovation and industry at the expense of the natural world—all speak, intentionally or not, with the voice of the Wormworm Protector. Many cultists infest municipal government, often forming "secret societies" of tradesfolk to effect slothful city life and expand civilized borders through aggressive trade and exploration. Followers of Sabnach honor worms, vermin, and rats as the natural agents of their liege and do whatever they can to avoid harming such creatures. Those thaumaturges who summon a familiar generally choose a rat or some type of vermin.

Obedience

A thaumaturge in service to Sabnach must spend an hour devouring live rats or vermin. Earthworms are a favored delicacy, and it is considered a good omen for an earthworm to crawl from the thaumaturge's mouth, up through his throat, and out the nostrils. At the end of the ritual, the thaumaturge's spell complement is replenished.

Seere

Patron of Portals

Layer: The Final Highway

Areas of Concern: Travel, worldliness, caravans, black markets, monoculture

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, Travel

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

A common philosophy holds that the world is inherently lawful—all things are situated at a specific, set distance from one another, for order is the true nature of the Material Plane. The Patron of Portals and his followers specialize in bending those “absolute” distances, carving literal wounds in the world by traveling from one place to another via the most destructive means possible. The hand of Seere can be seen when a new road cuts through unspoiled wilderness, when a wealthy merchant installs teleportational portals in two cities, maximizing profit by cutting out dozens of middlemen, and when a native people are, through exploration and exploitation, absorbed into the common culture of the civilized world.

Like his allies Sabnach and Socothbenoth, Seere bears a somewhat human appearance, perhaps to appeal to the civilized folk of the settled world. The Patron of Portals stands roughly seven feet tall, with short red hair and two twisting horns peeking from his angular forehead. He otherwise resembles a normal human and often is seen riding upon a pale horse. Seere prefers to dress in the most stylish fashions of high society, favoring tailored coats and elaborate capes that grant him the appearance of a wealthy merchant. He walks with a slight limp, supporting himself on a mighty traveler’s staff.

Seere’s confounding layer of the Abyss, known colloquially as the Final Highway, is a void partially filled by a twisting path of hard-packed earth that winds throughout the layer and is visible from every point within Seere’s realm. At times the road stretches up a great distance, as if traversing a great hill. Such hills, however, don’t exist anywhere beyond the surface of the road itself. Those who fall from the path (or, as is often the case, are pushed from it) fall for eternity unless they slam into another part of the highway far below. Souls sworn to Seere or captured by his agents roaming the Howling Threshold believe that the road has an end, and that those who reach it pass the test of the Patron of Portals to achieve enlightenment and pass on to some sort of Abyssal paradise. It’s a sham—the road extends for eternity before looping back upon its start (no one has ever made it so far), but Seere does nothing to disabuse his subjects of their lofty goals. Of course, the majority of these folk are chaotic evil, so the typical dangers of the road—highwaymen, corrupt checkpoint guards requiring fees for passage, and even wandering creatures (in the form of flying beasts who emerge from the void)—are even more dangerous on the Final Highway than their counterparts on the byways of the mortal world.

Seerians believe that the physical growth of civilization necessitates the absorption of native cultures into the greater body. Small elements of absorbed societies thus eventually come to be observed by the populace at large, infusing the common culture with disparate elements in a cacophonous paean to chaos. By “infecting” civilization with a multiplicity of hard-dying philosophies and belief systems sprung from the corpses of conquered lands, progress weakens society’s overall reliance on law. And with the inevitable weakening of laws, crow Seerians, the groundwork is laid for the advancement of evil. Seerians do their part by organizing trade caravans and expeditions, hoping to turn up areas rich in resources for later exploitation. In the wild they act as guides, and in cities they often serve unscrupulous merchant companies, enhancing their ability to damage the world and displace native peoples simply for the joy of turning a buck.

Whenever a thaumaturge in service to the Patron of Portals *teleports* (either via his own magic or a spell cast by another) he appears at the destination standing in a shallow pool of deep red blood—a wound torn into the sacred order of the natural world.

Obedience

To replenish his spells, a thaumaturge in service to Seere must beat a sentient creature to death with a walking stick (the thaumaturge’s quarterstaff suffices for the task). Thereafter, in a process that takes an hour, the thaumaturge dips his hands in the creature’s blood and coats his staff with its leavings. Since it’s often dangerous to murder randomly, many thaumaturges kill rats or other lowly beings, occasionally saving a *summon monster* spell for the specific purpose of gathering a sacrifice whose absence won’t be noted by anyone.

Shax

The Great Crippling Gaze

Layer: Charnelhome

Areas of Concern: Mutilation, lies, murder, audacity

Domains: Chaos, Crippling, Evil, Subterfuge

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Some demon princes concoct intricate philosophies to trick mortals into following them to eternal damnation. Shax, a ruthless Abyssal sovereign, makes no such claims of altruism. His liturgy holds that the body of a sentient creature is a microcosm, a living symbol of the greater universe. The secrets of the world are hidden in veins and subcutaneous tissue, and he who releases those secrets by opening the flesh exerts ultimate power upon that microcosm, in a sense attaining a sliver of the divine with the slash of a scalpel. Devotees refer to cutting up their victims as “achieving the demiurge,” deifying the moment at which they transcend mortality with their hands buried wrist-deep in cooling organs. The philosophy’s utter lunacy appeals to the criminally insane, who are thankfully rare, but a more significant threat has developed within the last decade.

After wallowing in obscurity for centuries among the wailing, mad souls consigned to his Abyssal home, Shax decided to raise his profile. His demonic servants ensured that his philosophy made its way to disaffected young human nobles in various cities throughout the mortal realm. These men and women have brought Shaxan doctrine to their decadent friends and slake their overwhelming boredom by embracing the teachings of the demon prince. The nobles are lurid sensualists who fancy themselves as having discovered a great new philosophical frontier in the mutilation of flesh. They murder vagrants in the night, undermine local institutions of order, and get away with it in style. As their infamy spreads, so too does their influence. Shax, it would seem, has finally come into his own.

Shax appears as a powerful humanoid with storklike legs and the head of a dove. He seldom wears a shirt, and prefers to be covered from head to toe in blood. He wields a number of prods, saws, and blades in combat, often favoring whatever will inflict the most gruesome wounds upon his enemies. When conversing, Shax speaks with a hoarse voice that makes a painful experience of listening to his depraved ravings. His completely black, avian eyes reflect an insane vacancy—it’s impossible to read Shax’s emotions by looking into those stolid pools of darkness. Known as the Great Crippling Gaze for the unsettling nature of his eyes, the demon prince prefers screams over parley, the dead over the living.

Rusted, filth-soaked gurneys trundle along the cramped hallways of the Charnelhome, Shax’s Abyssal domain. Pushed along by vacuous dretches, the gurneys hold the whimpering bodies of tortured souls who lie quivering in thin puddles of blood, bile, and festering guts.

Floating balls of *continual flame* shed harsh illumination upon tile walls marred with the sticky leavings of life. There are no exits or windows in the Charnelhome, no evidence that the layer exists beyond its grim interior. Hideously eviscerated and lobotomized souls aimlessly wander the endless hallways, absently looking for some sort of half-remembered life beyond the hellish sanitarium. Those souls who honored the Great Crippling Gaze in life serve the prince not as victims but as surgeon-philosophers who carve into their "patients" with academic zeal. Shax houses himself at the center of the structure, reading the reports of his inferiors and chuckling with raspy glee.

Upper-class followers of Shax will do anything to anyone, simply to get off on something they've never seen before. They often gather in intimate social clubs to carefully plan their attacks, then retreat to sympathetic cafés where, bloodied, they lock themselves in private rooms, regaling each other with tales of their own horridness while inhaling narcotic smoke from imported hookahs. Ruthless and sociopathic in the extreme, this new breed of Shaxans use political and familial connections to add an element of intrigue to their dark dealings. The old school carries on, regardless of the new attention from the gentry. With Shax's wicked approval, these babbling, incoherent lunatics struggle to fight back arousal while gutting unfortunates with broken bottles and cast-off bits of sharp metal, confident in the efficacy of their old-fashioned philosophies.

Obedience

To regain his daily allotment of spells, a thaumaturge in service to Shax must perform an autopsy upon a creature killed within the past 24 hours (usually one the thaumaturge has killed himself, but this is not a strict requirement). Shaxan thaumaturges prefer to muck around inside the corpse with their bare hands, believing that the sensation of physical contact improves the divine connection and bringing a bizarre sensuality to the affair. After the hour-long autopsy, the thaumaturge regains spells as normal.

Socothbenoth

Patron of the Tents and Tabernacles of the Daughters

Layer: The Cathedral Thelemic

Areas of Concern: Sexual perversion, prostitutes, taboos, exploration

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Pleasure, Trickery

Favored Weapon: Whip

Devotees of the demon prince Socothbenoth follow a philosophy that urges exploration and exploitation of sexual taboos as the truest manifestation of natural law. According to their increasingly popular views, that which feels good *is* good, simply because nature wills it so—no sexual fetish can be wrong if it brings pleasure to the person indulging in it. Taboos, as strictly mortal inventions, are to be cast away as blights on the face of nature, an almighty force that governs even the gods themselves. "Do what thou wilt

shall be the whole of the law," according to Socothbenoth's lurid litany. While his followers generally value the consent of their partners (perhaps to make their beliefs more attractive to would-be fellows), Socothbenoth himself has no such pretensions. As patron of prostitutes and perversion, the demon prince occasionally gives his followers a push in the direction of sublime pleasures that involve crimes such as murder and molestation. Boiled to its core, Socothbenoth's teachings praise the ecstasy of his followers. Everyone else is just so much flesh.

Socothbenoth appears as a handsome, rakish human man with long brown hair and pure white skin. A pair of donkey ears (replete with piercings) jut straight up from the sides of his head, and his face seems perpetually marked by a knowing, seductive smirk. The demon prince prefers to dress lightly in riding boots and leather pants, eschewing shirts to show off the six immense barbells piercing his chest horizontally in a single vertical row. His long, rounded fingernails seem manicured specifically to tease, and an abnormally long tongue occasionally slips out from between his lips, giving him the appearance of a salacious snake. Socothbenoth is known by many names, including Succor-Beloth and Succorbenoth. Nocticula, the sultry Princess of Moonlight, spends a great deal of time at Socothbenoth's side. The demon prince knows her both as a sister and as a lover—together the two push the limits of depravity in private while presenting a unified, powerful alliance to their numerous enemies.

A peaceful idyll of sparse forest makes up the bulk of Socothbenoth's private Abyssal demesne. Mockingbirds trill innocuous songs as they flutter from tree to tree, stretching their colorful wings in the welcoming light of a warm sun. Small clearings mark the woodland here and there, their soft beds of flowers giving comfort to young lovers fumbling at each other's clothes. No demons inhabit this outer landscape, and souls and the living alike dwell together in a handful of towns scattered throughout the layer. A towering edifice dominates the center of the forest, giving a name to the whole domain—the Cathedral Thelemic. Decked out with the iconography of dozens of good-aligned religions, the so-called "Church of Free Will" is home to thousands of entrapped souls whose attempts to slake their sexual thirst in life consigned them to an eternity in the Abyss. Under the tutelage of a "priesthood" made up of succubi and incubi, and under the gaze of impassive stone angels, the souls spend every minute of every day indulging in the most prurient proclivities imaginable. No distinction is made between dominant and submissive, violator and violated. The souls have until multiversal oblivion to work out their kinks, and in the eternity of the Cathedral Thelemic, everyone assumes every role eventually.



Socothbenoth's followers are difficult to classify. Most view their faith as an intensely personal matter, often because they first discovered hints of the demon prince's agenda scribbled in the margins of surreptitiously purchased books of erotic poetry or collections of pornographic woodcuts. Streetwalkers turn to Socothbenoth as a compassionate and approving father figure who views them not just as children, but as prophets of a new age of unbridled expressionism and limitless pleasures. Prostitutes frequently turn to allied thaumaturges, whose curative spells ease their sacred mission. Enlightened followers spread the word of the Patron of the Tents and Tabernacles of the Daughters, enticing new members to the movement with fetching pouts and nimble tongues. Nature, they claim, honors their indulgences, giving pleasure in return. Socothbenothans (sometimes for fear of reprisal after death) honor the infallibility of natural law above the decrees of the gods, disdaining any who would place morality in the way of sexual fulfillment.

Obedience

To regain his spells, a thaumaturge in service to Socothbenoth must achieve sexual release, either alone or with a partner. Thereafter, he must defile a page torn from the religious canon of a lawful good deity, fold it into an occult symbol, and thrust it into a hermetically prepared fire. At the end of the hour-long ritual, the thaumaturge's complement of spells is replenished.

Vepar

Master of Angry Waters

Layer: Kolopan, the Seething Passage

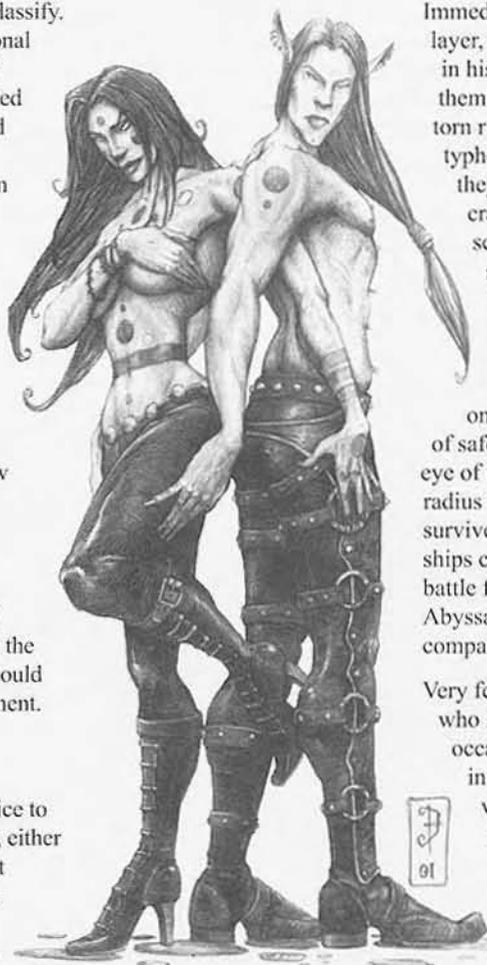
Areas of Concern: Mercantile trade, ocean voyages, slavery, drowning

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Travel, Water

Favored Weapon: Trident

To get anywhere worth going, you've got to cross water. When seasoned mariners encounter a storm on the open seas, they call upon the dread lord Vepar in hopes that the demon prince will quell his wrath and calm the violent waters. Below decks, chained "savages" curse his name. They blame Vepar for allowing rapacious slavers to come across the ocean and cart them away from their homelands. Lower still, beneath the frightening waves, massive, many-tentacled sea creatures keep pace with the ship, thanking the Master of Angry Waters for delivering them yet another tasty meal.

Vepar appears as an immense humanoid figure with the lower body of a giant fish. His dull gray skin hangs loosely from his powerful skeleton, seemingly awaiting the day when it will slough off as he swims through the depths of the sea. Vepar wears an irregular crown of coral atop his balding head. The headgear pulls and tears at his scalp, releasing thick amber blood of a puslike consistency. The Master of Angry Waters rarely surfaces, preferring to dwell in the watery depths of his home layer, the Seething Passage, alongside the Slithy Brood, a school of seventy-two hezrou who serve him faultlessly.



Immediately upon their arrival at his home layer, souls sworn to Vepar or those harvested in his name from the Howling Threshold find themselves packed into leaking vessels with torn rigging, adrift in a nightmare seascape of typhoon winds and hurricane waves. Worse, they usually manifest chained in sweaty, cramped holds, their only companions the screams of other damned souls and the slowly rising pool of water coming in through small holes in the deck. Most drown within an hour of arrival, fueling Vepar's unthinkable demonic power.

The strongest manage to fight their way on deck, wrestling the vessel to a semblance of safety by navigating into the relatively calm eye of the storm. Within the eye, which has a radius of more than ninety miles, those who survive the storm get the pleasure of fighting off ships crewed by other survivors, all in constant battle for the only food available on the entire Abyssal layer—soulflesh. Below, Vepar and his companions squeal with piscine laughter.

Very few serve Vepar intentionally, though most who live on the open seas know of him and occasionally toss an offering into the waters in a half-hearted attempt to stave off his villainous attentions. But when gales tear the mainsail from its moorings and waves pound crew off the deck and into the inky waters, lip service often shifts to wholehearted prayers and desperate promises. Vepar isn't picky, however, and takes his followers wherever he can get

them. He's been known to manifest aboard a ship in the minutes before it goes under, proffering its crew safety in return for their cargo. Sometimes he tells them that they must offer up three of their own to the Abyss before he will calm the waters—Vepar delights in watching formerly tight crews fall upon each other to save their own hides. Rarely, he even allows the three sacrifices to live, casting their betrayers into the seas as snacks for inhuman servitor creatures that dwell below the waves.

Slavers honor Vepar as patron of their cruel trade, praying to him to reveal the best naval routes to new lands rife with material and human riches. Vepar in turn thrives on the suffering of the slaves in disease-ridden, filthy cargo holds. He delights in the eradication of "primitive" societies, seeing this as necessary to spread cultures that depend upon sea travel for their sustenance. Once they dominate the world, the Master of Angry Waters intends to visit it personally, demanding tribute from all while holding the trade of every nation in his clawed, rubbery fingers.

Obedience

A thaumaturge dedicated to Vepar always carries the decaying severed head of a humanoid he has personally drowned. To regain his spell complement for the day, the thaumaturge conducts a ritual in which he holds the head under water while chanting prayers to his infernal master. Alternately, he may empty a vial of holy water into the mouth of the head, letting the liquid spill through the open throat and onto his boots. In either case, the ritual takes a full hour. When all of the flesh and hair rots away from the skull, the thaumaturge must replace it by drowning another victim.

Familiar Demon Princes

Those familiar with demonology (both within and without the context of roleplaying games) will no doubt find some of the names in this sidebar familiar. Even the most casual delver into unknowable mysteries is aware of additional resources to discover information regarding the backgrounds, motivations, and cults of these creatures (or beasts very similar to them). A perusal of the bibliography in Appendix III gives a few good starting points for further research. The following summary provides everything you need to create thaumaturges serving these all-too-familiar princes of evil.

Arachnadia

Areas of Concern: Poison, dark elves

Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Trickery

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Obedience: To regain his full complement of spells, a thaumaturge dedicated to Arachnadia must weave a delicate spider web from a length of string. He then wraps the web around a living insect, entwining the bug in a cocoon of thread. The thaumaturge crushes the cocoon in his fingers, smearing the resulting ooze upon his weapon of choice.

Baphomet

Areas of Concern: Guardians, minotaurs

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Strength, Protection

Favored Weapon: Halberd

Obedience: Thaumaturges in service to Baphomet spend their hour of obedience standing completely still, staring at the space immediately in front of them. At the end of the ritual, the thaumaturge speaks fifty observations regarding his surroundings into a hollowed-out bull's horn. After this, his spells are completely replenished.

Demogorgon

Areas of Concern: Despotism

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Fear, Pain

Favored Weapon: Whip

Obedience: Demogorgonite thaumaturges renew their spell complement by spending an hour whipping and berating one or more social inferiors. Many experienced thaumaturges rely upon the Leadership feat to attract willing victims from a host of fanatically loyal followers (the thaumaturge's Leadership score does not change due to maltreatment of his inferiors).

Kostchtchie

Areas of Concern: Cold, brutality

Domains: Chaos, Crippling, Evil, Strength

Favored Weapon: Warhammer

Obedience: Kostchtchie's thaumaturges receive new spells after participating in an hour-long ritual in which they spill the blood of a living innocent upon snow-covered ground. This has the side-effect of limiting Kostchtchie's cult to cold climes, though particularly crafty thaumaturges employ magic or summoned creatures of cold to cover unfrozen ground in snow before the ritual begins.

Lord of Many Forms

Areas of Concern: Oozes, slimes

Domains: Change, Chaos, Evil, Pain

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Obedience: Thaumaturges in service to the evershifting Lord of Many Forms carry a small flask of corrosive acid at all times (see *DMG*). The acid costs 10 gp to replace if lost. During the hour-long obedience ritual,

the thaumaturge submerges a small, severed piece of a human body (perhaps a finger or nose) in the acid, chanting praise to his Abyssal master as the flesh dissolves.

Orcus

Areas of Concern: Undeath

Domains: Chaos, Death, Destruction, Evil

Favored Weapon: Rod (light mace)

Obedience: To regain his spells, a thaumaturge serving Orcus grinds a half-pound of bones from the skeleton of a sentient creature and mixes the granular remnants with water to create a gray paste, which he then ingests.

Pazuzu

Areas of Concern: Predators, winged creatures

Domains: Air, Animal, Chaos, Evil

Favored Weapon: Longsword

Obedience: A thaumaturge sworn to Pazuzu replenishes his spells by stringing the intestines of a freshly killed creature on the branches of a tree or crenellations of a tower (or some other place likely to capture the attention of birds).

Vaz'zht

Areas of Concern: Nobility, espionage

Domains: Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Subterfuge

Favored Weapon: Bastard sword

Obedience: To regain spells, a thaumaturge in service to the Ebony Lord Vaz'zht must cut a small slice bisecting the front of his tongue. He then allows his mouth to fill with blood while thinking about how to eliminate one person who poses a political threat to him. Once his mouth is bursting with liquid, he yells out the name of the enemy in an ejaculation of sound and blood.

Yughooragh

Areas of Concern: Scavengers, gnolls

Domains: Animal, Chaos, Death, Evil

Favored Weapon: Flail

Obedience: Yughooraghan thaumaturges must endure a particularly gruesome obedience in order to receive their daily allotment of spells. In a ritual that takes one hour, the thaumaturge devours as much of the corpse of an animal, beast, humanoid, magical beast, or monstrous humanoid as he can. Using only his teeth.

Zhar'Ub-Luur

Areas of Concern: Lies

Domains: Chaos, Eloquence, Evil, Trickery

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

Obedience: The distrustful thaumaturges of Zhar'Ub-Luur regain their spells through a ritual in which they construct a new identity for themselves. Writing falsified information about this individual in a volume known as the *Book of Persons*, the thaumaturge ends up with a complete new persona each time he refreshes his spells for the day.

Chapter Four: Creatures of the Abyss

The following creatures are presented in alphabetic order. Many are tanar'ri, some are qliphoth, and a few are...something else.

Alastor (Tanar'ri)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 11d8+44 (93 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 28 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +18 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 27

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 10

Attacks: *Vengeful scythe* +19/+14/+9 melee; or 2 claws +17 melee

Damage: *Vengeful scythe* 2d6+11 (+2d6 vs. good, +2d6 vs. lawful);
claw 2d4+7

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, pronounce sentence, *vengeful scythe*, summon tanar'ri

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 20/+2, SR 22, true seeing

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +9

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15

Skills: Concentration +18, Disguise +16, Gather Information +24, Intimidate +16,
Knowledge (Abyss) +15, Scry +9, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +8

Feats: Improved Critical (scythe), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or posse (2–5 alastors) or court (1 nalfeshnee and 2–5 alastors)

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods; no items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 12–22 HD (Large); 23–33 HD (Huge)

Many planar travelers make the mistake of assuming that simply because the Abyss is chaotic, the demons who dwell within it have no laws. A consortium of nalfeshnee known as the Magistrate Cabal give the lie to such mistaken impressions, and alastors are their servants.

From a layer called Black Regulus, these thirteen masked nalfeshnee debate and draft laws that govern the behavior of demons, souls, and visitors from the Material Plane alike. They then sit in judgment of violators (who most often are tried *in absentia*), sentencing many to horrific tortures or gruesome death. To the casual observer (and even some dedicated scholars), the body of law created by the Magistrate Cabal is contradictory at best, changing on what appears to be the whim of the nalfeshnee. The laws defer to the demon princes, never seeking to limit their power or influence. Everyone else would ignore the Cabal's rulings like the mad ramblings they are save for one factor: the alastors.

If the nalfeshnee serve as the legislators and judges in this bizarre legal charade, alastors serve as the executioners. The Cabal dispatches alastors from their lair, entrusting the creatures with carrying out whatever sentence it has decreed (almost always that of death). After an alastor has pronounced sentence, its chosen victim can either fight or run away. In the court of the Abyss, there are no appeals.

Armed with magic scythes that ignore the natural protections of the tanar'ri, alastors strike fear into the desiccated hearts of all but the hardest demons. Alastors especially hate those who would bring goodness or just law to the Abyss, and they attempt to destroy such interlopers regardless of the decrees of their masters.

An alastor stands as tall as an ogre but possesses a lithe, muscular frame similar to that of an athletic human. Its dull mustard-yellow skin contrasts with its bright red eyes. Spiky bone ridges cluster at an alastor's elbows, shoulders, and upon the back of its lizardlike head. In addition to the massive scythes carried by all alastors, the more dramatic executioner demons deck themselves in voluminous robes and carry hourglasses, gavels, and other symbols of judgment.

Alastors speak Abyssal and Common.

Combat

Alastors spend a great deal of time hunting down potential victims, either at the behest of the Magistrate Cabal or for their own amusement. Once a victim has been chosen, they prefer to use *teleport without error* to take the quarry by surprise. All encounters begin with an alastor pronouncing sentence. (Though the purpose of this ability is to exact vengeance upon the enemies of the nalfeshnee in the Magistrate Cabal, alastors prefer to use it against all of their victims.) Thereafter, it attacks with its spell-like abilities and *vengeful scythe*.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*arcane eye*, *chaos hammer*, *deeper darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *dimensional anchor*, *dispel good*, *lesser geas*, *locate creature*, *magic circle against good*, *polymorph self*, *produce flame*, *scrying*, *teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), and *unholy blight*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 11th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).



Pronounce Sentence (Su): Once every 3 rounds, an alastor may point at a single enemy and pronounce sentence upon it by uttering the word “guilty” in Abyssal. The target must immediately make a Will save (DC 17). This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm. If the save is successful, the creature cannot be affected again by that alastor’s pronounce sentence ability for one day. Those who fail immediately drop anything in hand and kneel upon the ground, presenting their necks for a killing blow. A kneeling opponent is considered helpless. The effect lasts 2d4 rounds or until dispelled.

Vengeful Scythe: An alastor’s weapon is a Huge +1 chaotic unholy scythe. Further, it ignores the damage reduction of even the most powerful demons (which is one of the reasons even balors fear an alastor on the prowl). The scythe disappears when the alastor dies or if separated from its owner for more than 24 hours. An alastor whose scythe has vanished can magically summon a new one as a full-round action.

Summon Tanar’ri (Sp): Once per day an alastor can attempt to summon 1d4+1 alastors or a single nalfeshnee with a 35% chance of success.

True Seeing (Su): Alastors continuously use *true seeing* as the spell cast by an 11th-level sorcerer.

Skills: An alastor receives a +8 racial bonus on Gather Information and Sense Motive checks.

Alrune (Tanar’ri)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 5d8+5 (27 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

AC: 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 16

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: Bite +7 melee, 2 claws +5 melee

Damage: Bite 1d8+2 and contortion; claw 1d4+1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Contortion bite, dark ligature, spell-like abilities, summon tanar’ri

Special Qualities: Tanar’ri qualities, damage reduction 10/+1, SR 10, alternate form

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +17, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +21, Disguise +9*, Forgery +8, Gather Information +9, Hide +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6

Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 6–15 HD (Medium-size)

In rural Material lands, superstitious women create small statuettes of beautiful females known as alrunes. The women pray to these figurines, asking them for guidance and protection and sometimes hints regarding the future in exchange for clothing the statuettes and giving them small offerings of food and drink. Most of the time the dolls do nothing, eventually ending up in some drawer or refuse pile. But when the woman’s life is threatened by a male (most often a husband or relative), the dolls sometimes send a signal to the Abyss, warning servants of the demon princess Nocticula that something is amiss on the Material plane.

These servants, the actual alrunes, serve the Princess of Moonlight as agents of vengeance against Material patriarchy and against those men who would exploit their familial and political power to bring misery to the lives of women. When called by a woman praying over her figurine, an alrune most often appears as a fetching female of the same race as the chosen male victim. It thereafter insinuates itself into the life of the man, attempting to seduce him into bed and, ultimately, to castrate and kill him as a sign to his misogynistic fellows.

Once it has exacted vengeance, the alrune presents itself to the woman who (sometimes unwittingly) called it. It explains that the woman’s tormentor has been dealt with and attempts to bring her into the Nocticulan fold (assuming she does not already belong to the cult). Sometimes, the alrune will remain on the Material Plane to help the woman form a new cult of Nocticula, serving as both advisor and dark priestess.

In its natural form, an alrune looks like a strikingly beautiful human woman from the waist up, although with stunted batwings and deformed, woody arms that end in sharp claws. The bottom half of her form features a disgustingly distended belly split by a prehensile phallus that ends in a yonic maw ringed by sharp teeth. Two sets of half-formed, useless appendages grow from the belly, as does a snaking, rubbery tail.

Alrunes speak Abyssal, Common, Elven, Infernal, and Celestial.



Combat

An alrune prefers to charm (magically or otherwise) its chosen enemy, luring him to bed before assuming its natural form mid-coitus. It thereafter attempts to bite him with its lower mouth, hopefully weakening him with thoughts of contrition. As its victim is usually naked and without any means of defending himself, it's only a matter of time before an alrune kills and mutilates its quarry, often leaving certain organs in his mouth as a sign to others who would follow his abusive path.

Contrition Bite (Su): Anyone bitten by the alrune's lower maw must make a successful Will save (DC 16) or be overcome with feelings of sorrow and contrition. Those who fail become shaken, suffering a -2 morale penalty on attack and damage rolls and saving throws. The effect lasts for 2d4 rounds.

Dark Ligature (Su): Once per day, an alrune may tie a small string into a knot, then throw it and a coin onto the ground while pointing at a male within 300 feet. The coin disappears, manifesting in a treasure chamber within Nocticula's personal realm in the Evershifting Vale. The target must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 16) or suffer debilitating pain to the groin. The attack has the effect of a *harm* spell cast by a 12th-level cleric. Men who fail the save become impotent, their ability to pass on their seed forever bound to the fate of the coin's. Rarely, Nocticula allows victims to engage in some dangerous quest in return for release. When melted and cast into a natural body of fresh water under the light of the moon, the coin gives up its hold on the man, who regains his virility.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*charm person*, *dispel magic*, *endure elements*, *expeditious retreat*, *invisibility*, *mage armor*, *protection from good*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, *tongues*, and *true strike*. These abilities are as spells cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Once per day an alrune can attempt to summon 1d3 alrunes with a 35% chance of success.

Alternate Form (Su): Alrunes can assume any humanoid form of Small to Large size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only female humanoid forms.

Skills: An alrune receives a +8 racial bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

*When using an alternate form, an alrune receives a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks.

Armageddon Beast

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 30d8+150 (285 hp)

Initiative: +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 32 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +25 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 32

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 7

Attacks: 4 claws +42 melee, 7 bites +40 melee

Damage: Claw 2d8+14 (crit 19-20, vorpal); bite 2d6+7

Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapons, frightful presence, vorpal claws

Special Qualities: Body invulnerability, damage reduction 50/+5, SR 30, acid, cold, electricity, and poison immunity, fire and sonic resistance 20, regeneration 10

Saves: Fort +22, Ref +16, Will +18

Abilities: Str 38, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16

Skills: Climb +44, Intimidate +36, Intuit Direction +31, Jump +44, Listen +44, Search +32, Sense Motive +31, Spot +44, Swim +44, Wilderness Lore +22

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 25

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 31-60 HD (Gargantuan); 61-90 HD (Colossal)

While it's technically impossible for an infinite plane to have a "lowest" layer, few demons of the Abyss would argue with such a characterization of Volgauth, a hostile, stinking realm with but a single planar entrance. Positioned at the end of a gauntlet of deadly Abyssal layers, Volgauth would go without notice in the multiverse were it not the point of origin of a particularly deadly breed of demon known as armageddon beasts.

An armageddon beast can destroy the strongest demon lord with a single breath from one of its seven ferocious mouths. The creatures are so powerful they cannot be summoned. Instead they are "harvested" by teams of balors once every century and imprisoned by demon princes as doomsday weapons, to be used only when nothing but the utter annihilation of the enemy will do. The appearance of an armageddon beast on a Material world usually results in that world's destruction, and the prophecies of countless religions speak of a great seven-headed, ten-horned beast whose coming will bring about the End Times.

An armageddon beast resembles a mixture of hydra and fiendish dragon. Seven long, muscular necks bridge the space between leering, monstrous heads and a massive body covered in bony plates and horny protrusions. Each head bears a different personality, though armageddon beasts care little for conversation, preferring to use their toothy maws for chewing the bodies of their slain enemies. Each of the creature's four feet bears five ebony talons that cut through stone as if it were flesh. The claws, as it happens, are much better at cutting through actual flesh, a fact commented upon in most of the aforementioned prophecies.

Armageddon beasts speak Abyssal. Although they have the capacity to learn other languages, they arrogantly believe that conversation is a complete waste of time and do not make any effort to learn how to communicate with any but their own hideous kind.

Combat

Armageddon beasts can attack with all their heads at no penalty, even if they move or charge during the round. An armageddon beast can be killed only by severing all its heads and destroying its body. The hit point total above represents the body (but see *Body Invulnerability*, below).

To sever a head, an opponent must hit the monster's neck with a slashing weapon and deal 35 points of damage in a single blow. (The player says where the attack is aimed just before making the attack roll). Any excess damage is lost. A severed head dies, and a natural reflex seals the neck shut to prevent further blood loss. The armageddon beast can no longer attack with the severed head but suffers no other penalties. A severed head regrows in about a month.

Breath Weapons (Su): Each of the armageddon beast's heads possesses a different breath weapon, which may be used even when the armageddon beast is attacking physically or moving at full speed. The beast may bring all breath weapons to bear on a single opponent or target multiple opponents in the same round. Each breath weapon may be used once every 1d3 rounds. Naturally, once a head has been severed, the armageddon beast loses access to the associated breath weapon.

Acid: Cone of acidic spittle, 60 feet long; damage 12d6; Reflex half DC 30.

Annihilation: A tight beam of cloying darkness targets a single individual within 60 feet. The opponent must succeed at a Will save (DC 28) or be utterly erased from existence. Annihilated creatures cannot be brought back to life by any means, including *miracle*, *true resurrection*, or *wish*.

Cold: Cone of frost, 60 feet long; damage 12d6; Reflex half DC 30.

Electricity: Cone of electrical discharge, 60 feet long; damage 12d6; Reflex half DC 30.

Petrification: Turn to stone permanently; cone of blue gas, 60 feet long; Fortitude negates DC 30.

Sonic: Cone of cacophonous noise, 60 feet long; damage 12d6; Reflex half DC 30.

Torpor: Speed halved, can take only a single partial action per turn for 2d6 rounds; cone of gas, 60 feet long; Will negates DC 28.

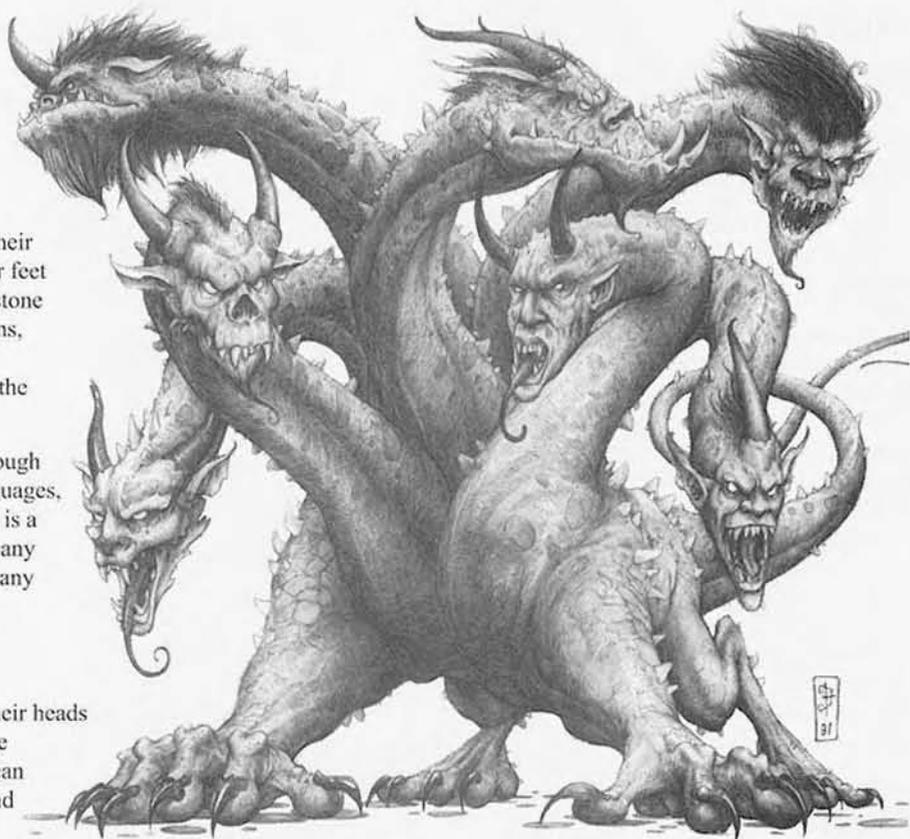
Frightful Presence (Su): An armageddon beast can inspire terror within a 30-foot radius by charging or attacking. Affected creatures must succeed at a Will save (DC 28) or become shaken, remaining shaken until they leave the area of effect.

Vorpal Claws (Ex): An armageddon beast's claws are so sharp that they act as *vorpal* weapons. Upon a successful critical hit, the claws sever an opponent's head (assuming it has one), instantly killing that creature. After an armageddon beast has been killed, the claws can be harvested as the blades of +1 *vorpal greatswords*. The magic lasts three weeks after the armageddon beast's death before dissipating completely.

Body Invulnerability (Su): So long as at least one head remains (see above), the armageddon beast's body is immune to all forms of physical damage and all spells.

Regeneration (Ex): No form of attack deals normal damage to an armageddon beast.

Skills: An armageddon beast receives a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.



Darba

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 19 (+4 Dex, +5 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 15

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 14

Attacks: 4 fleshtearers +9 melee; or longsword +8/+3 melee

Damage: Fleshtearer 1d8+4 and wounding; longsword 1d8+2

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Blademaster, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Acid and fire resistance 20, alternate form, damage reduction 5/+1, poison immunity

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15

Skills: Bluff +11, Climb +11, Jump +11, Listen +9, Search +10, Spot +9

Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (fleshtearer)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7–9 HD (Large); 10–18 HD (Huge)

Darbas are cousins to the dreaded rakshasas, but unlike their kin they are creatures of chaos. While rakshasas serve their king, Ravana, and live under a code of laws (albeit one that allows them to vex the mortal races with impunity), darbas are fierce individualists. They rarely gather in any numbers, preferring to spend their time causing untold misery on the Material Plane.

Although classed as demons, darbas spend little time in the Abyss. With their shapechanging powers and taste for mayhem, darbas just can't stay away from the mortal world. Each pursues its own evil schemes, from slave running to the defilement of holy places to the corruption of innocent mortals to mass murder. Since darbas have no real agenda other than self-gratification, their actions are difficult to predict. Paladins and good clerics know darbas well and curse their iniquities.

In its true form, a darba looks like a four-armed humanoid whose grotesque face is plastered with a permanent grin. Instead of hands, however, it has long wicked blades known as fleshtearers. These living weapons inflict terrible wounds and are rightly feared.

Darbas speak Abyssal, Common, Draconic, and Elven.

Combat

If fighting in an alternate form (see below), a darba uses a longsword or another bladed weapon. It tries to get out of trouble with its spell-like abilities first, but if the danger escalates it reverts to its true form and lets the fleshtearers do their bloody work. Unless it has already done so once that day, it is likely to *teleport* away if it feels its life is truly in jeopardy.

Blademaster (Ex): A darba wields its fleshtearers with expert precision, and its scything blades can cut an opponent to pieces in mere seconds. A darba receives the benefits of Weapon Specialization with its fleshtearers. In addition, the fleshtearers have the *wounding* special ability, as magic weapons so imbued.

Alternate Form (Su): A darba can assume any humanoid form, or revert to its own form, as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *alter self* spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the darba can remain in the new form indefinitely.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*hypnotism* and *Tasha's hideous laughter*; 1/day—*suggestion* and *teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 1/week—*plane shift*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).



Enveloper of the Innocent (Tandar'ri)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 8d8+24 (60 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 16 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 15

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 10

Attacks: Slam +13 melee

Damage: Slam 1d8+7 and 1d6 acid

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Acid, engulf, metabolize good, paralysis, spell-like abilities, summon tandar'ri

Special Qualities: Tandar'ri qualities, oozelike qualities, damage reduction 10/+1, SR 10, blindsight, damage absorption

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9–15 HD (Huge); 16–24 HD (Gargantuan)

The result of ancient experiments by the demon princes Marbas and the unnamable Lord of Many Forms, envelopers of the innocent are agents of the Abyss on the Material Plane, spreading horror and confusion in lands aligned against demonic hordes.

Mindless beasts created only to kill, envelopers of the innocent spend their lives eating or hunting for a new meal. Demonic generals battling good foes often stack their first ranks with them, knowing that the amorphous creatures' ability to swallow and surround still-living foes has a demoralizing effect upon their opponents' allies.

Envelopers of the innocent are tumorous blobs of undulating, dark flesh. Dozens of pseudopods writhe and flex in what appears to be a jumble of muscle surrounding a hollow depression at the creature's center. More often than not, the depression is filled with the body of an engulfed creature. The enveloper draws nutrients from its captive, metabolizing altruism and righteousness into the energy it needs to survive. Envelopers of the innocent leak acid from pores positioned around their bodies, sometimes leaving trails of corrosion in their terrible wake.

Combat

An enveloper of the innocent prefers to use its *detect good* ability to home in on the most nourishing meal among multiple enemies. It thereafter attacks that creature with *hold person* until it is paralyzed, then moves to engulf it before turning upon companions.

Acid (Ex): The outer body of an enveloper of the innocent secretes a digestive acid that quickly dissolves organic material. Any melee hit deals automatic acid damage.

Engulf (Ex): An enveloper of the innocent can mow down a Medium-size or smaller creature as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The enveloper merely has to move over the opponent. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the enveloper, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 17) or be engulfed; on a success, they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the enveloper of the innocent moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to the enveloper's paralysis and metabolize good abilities, and are considered to be grappled and trapped within the enveloper's body. An enveloper of the innocent can engulf a single creature at a time. If it successfully engulfs a new creature before expelling an old one (which it can do as a standard action), the old one is pushed out of its body to make room for the new prisoner. The old captive is moved to an adjacent space.

Metabolize Good (Su): As a standard action, an enveloper of the innocent can attempt to consume a nonevil captive's goodness, drawing strength from its convictions and draining the victim of a portion of its character. The captive must make a successful Will save (DC 17). Those who succeed are immune to the enveloper's metabolize good ability for 24 hours. Those who fail suffer a one-step shift in alignment along the good-evil axis, toward evil. (For example, a chaotic good creature would become chaotic neutral, and a chaotic neutral creature would become chaotic evil.) Alteration of the alignment is mental as well as moral, so an individual changed by the enveloper thoroughly enjoys its new outlook. As part of the transfer, the enveloper gains 40 temporary hit points. These hit points last for 24 hours and go away if the victim is expelled or killed. Only a *wish* or *miracle* can restore the captive creature's former alignment, and the affected individual does not make any attempt to do so voluntarily. If the being has a class with an alignment requirement, an *atonement* spell is needed as well to restore it to good standing.



Paralysis (Ex): Envelopers of the innocent secrete an anesthetizing slime. A target hit by an enveloper's slam or engulf attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. The enveloper can automatically engulf a paralyzed opponent.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect good, Evard's black tentacles, fear, hold person, protection from good*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level cleric (save DC 11 + spell level).

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Once per day an enveloper of the innocent can attempt to summon another enveloper of the innocent with a 50% chance of success.

Oozelike Qualities (Ex): Although envelopers of the innocent are outsiders, they share several features common to oozes such as black puddings and ochre jellies. Envelopers of the innocent are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. They have no clear front or back and are therefore not subject to critical hits or flanking.

Blindsight (Ex): Using its many pseudopods to sense vibrations, an enveloper of the innocent maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature, despite the fact that it has no eyes. Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant, though the creature still can't discern ethereal beings. An enveloper of the innocent can ascertain objects and creatures within 90 feet.

Damage Absorption (Ex): An enveloper of the innocent that has engulfed an opponent gains three-quarters concealment (30% miss chance) by quickly moving its flesh to avoid attacks, instead presenting the engulfed creature to the blow. Attacks that miss due to concealment are instead resolved against the engulfed creature.

Eurynomus, the Corpse Eater (Tanar'ri)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 16d8+48 (120 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 25 (-1 size, +16 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 25

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 9

Attacks: 2 claws +22 melee, tail slap +17 melee

Damage: Claw 2d6+7; tail 1d6+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, greater bull rush, spell-like abilities, toothy maw 3d6+3

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 15/+3, SR 24

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +12

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13

Skills: Balance +16, Climb +23, Intimidate +17, Jump +23, Knowledge (Abyss) +18, Listen +18, Search +18, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18, Swim +23

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Sunder

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Unique or with ghoul pack (1–4 ghouls, 2–12 ghouls)

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: Standard

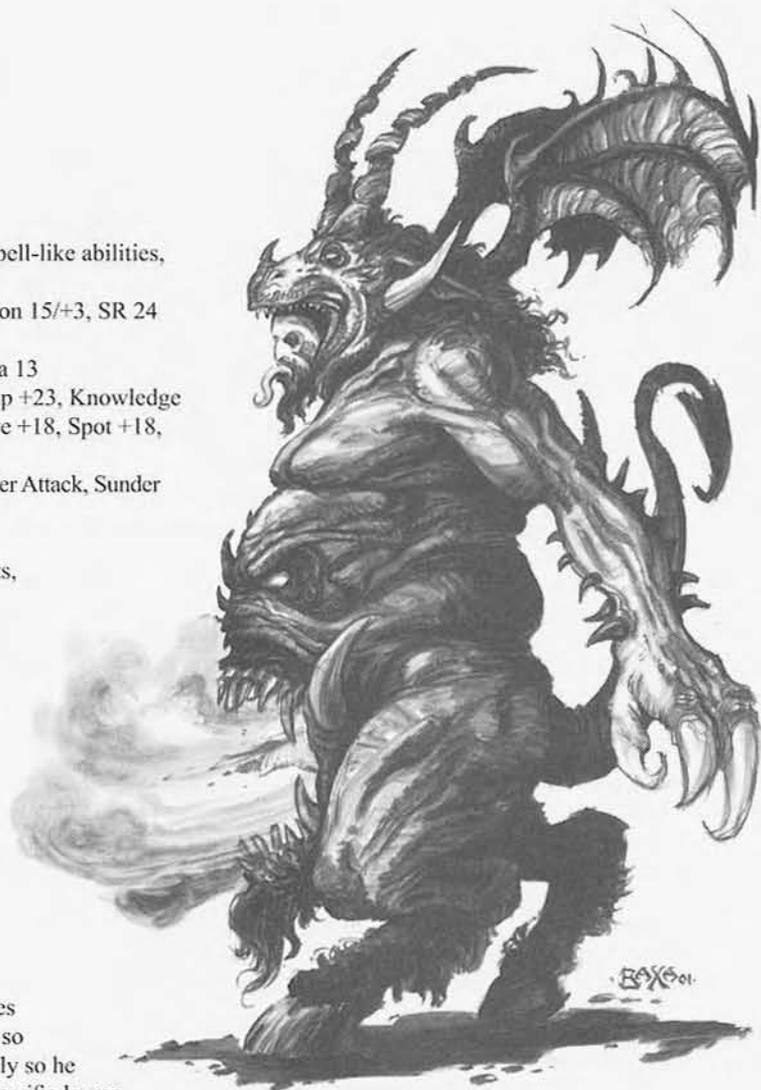
Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Eurynomus is a primal demon lord who owes allegiance to no power or prince. He and his followers rule no territory and fight for no cause. On a plane obsessed with souls, Eurynomus taste runs to something else: flesh.

Known as the Corpse Eater, Eurynomus has a voracious appetite for flesh of all sorts. Nothing gives him more pleasure than sucking the meat off the bones of a freshly killed victim, a passion he shares with the ghouls that follow him. He is such a glutton, so the story goes, that he grew a second mouth in his belly so he could eat faster. Whatever the truth of its origin, his horrific lower maw is legendary. It never speaks, moving only to eat or to lick its lips in anticipation of its next feeding.

The Corpse Eater does what he must to feed his addiction. He sometimes hires himself out to demon princes, though in truth he isn't a very reliable mercenary. He often visits the Material Plane to feed, and he especially enjoys traveling to worlds at war. Blasted battlescapes, filled with the wounded and the dying, are places of beauty to Eurynomus. Men crying out for their mothers before the oblivion of death are like invitations to dinner for the Corpse Eater and his followers.



In some lands graced by visits from Eurynomus, funerary customs changed quickly. Several churches have taken to cremating corpses instead of burying them, to better protect the honored dead from desecration.

Eurynomus speaks Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, and Elven.

Combat

Eurynomus loves to muscle his enemies around, so he usually charges at the first good opportunity and uses his greater bull rush ability to fling back and hopefully knock down the toughest-looking opponent. Then it's time for the toothy maw to do its work. When faced with a multitude of foes, Eurynomus starts with his breath weapon to even the odds.

Breath Weapon (Su): Eurynomus can spew forth a cloud of foul corrosive gas from the depths of his bowels. Cone of acid, 40 feet long, once every 1d4 rounds; damage 10d6, Reflex half DC 21.

Greater Bull Rush (Ex): Eurynomus receives a +8 bonus on Strength checks when making bull rush attacks. Such is the force of his impact that if his Strength check result exceeds that of his opponent by more than 5, the opponent is knocked prone in addition to being pushed back.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 1/day—*desecrate* and *plane shift*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 16th-level sorcerer (save DC 11 + spell level).

Toothy Maw (Ex): The vile maw in Eurynomus' distended stomach chomps at nearby opponents in combat. If Eurynomus hits a single opponent with both his claw attacks, he can make one additional bite attack against that opponent with a +17 attack bonus that deals 3d6+3 damage.

Golem, Razorwire

Large Construct

Hit Dice: 14d10 (77 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft. (can't run), climb 30 ft.

AC: 28 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +15 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 24

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 13

Attacks: 4 rakes +13 melee

Damage: Rake 2d6+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, constrict 2d6+4, rush, trip

Special Qualities: Construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 15/+1, blindsight, bludgeoning immunity, rust vulnerability

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +6

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 19, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 4

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 15-21 HD (Large); 22-42 HD (Huge)

Razorwire golems are ancient remnants of the great construct armies that helped the tanar'ri gain dominion over the Abyss in their prehistoric war with the eladrin. Few remain in existence.

Razorwire golems serve the oldest and most powerful demon princes as estate guardians or battlefield terrors. Whether defending a treasure hoard or taking the lead in a charge, their ability to swiftly and emotionlessly flay the skin from an enemy has granted them respect among demons, souls, and mortals alike.

A razorwire golem is a nightmarish form of jagged steel wires and blades in roughly humanoid form. It stands 10 feet tall but weighs just 200 pounds, since most of its space is air. Razorwire golems have total control over the shape of their bodies, and can explode outwards in loops of razor-sharp metal, or contract to a space no larger than 2 feet on a side. A tangled ball of wires near the center of the creature's "chest" pulsates with a heartlike cadence.



Combat

Razorwire golems attack in a straightforward fashion, grabbing and constricting foes until they drop. They are dogged pursuers, rushing after fleeing opponents to make trip attacks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the razorwire golem must hit an opponent of up to Medium-size with a rake attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Constrict (Ex): A razorwire golem deals automatic rake damage with a successful grapple check against Medium-size or smaller creatures.

Rush (Ex): Once per minute, the razorwire golem can take a move action to move at a speed of 60 feet, or climb at 40 feet.

Trip (Ex): A razorwire golem that hits with a rake attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *PH*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the golem.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Razorwire golems are immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. Fire-based effects (including *heat metal*) *haste* them for 1 round, and cold-based effects *slow* them for 1 round. The spells *make whole* and *fabricate* compress a razorwire golem into a space no more than 5 feet on a side, so that it loses reach and improved grab for 1d3 rounds.

Blindsight (Ex): Razorwire golems can ascertain prey by vibration within 60 feet.

Bludgeoning Immunity (Ex): Bludgeoning weapons, even magic ones, deal no damage to a razorwire golem. The golem likewise is immune to falling damage.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): A razorwire golem is affected normally by rust attacks, such as that of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Construction

The exact method of constructing razorwire golems has been lost to time, and many demon princes would go to great lengths to reward the person who rediscovered it for them. What is known is that a razorwire golem's body is spun from 400 pounds of mithral-alloyed steel. The creator must mummify the decapitated head of a ghaele eladrin in a bundle of barbed cords and wires that, when finished, serves as the golem's "heart." (The secret of this mummification has not yet been found.)

The golem costs 90,000 gp to create, which includes 1,500 gp for the raw materials. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (metalworking or weaponsmithing) check (DC 19).

The creator must be 16th level and be able to cast arcane spells. Completing the ritual drains 1,800 XP from the creator and requires *blade barrier*, *geas/quest*, *haste*, *limited wish*, and *polymorph any object*.

Hydragoon (Qlippoth)

Large Outsider (Aquatic, Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

AC: 17 (-1 size, +8 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 17

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 9

Attacks: Bite +7 melee; or halberd +5 melee, heavy mace +5 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+6; halberd 1d10+4; heavy mace 1d8+2

Face/Reach: 5 ft., by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: No hand fighting

Special Qualities: Qlippoth qualities, beacon, Styx immunity

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Intuit Direction +11, Listen +7, Search +6, Spot +7

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary, brood (2-5) or swarm (5-20)

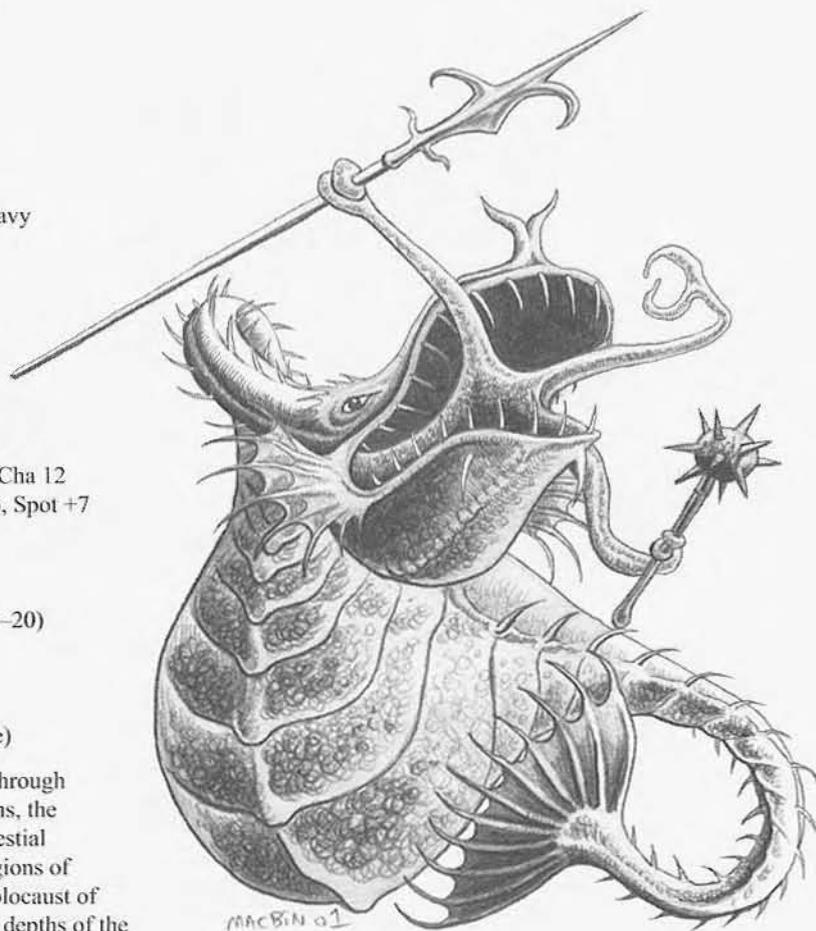
Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-8 HD (Large); 9-12 HD (Huge)

The stretch of the River Styx that winds its way through the Abyss used to positively team with hydraggon, the dominant form of aquatic qlippoth. When the celestial hosts began to ravage the Howling Threshold, legions of hydraggon rose up to fight them and died in a holocaust of holy fire. The remaining hydraggon fled into the depths of the



river. Since the Styx is incalculably long, the hydraggon split up and hid in stretches of the river throughout the Lower Planes. The celestial armies dared not follow them to Hell and Hades, lest they touch off a war even they could not win. Thousands of hydraggon were killed by devils, daemons, and other horrors of the Styx, but a core survived and even came to thrive in their adversity.

Now hydraggon can be found throughout the River Styx. Although they are clearly of fiendish origin, few know they are demons from the Abyss. It is rumored that a colony of hydraggon also escaped to the Material Plane, but if so their lair remains well hidden.

Hydraggon do not usually congregate in large numbers, since they've found it easier to pass unnoticed in small groups. In dire situations, though, it can be critical for all hydraggon in the area to coalesce quickly. The hydraggon developed their natural telepathic abilities so that now each can create a psychic homing beacon to make the most of their limited numbers.

Hydraggon speak Abyssal but generally use their telepathic abilities to communicate.

Combat

Underwater, hydraggon use speed to their advantage, swooping in with bite attacks and speeding away. On land their abilities are more limited. They stay close to water, let the enemy come to them, and then use their uncanny ability to wield weapons to their advantage. When a fight turns against them, hydraggon are not averse to fleeing. No one knows the value of living to fight another day more than they do.

No Hand Fighting (Ex): A hydraggon can use its tongue to wield weapons, a fact opponents find most disconcerting. A hydraggon can wield two weapons at once and fights as if it had the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats.

Beacon (Su): In addition to the telepathy shared by all gliptho, a hydraggon can emit a psychic beacon in times of danger. This homing beacon alerts all hydraggon in a 100 mile radius.

Styx Immunity (Ex): Hydraggon are immune to the memory-stealing effects of the River Styx.

Skills: A hydraggon receives a +4 racial bonus on Intuit Direction checks.

Incubus (Tanar'ri)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 8d8+16 (52 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

AC: 21 (+1 Dex, +10 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 20

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: 2 claws +10 melee; or +1 *thundering whip* +10/+5 ranged

Damage: Claw 1d4+2; whip 1d2 subdual

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Dream sending, kiss of death, spell-like abilities, summon tanar'ri

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, alternate form, damage reduction 15/+2, SR 13, tongues

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +7

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +17, Concentration +8, Disguise +17*, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +11, Hide +9, Innuendo +7, Intimidate +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Search +7, Spot +9

Feats: Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Improved Critical (whip)

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9–24 HD (Medium-size)

Succubi, the demonic temptresses of the Abyss, are well known in common folklore throughout Material worlds. When such sources mention incubi, their male counterparts, it is usually assumed that the demons are succubi in an alternate form. Of course, nothing in the Abyss is so simple.

Incubi and succubi share a common mission—tempting mortals into evil—but they have different abilities and use different strategies. Though frequently denounced by good-aligned faiths as “sex demons,” incubi in fact pose a far more complex threat. While their ministrations generally involve physical seduction of women (and sometimes men as well),



that is only the beginning. The ultimate goal of every incubus is to tempt its lover into embracing chaos and evil of his or her own free will. That enraptured surrender to the demonic credo is what consigns their lovers to the Abyss in death, and it takes more than a little illicit sex to complete the seduction.

An incubus begins the temptation by sending erotic dreams to its chosen target over the course of several weeks. Then it appears in the dark of night and physically seduces its quarry. Once the relationship is established, the incubus returns night after night, introducing the lover to ever more decadent pleasures. After each bout of lovemaking, the incubus whispers poison in its victim's ear. It encourages her to act on her every impulse, to discard conventional morality, and to eliminate anyone who gets in her way.

When the mortal has been thoroughly corrupted, the incubus' work still isn't done. With knowledge gained from its first victim, the incubus now begins the seduction of other locals, tempting entire communities in this way. Many incubi come to be worshiped, and they enjoy the veneration of their own cults of sensuality. Most gain special pleasure from corrupting otherwise chaste locales such as convents, monasteries, or tightly knit religious communities.

Incubi speak Abyssal and Common inherently, but their special abilities give them access to all the languages of the multiverse.

Combat

Incubi rarely resort to physical confrontation. When they do, it is usually to intimidate suspicious husbands or eliminate troublesome priests. Incubi never employ mind-affecting spells such as *charm person* and *suggestion* against their intended victims. These mortals must fall to evil of their own free will.

Dream Sending (Su): An incubus can send erotic dreams to any sleeping humanoid within a radius of 1 mile. This ritual power takes 1 hour to perform. The target must make a successful Will save (DC 19) to resist the sending. Otherwise, the victim spends the night dreaming of the incubus and the decadent erotic pleasures the fiend will surely share if given the opportunity. The incubus gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Disguise checks made against anyone who has dreamed one of its sensual sendings. The sendings have no effect upon those who are not ordinarily attracted to men.

Kiss of Death (Su): Despite all the charms and seductive powers of an incubus, some mortals are too strong-willed to fall into evil. To these, and others that get in its way, the incubus gives the kiss of death. If a clever ruse will not allow the incubus to plant the fatal kiss, it must start a grapple (which provokes an attack of opportunity). Those kissed die instantly unless they make a successful Fortitude save (DC 19); even then, the kiss deals 3d6 damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*charm person*, *detect good*, *detect thoughts*, *ecstasy**, *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *suggestion*, and *teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 1/day—*bestow curse*, *emotion*, and *phantasmal lover**. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (save DC 15 + spell level). *New spell. See **Appendix I: Demonic Magic**.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp): Once per day an incubus can attempt to summon one balor with a 10% chance of success.

Alternate Form (Su): An incubus can assume any humanoid form of Small to Large size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only humanoid forms. *While using alternate form, an incubus gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks.

Tongues (Su): An incubus has a permanent *tongues* ability as the spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer.

Skills: Incubi receive a +8 racial bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks.

Jahi (Tanar'ri)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 15

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 13

Attacks: 2 claws +4 melee

Damage: Claw 1d4+1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Beguiling dance, spell-like abilities, swallow soul

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 10/silver, SR 8

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

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

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +9, Perform +9 (dance, drama, flute, harp, lute, pan pipes)

Feats: Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

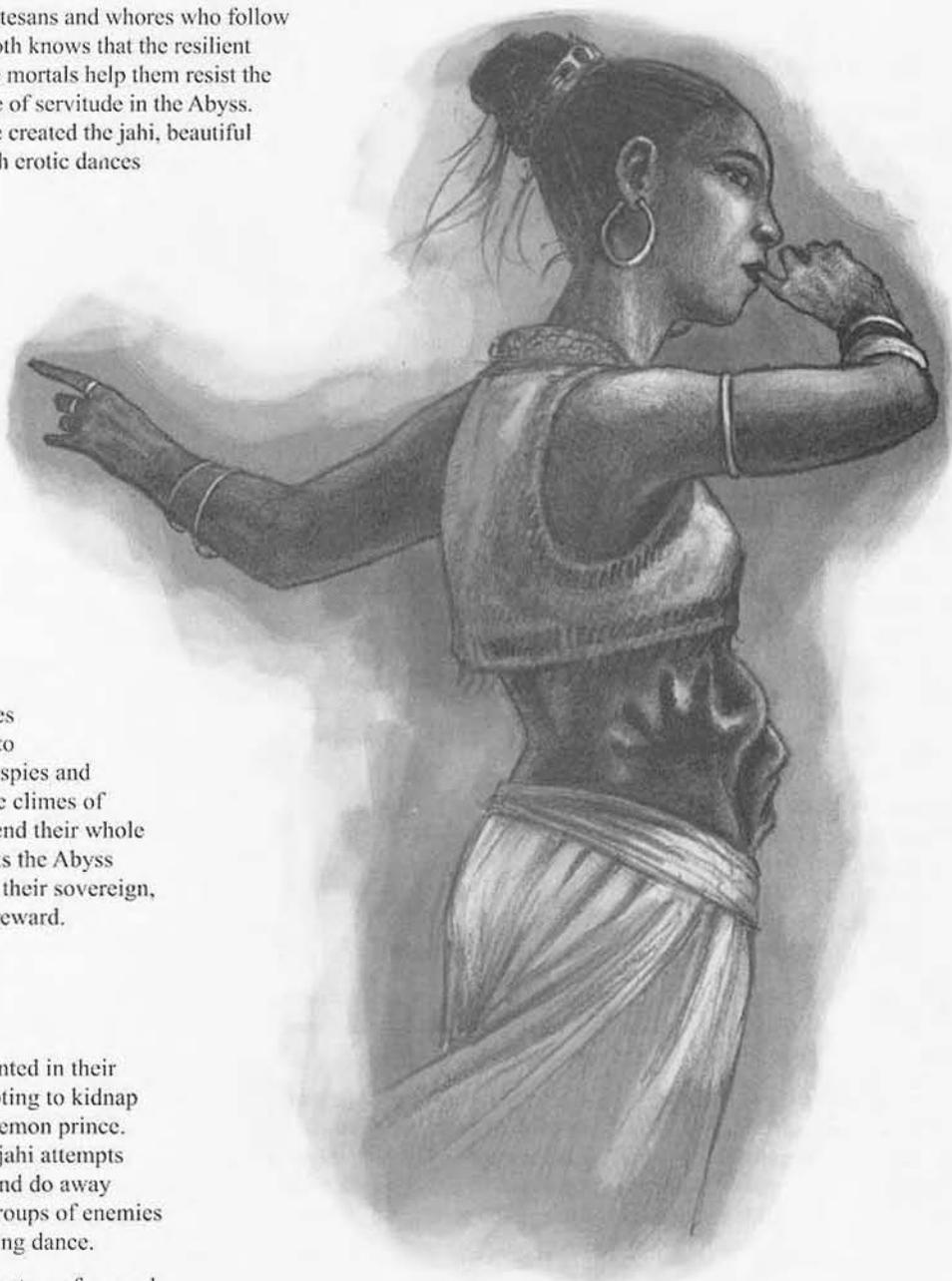
Advancement: 4–9 HD (Medium-size)

Despite the best efforts of the courtesans and whores who follow him, the demon prince Socothbenoth knows that the resilient spirits and moral fortitude of some mortals help them resist the temptation that leads to an afterlife of servitude in the Abyss. In response to such frustrations, he created the jahi, beautiful demons who captivate mortals with erotic dances before swallowing their souls.

Jahi resemble human women, allowing them to blend easily into mortal settlements. Somewhat dark of skin, jahi have “exotic” physical characteristics that make a specific human heritage difficult to determine. Most folk assume them to be from some unknown foreign land and leave it at that. A jahi’s seductive glances and persuasive bluffs generally get it out of trouble with more persistent inquisitors.

Despite their creation by the Patron of the Tents and Tabernacles of the Daughters, jahi have come to serve dozens of demon princes as spies and kidnapers. Unsited to the hostile climes of most Abyssal layers, most jahi spend their whole lives on a Material world and visits the Abyss only to deliver a captured prize to their sovereign, usually in exchange for a sizable reward.

Jahi speak Abyssal and Common.



Combat

Jahi eschew combat unless confronted in their espionage activity or while attempting to kidnap a victim’s soul at the behest of a demon prince. If faced with a single opponent, a jahi attempts to befriend it with *charm person* and do away with it when convenient. Larger groups of enemies invariably are treated to its beguiling dance.

Beguiling Dance (Su): Though masters of several forms of traditional (and not-so-traditional) dance, jahi specialize in beguiling rhythmic motions using their inherent magical essence to bewitch all who look upon them. The ability operates as a gaze attack with a range of 30 feet. Anyone viewing the dance must make a successful Will save (DC 14) or be dazed with fascination for 1d6 rounds. A dazed creature can take no actions (but defends itself normally). Creatures that successfully save are immune to that jahi’s beguiling dance for one day.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*alter self*, *blur*, *cat’s grace* (self only), *charm person*, *detect thoughts*, *knock*, *mage armor*, *message*, *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *obscure object*, *shatter*, and *unseen servant*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Swallow Soul (Su): As a standard action, a jahi can open its mouth and inhale a great gust of air, subjecting a single mortal target within 30 feet to a horrifying magical attack. Those who make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) are immune to the jahi’s swallow soul ability for 24 hours. If the target fails, its soul is torn forcibly from its body and into the jahi’s mouth, where it is imprisoned in a special organ in her abdomen. The soul appears as a wispy, translucent manifestation of the creature, and screams a terrible keen in the seconds of transition. The creature suffers mental anguish and must succeed at another DC 14 Fortitude save to avoid becoming stunned for 2d4 rounds. Soulless creatures cannot return from the dead via any means short of a *miracle*, *true resurrection*, or *wish*. A jahi can contain but a single soul at any one time. Further, once it has done so it becomes significantly more difficult for it to operate in normal society. As the soul struggles fruitlessly to escape, it reaches for freedom so that impressions of its hands and face sometimes appear upon the jahi’s belly. A jahi can disgorge the soul from its body as a standard action. Doing so returns the soul to its rightful place in 2d4 rounds (no matter the distance between body and soul). Those demon princes who employ jahi as kidnapers generally have some means of trapping captured souls in small cages or gems so that they might bargain with the mortals for services. Though they could doubtless destroy the captured souls, they gain no sustenance from doing so as they do from the annihilated souls of the chaotic evil dead. Creatures that lack souls, naturally, are immune to a jahi’s swallow soul attack.

Locust Demon (Tanar'ri)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 12d8+72 (126 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

AC: 26 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +15 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 24

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: 6 claws +15 melee, sting +13 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+4; sting 1d4+2 and poison

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Drone, poison, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 35/+3, scent

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +7

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6

Skills: Balance +18, Concentration +11, Intuit Direction +4, Listen +14, Search +14, Spot +14, Tumble +17

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

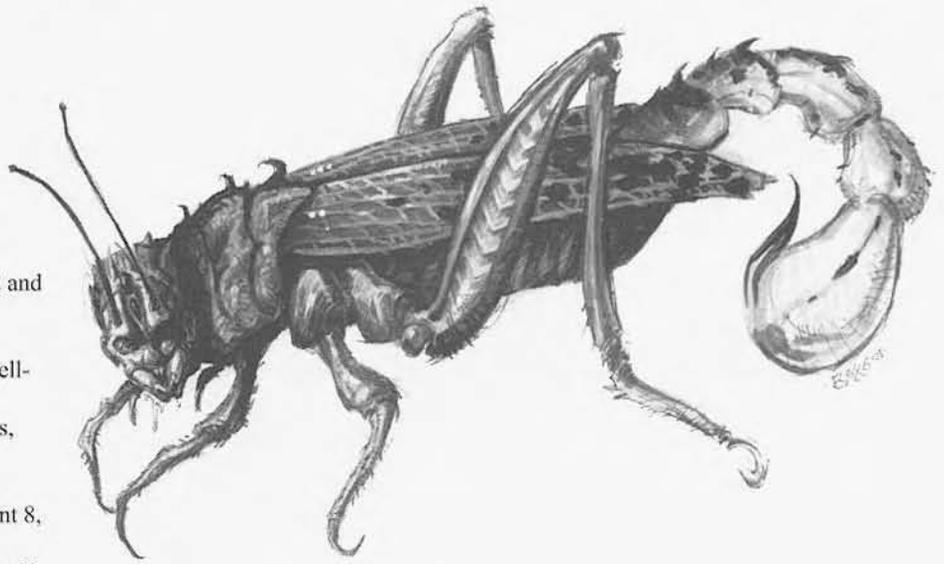
Organization: Solitary or swarm (2-7)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 13-18 HD (Huge); 19-36 HD (Gargantuan)



In the Final Days, untold millions of locust demons will ascend from the Abyss, blotting out countless suns to signal the last death throes of the multiverse. Until then, they venture to the Material Plane at the behest of evil spellcasters or to run an errand for their debased master Abaddon, Lord of the Bottomless Pit.

Locust demons believe that their existence in the Abyssal layer known as the Bottomless Pit is a paradise, a perfect reward for an unremembered former life lived in celebration of murder and destruction. They also believe that their home layer will be sundered in the Last Days by mortal meddlers. That destruction of the Bottomless Pit will expel the layer's inhabitants into the Material Plane, which they will destroy in retribution for their own loss. Embracing the inevitable ruination of their flawless home, locust demons spend their lives plotting their personal role in the great armageddon.

Standing as tall as a powerful warhorse, a locust demon has a humanlike face that leads many to mistakenly assume it can be reasoned with. Sharp hooks mark the end of its six legs, and a mighty segmented tail tipped with a wickedly barbed stinger represents the demon's most frightening weapon. Its translucent wings, lined with ichor-filled veins, allow the locust demon good aerial mobility despite the loud buzzing they emit in flight. The demons seem to like the fact that their wing drone strikes terror into the hearts of their enemies.

Locust demons understand (but do not speak) Abyssal. They communicate with each other via a complicated series of small movements in the chitin covering their faces (meaning they must be within 20 feet and facing each other to communicate). This bizarre, silent language does not have a written form.

Combat

Locust demons prefer attacking as a group, and they instinctively shy away from attacking when outnumbered. The creatures most often soften their enemies with their confounding wing drone, setting upon injured or confused prey in preference to engaging a healthy opponent. If battling land-bound opponents, locust demons prefer to remain in the air, attacking with spell-like abilities or swooping in for flyby attacks.

Drone (Su): Few who hear it ever forget the terrible drone of a locust demon in flight. If it wishes, a locust demon can vibrate its thin wings in a mesmerizing rhythm to cause confusion in those who hear the awful buzzing. When a locust demon uses its drone attack, all creatures (other than demons) within a 300-foot spread must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or become *confused* (see *DMG*) for 2d6 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm. If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that locust demon's drone for one day.

Poison (Ex): Sting, Fortitude save (DC 22); initial and secondary damage 2d6 temporary Constitution.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*contagion*, *enervation*, *gust of wind*, *summon swarm*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (save DC 8 + spell level).

Malohin the Strangler (Tanar'ri)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 14d8+70 (133 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

AC: 34 (-2 size, +4 Dex, +22 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 30

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 12

Attacks: 4 claws +17 melee, bite +15 melee; or

stamp +17 melee; or greataxe +17 melee

Damage: Claw 2d6+5; bite 2d8+2; stamp 4d6+7; greataxe 1d12+7

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Frightful presence, possession, improved grab, squeeze, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 40/+4, SR 30, keen scent, nondetection

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +13, Will +14

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 21, Wis 21, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +21, Climb +23, Concentration +22, Diplomacy +25, Hide +9,

Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +29, Move Silently +21,

Search +22, Sense Motive +22, Spellcraft +22, Spot +30

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Cold and temperate hill, mountains, and underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 19

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

As demon prince of murder, Malohin was honored by professional assassins and common thugs alike. He lost his Abyssal realm and status as retribution for his part in an uprising against the demon prince Kostchtchie, who later stripped Malohin of his memory and banished him to the Prime. Malohin's worshipers are few and secretive. A tiny cabal of assassins maintains loyalty to their fallen lord and work to bring about his return to power.

Malohin's natural form presents a horrendous sight. He stands 20 feet tall and has the legs of a stork, the torso of an emaciated ape with four long arms, and a quivering pink molelike head that drips slime from its many sensory organs.

Since his exile, the deposed lord has wandered lonely mountain trails and dark canyons far outside civilization, feeding upon anyone he meets. He occasionally possesses an unlucky victim and wanders into a border town, where he feverishly searches libraries and interrogates wise ones in a search for his identity. These expeditions are all the more disturbing due to Malohin's preference for using the bodies of young children. When he fails to uncover anything of substance, he tears the town apart in a violent rage.

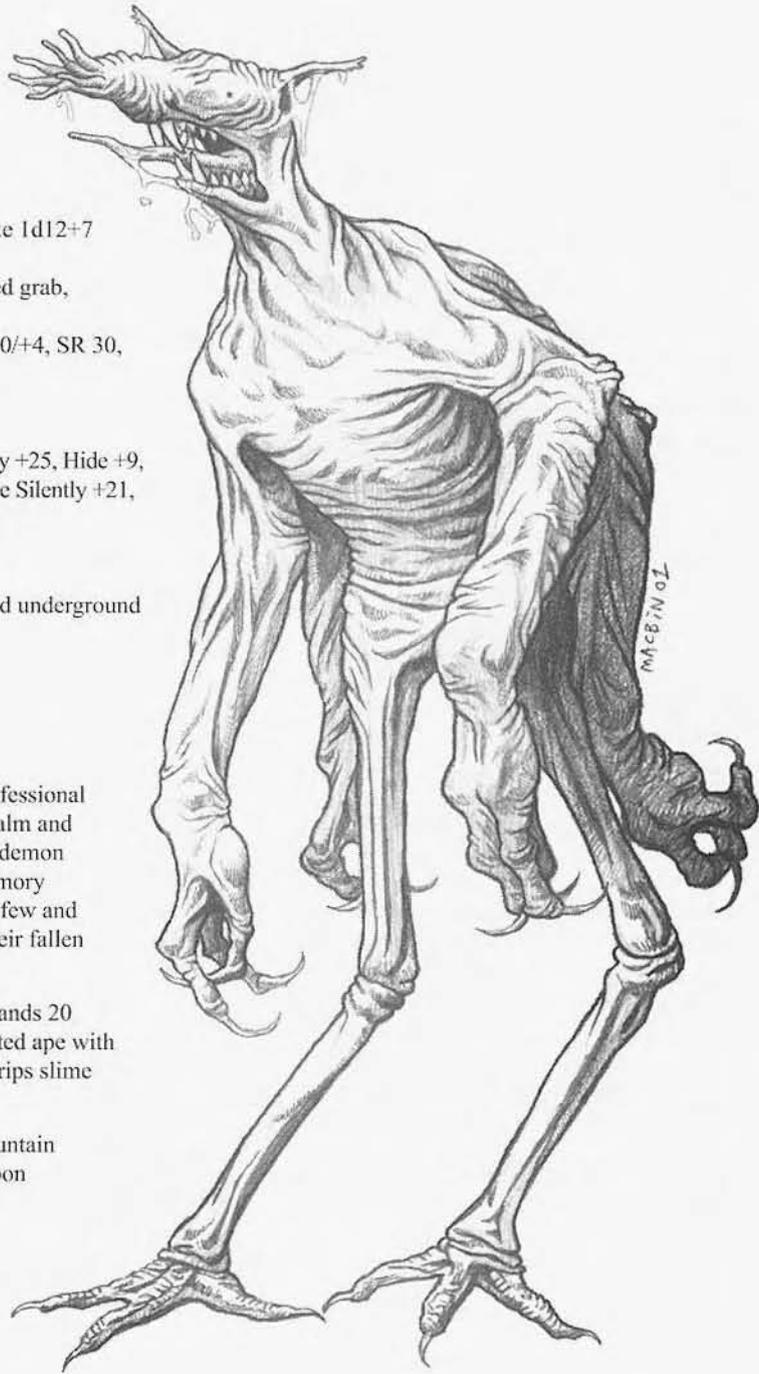
Malohin speaks Common. He understands (but has forgotten how to speak) Abyssal, Celestial, and Draconic.

Combat

Malohin prefers to attack from the shadows, but loves a toe-to-toe battle as much as any demon. In his natural form he picks up and strangles opponents with his four arms or stamps with his clawed feet.

When he possesses a mortal body, he relies on his spell-like abilities and often uses a melee weapon, preferring a greataxe if available.

Frightful Presence (Ex): Malohin can unsettle foes with the sheer presence of his natural form. The ability takes effect automatically whenever he attacks, charges, or emerges from a possessed body (see Possession, below). Creatures within 60 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 14 HD. A potentially affected creature that makes a successful Will save (DC 21) remains immune to Malohin's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 5d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 5d6 rounds.



Possession (Su): Once per day, Malohin can merge his body with another creature. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 20th-level sorcerer, except that it does not require a receptacle. If the attack succeeds, Malohin's form vanishes into the opponent's body. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 21). A creature that successfully saves is immune to Malohin's possession for one day. Malohin can leave the body at any time as a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. If the host body is slain, he emerges on his next turn.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Malohin must hit an opponent of up to Large size with a claw attack.

Squeeze (Ex): If Malohin gets a hold he deals automatic claw damage, with an additional 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*animate rope, call lightning, chaos hammer, chill touch, death knell, deathwatch, deeper darkness, desecrate, detect magic, entangle, greater dispelling, invisibility (self only), magic circle against good (self only), mirror image, raise dead, slow, teleport without error (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), unholy aura, unholy blight, and web*; 3/day—*harm, inflict critical wounds, circle of doom, and slay living*; 1/day—*implosion*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Spells: Malohin casts arcane spells as a 10th-level assassin, and also can cast spells from the Chaos and Evil domains as arcane spells.

Keen Scent (Ex): Malohin can notice creatures by scent in a 90-foot radius and can smell spilled blood at a range of up to a mile.

Nondetection (Su): Malohin is constantly under the effects of a *nondetection* spell. Those attempting to *scry* him must make a caster level check against DC 35.

Skills: Malohin receives a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

Mandragoras

Diminutive Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 20 (+4 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 17

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 17

Attacks: 2 tails +10 melee

Damage: Tail 1d2–2 and poison

Face/Reach: 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: *Detect thoughts*, poison, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Dollform, damage reduction 5/silver, SR 5, poison immunity, fire and acid resistance 20

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +3

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +3, Hide +29, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Move Silently +17, Read Lips +4, Spellcraft +4

Feats: Weapon Finesse (tail)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 4–9 HD (Diminutive)

The weak race of demons known as mandragoras surely would have died out eons ago if not for the fact that they make wonderful familiars for thaumaturges and evil spellcasters alike.

Such folk summon mandragoras to the Material Plane, binding or enticing them into servitude as laboratory helpers, traveling companions, and spies. Possessing a morose demeanor that differentiates them from the capricious, danger-seeking quasits, mandragoras nonetheless have an intense curiosity about their environment. Their naturally inquisitive nature has a tendency to lead them into trouble, whether they openly court it or not.

A mandragoras looks like a long-limbed manikin no bigger than one foot tall. Long, delicate fingers display an almost fey grace. Its slight body is covered in fine mustard-colored scales, and three horns emerge from the top of its head, the centermost being a crooked protrusion of the skull itself. Two whiplike prehensile tails ending in poisonous barbs flail wildly behind it when the creature is agitated, remaining casually alert when at rest.

Perhaps due to its elfin appearance, many mortals have underestimated a mandragoras—to their detriment. A mandragoras's tail bears a potent poison, and few have any compunctions about using it. A particularly devious mandragoras sometimes pretends to befriend a mortal, asking to hop upon its shoulder for a quick ride to a nearby destination. Once in transit, the mandragoras swiftly jabs its tails



into its host's neck, cackling in a high-pitched voice as the mortal pitches to the ground, poisoned. Some mandragoras enjoy assuming dollform when positioned in a treasure hoard, animating in a pack to rummage around and perhaps steal their kidnapper's possessions. They always cut through the sack on their way out, hoping against hope that they've been placed in a *bag of holding* and that their tear will spill the bag's contents (including the mandragoras) into the Astral Plane.

Most demons hate mandragoras, whom they consider no better than vermin. Many loudly proclaim that mandragoras are not demons at all, that the diminutive creatures are some sort of natural byproduct exuded by the Abyss itself. A mandragoras enjoys the same respect granted to a rat in a human city. If it's lucky, it'll survive because it is beneath the notice of those who could easily destroy it.

Mandragoras speak Abyssal and Common.

Combat

Notoriously cowardly in battle, a mandragoras strikes out with its poisonous tails when threatened, retreating into dollform if it feels it is in genuine danger. If used as a spy, a mandragoras typically relies upon its size to sneak into a location unnoticed, hiding and assuming dollform as a proactive defense.

Detect Thoughts (Sp): Those thaumaturges who favor espionage generally prefer mandragoras to quasits as familiars, placing great value in the creatures' ability to pry into the minds of their enemies. A mandragoras can cast *detect thoughts* at will as a 12th-level cleric (save DC 12).

Poison (Ex): Tail, Fortitude save (DC 11); initial damage 1d4 temporary Constitution, secondary damage 2d4 temporary Constitution.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound*, *open/close*; 1/day—*shocking grasp*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 6th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Dollform (Su): As a full-round action, a mandragoras may assume a stationary position, taking on the properties of super-condensed stone. Effectively indestructible (hardness 50), the mandragoras cannot move while in dollform, but it is aware of its surroundings and may take purely mental actions. It can revert back to its organic form as a full-round action.

Skills: A mandragoras receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Merihim (Tanar'ri Lord)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 17d8+102 (178 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 29 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +20 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 28

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 9

Attacks: Claw +22 melee; or palsied hand touch +13

Damage: Claw 2d6+10; palsied hand touch 1d3–2 and unleash taint

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./20 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, rend 3d6+10, constrict 2d6+10, disease stems, smotherfume, spell-like abilities, unleash taint

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, palsied hand, damage reduction 40/+3, SR 26, regeneration 10

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +11

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 12, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +27, Concentration +26, Heal +21, Intimidate +19, Jump +27, Listen +21, Search +22, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +12

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Sunder

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Many planar travelers consider the Abyssal layer known as the Soaking Canyon of Malignancy to be one of the least hospitable locations in the multiverse. Unlike the Elemental Plane of Fire or an Abyssal layer composed entirely of rapidly spinning shrapnel, it's possible to survive in the Canyon—it's just not possible for most mortals to survive there for long. Home to Marbas, the demon prince of disease and mutation, the layer features steep walls of afflicted flesh seeping streams of pus, rivers of cancerous bile, and legions of demonic creatures best identified as overgrown bacteria. Pestilence floats on the air here, bringing slow death to all who inhale it. The layer does have its attractions, however. Marbas's personal caverns, known as the Dripping Darkness, hold a wealth of magical liquids sought after by alchemists throughout the multiverse. Those who would plunder that dank repository of filth, however, must first deal with Merihim.

Merihim has served Marbas for millennia as guardian, general, confidant, and science project. Abyssal legend posits that he was once a handsome mortal elf, but eons of exposure to the Canyon and the personal attentions of the Master of Fetid Change transformed him into his current incarnation. The demon lord stands as tall as a cloud giant, though his twisted spine results in a stooped posture. Rubbery skin the color of phlegm covers his deformed frame. Six fleshy flutes of skin extend from his back. Each is tipped with a

small voiceless mouth and serves as a direct conduit to Merihim's tumorous internal organs, fertile growth beds for numerous diseases. His oversized, mutated left arm appears cumbersome, but Merihim manipulates it with grace and ease, crushing opponents in his giant, terrible hand. His right arm is a different story. Atrophied and nearly unusable due to an extreme palsy, it is a testament to the power of disease to harm even mighty outsiders.

Though Merihim spends most of his time at the mouth of the Dripping Darkness, Marbas occasionally sends him as an envoy to a Material world, knowing that Merihim represents his best chance at spreading disease and mutation among mortals.

Merihim speaks Abyssal, Common, and Elven.

Combat

Merihim greatly enjoys physical combat, as he has never truly lost. Each fight gives him more chances to spread the "boon of Marbas" (a foul disease), a prospect that fills him with glee. He usually attempts to grab enemies with his powerful left hand, bringing them to his disease stems for a quick breath of foul air. The demon lord thereafter touches the opponent with his palsied hand, unleashing the horror of disease upon it in a matter of instants.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Merihim must hit with a claw attack. If he gets a hold, he rends and can constrict.

Rend (Ex): When Merihim gets a hold he latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals 3d6+10 points of damage.

Constrict (Ex): Merihim deals automatic claw damage to a Large or smaller opponent with a successful grapple check.

Disease Stems (Ex): Merihim's monstrous back features six prehensile fleshy stems that end in toothy maws. The demon lord can expel a different noxious fume from each stem in a cone 30 feet long, spreading pestilence with the release of his bodily gases. Creatures caught within must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 24) or become diseased. (Note that the save DCs below represent the difficulty of fighting off the disease once it has already been contracted.) Creatures who successfully save are immune to the effects of that specific disease cone for one day. The demon lord may use one cone per round, choosing one of the following diseases.

Bone Rot: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 18), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution.

Cackle Fever: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 18), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Wisdom.

Kobold Stank: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 16), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Charisma.

Mindfire: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 12), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d4 temporary Intelligence.

Musclecreak: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 18), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d4 temporary Dexterity.

Stumpers: Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 14), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d4 temporary Strength.

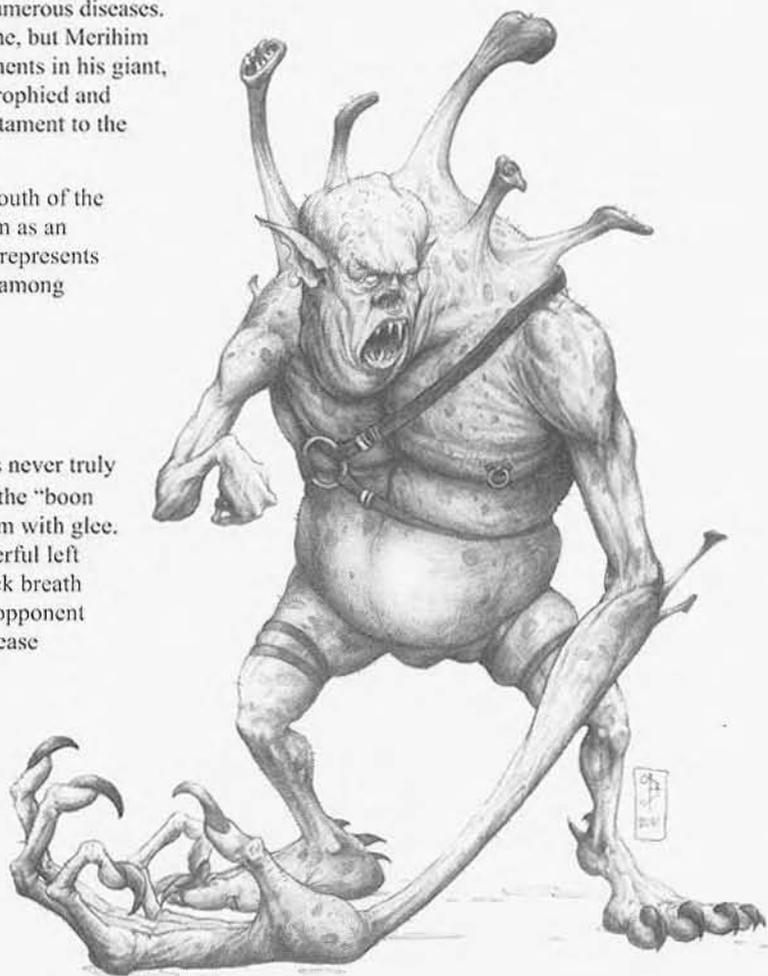
Smotherfume (Su): Merihim can forego his constrict damage to pull a held opponent over his head and directly into the ambient vapors spewing from his six disease stems. The opponent must make a Fortitude save for each disease stem to avoid infection.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*change self*, *contagion*, *enervation*, and *see invisibility*; 3/day—*acid fog*, *insanity*, *power word*, *stun*, and *slow*; 1/day—*power word*, *kill*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 9 + spell level).

Unleash Taint (Su): By making a successful touch attack with his palsied hand, Merihim can unlock any disease festering in the touched opponent. Touched creatures must make a Fortitude save (DC 24). Those who successfully save are immune to Merihim's unleash taint attack for one day. Those who fail immediately suffer the effects of any diseases they currently carry as if they had reached the end of the disease's incubation period. If the victim is not infected by an incubating disease, the attack has no effect.

Palsied Hand (Ex): The demon lord's right arm is shriveled and shakes with palsy. Its attack bonus and damage are calculated as though his Strength score were 6.

Regeneration (Ex): Blessed and *holy* weapons deal normal damage to Merihim.



Nyogoth (Qlippoth)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 12d8+48 (102 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (good)

AC: 22 (+1 Dex, +11 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 21

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: 4 maws +15 melee, 1 bite +10 melee

Damage: Maw 1d6+3; bite 1d8+1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Acid spray, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Qlippoth qualities, flight, acid immunity, damage reduction 10/+2

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +9

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 11

Skills: Concentration +13, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (Abyss) +14, Listen +16, Search +14, Spot +16

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (maw), Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary, brood (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 13–26 HD (Large)



Nyogoths epitomize of the insatiable hunger of the qlippoth race. They are, in a way, a physical representation of the incompleteness of the multiverse. No matter how much they eat, the nyogoths are always hungry. No type of qlippoth deserves the sobriquet “Hollow One” more than the nyogoth.

In ancient days, before the celestial host descended upon the Abyss, nyogoths served the qlippoth as living disposal systems, dissolving with their powerful body acids that which did not fit into their many mouths. Products of the great genetic programs in the qlippoth’s foundry-cities, they were bred for passivity and industriousness. Passing millennia within the darkest shadows of the Abyss worked out nyogoths’ disposition to docility, but they continue to pursue their primary task—eating—with a most undemonlike work ethic.

Their anatomy defies nature. Over 90% of a nyogoth’s body is given over to digestion—it looks like a floating cluster of intestines. Four elastic appendages, each tipped with a hungry maw, erupt from its body, and these suck in food: alive, dead, or inanimate.

Most nyogoths remain concealed in the Abyss with the rest of the qlippoth. A small number have found their way to the Material Plane at the behest of wizards or thaumaturges. Few summoners who end up with one truly know what they are in for.

Nyogoths understand but do not speak Abyssal.

Combat

Nyogoths love to get up close and personal in combat. This not only allows them to make multiple maw attacks, it also punishes opponents’ blows with sprays of acid. Since nyogoths enjoy a high attack bonus, they often use Power Attack to increase their damage, and Improved Critical makes their maw attacks even more deadly. In confined spaces such as dungeons, nyogoths prefer to lurk in high-ceilinged areas and bring toothy death from above.

Acid Spray (Ex): A nyogoth’s body is full of highly corrosive digestive fluid. When punctured, it sprays out this acid uncontrollably. Any opponent that deals melee damage to a nyogoth with a piercing or slashing weapon immediately takes 2d4 points of acid damage (Reflex save at DC 17 for half damage). On a successful critical hit against a nyogoth, the acid damage increases to 2d6. Opponents attacking from nonadjacent spaces (such as with reach weapons) are unaffected by the acid spray.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*protection from arrows*, *protection from law*, and *scare*; 1/day—*dimension door* and *shout*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Flight (Ex): A nyogoth’s body is naturally buoyant. This buoyancy allows it to *fly* as the spell, as a free action, at a speed of 30 feet. It also grants the nyogoth a permanent *feather fall* effect with personal range.

Paigoel

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 12d8+36 (90 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 22 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +12 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 21

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 10

Attacks: 10 Large weapons +16 melee

Damage: Large weapon 1d10+5 or by weapon type

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Hail of darts, potent charge

Special Qualities: Acid and electricity resistance 15, all-around vision, damage reduction 10/+2, fire and poison immunity, SR 24, true seeing

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +9

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills: Appraise +8, Balance +9, Bluff +8, Concentration +11, Intimidate +10, Jump +13, Knowledge (geography) +8, Listen +9, Pick Pocket +11, Search +12, Sense Motive +9, Spot +13

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Sunder

Climate/Terrain: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

The personal layer of Anarazel, the Guardian of a Thousand Terrors, is known as the Caves of Chaos. Within endless miles of corridors and galleries, Anarazel has secreted treasures beyond mortal comprehension and set deadly traps and monstrous creatures to guard them. Among his favorite guardians are the fierce demons known as paigoels.

Paigoels are near and dear to Anarazel's avaricious heart because they are made from the souls of his most dedicated worshipers. Those who give praise to the Guardian of a Thousand Terrors know that if they die seeking treasure in the deep dark of a dungeon, they'll be given a new demonic shape when their souls arrive in the Caves of Chaos. What very few know, however, is that when an entire adventuring party is wiped out in some tomb of horror, the souls of the slain are fused together to create a paigoel.

Paigoels are grotesque in appearance, having three faces and ten arms. With eyes facing in every direction, they cannot be surprised. Anarazel uses paigoels to guard precious artifacts in the Caves of Chaos, and he sometimes sends them to haunt the deepest levels of famous Material dungeons.

Combat

Paigoels used to be adventurers, so they know many of the classic dungeoneering tricks and how to counter them. They don't let on that they can see invisible creatures, for instance, allowing sneaky characters to get close before lashing out. Some paigoels even pick the pockets of enemy rogues to prove that they've still got it. When combat gets down and dirty, paigoels use their hail of darts in corridors where possible and then close to let their ten arms finish the opposition.

A paigoel is proficient with all martial weapons and can wield a different weapon of up to Large size in each of its ten hands. For the sake of ease, average damage is provided above. GMs who want more precision should detail the weaponry carried and determine damage by weapon.

Hail of Darts (Su): As a standard action, a paigoel can project a hail of darts from its outstretched palms in a line 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Those caught in the hail take 10d6 damage (Reflex half DC 19).

Potent Charge (Ex): A paigoel can take advantage of its many arms for extra attacks when charging. If a paigoel executes a successful charge, it can make up to three attacks that round instead of the usual one.

All-Around Vision (Ex): With three sets of eyes, a paigoel can see in every direction. A paigoel receives a +4 racial bonus on Search and Spot checks and gains the uncanny dodge ability of a 6th-level rogue.

True Seeing (Su): A paigoel has a permanent *true seeing* ability as the spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer.

Feats: A paigoel receives Improved Bull Rush as a bonus feat.



Rahu the Tormentor (Tanar'ri Lord)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 19d8+95 (180 hp)

Initiative: +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 40 (-1 size, +6 Dex, +25 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 34

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 15

Attacks: 2 claws +24 melee

Damage: Claw 2d6+1 (crit 19-20)

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, pain manipulation, precision claws, spell-like abilities, stop that wriggling, tools of the trade, truth through pain

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 40/+4, SR 30, regenerate 10

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +17, Will +15

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 22, Wis 19, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +28, Concentration +27, Decipher Script +28, Diplomacy +32, Escape Artist +28, Gather Information +28, Heal +26, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Profession (torturer) +26, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +28, Use Rope +8

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Triple standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Torturers everywhere pray to the demon prince Azidahaka as patron of both truth and lies. They're much more likely to respect his chief "surgeon," Rahu the Tormentor, though, as it is Rahu who frequently visits the Material Plane to evangelize the use of torture as a means of political control.

A collector of both surgical instruments and preserved body parts, Rahu has an interest in human physiology and anatomy best categorized as obsessive. He tires of working under the paranoid Azidahaka, wasting his efforts upon demons and souls. He longs to flee to a mortal world, where he can continue his grim work with no shortage of live human victims.

Impossibly gaunt, Rahu nonetheless possesses an oddly handsome visage, with fine features and delicate blue skin. Two long, elegant horns emerge from his forehead, stretching more than a foot in length. The Tormentor speaks in a soothing low voice that would put listeners at ease if it came from the mouth of anyone else. He favors highly fetishized garments of tight leather, accenting the assembly with a blood-spattered apron. Dozens of small saws, awls, vises, and worse dangle from the apron, some still thick with the skin and fluids of past unfortunates.

Evil mortal sovereigns sometimes call upon Rahu to assist them in extracting information from otherwise intractable foes. This he does, for a price. Occasionally, the demon lord tortures his employer as well, all in an effort to better understand the human body and how to make it do one's bidding through the methodical application of pain.

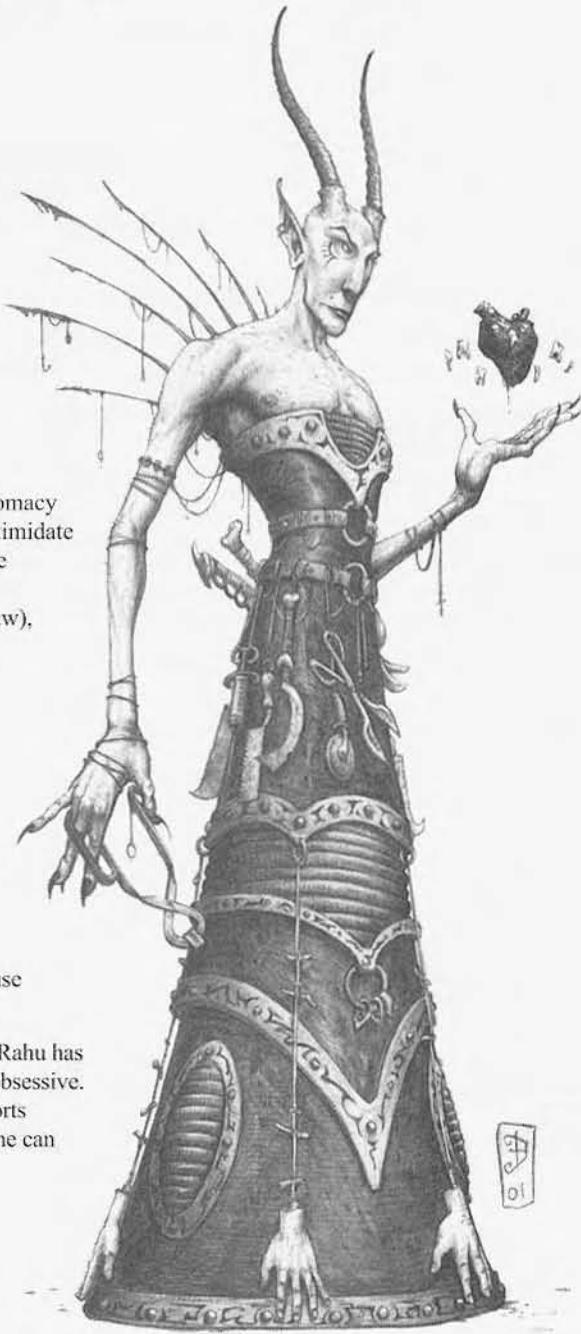
Rahu speaks Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, and Infernal.

Combat

Rahu much prefers cutting apart a restrained opponent to actually risking himself on the field of battle. When he must fight he attempts to strengthen himself using his spell-like abilities before charging into the fray, fingers itching for a chance to use his screws and saws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Rahu must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with a claw attack.

Pain Manipulation (Ex): Using his advanced knowledge of anatomy and how to turn a small wound into a horrific disability, Rahu automatically confirms critical hits against previously wounded opponents.



Precision Claws (Ex): Rahu uses ancient secrets of sharpening to hone his claws into the equivalent of *keen* weapons.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*blasphemy*, *death knell*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *fear*, *greater dispelling*, *hold person*, *suggestion*, *symbol* (pain only), *teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy blight*, and *zone of truth*; 3/day—*displacement* and *haste*; 1/day—*implosion*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 16 + spell level).

Stop that Wriggling (Ex): Due to his extensive knowledge of immobilizing an opponent, Rahu receives a +8 competence bonus on grapple checks.

Tools of the Trade (Ex): If he gets a hold, Rahu can spend a round working on the held opponent's body with the grisly torture implements that hang from his apron. He may pick one of the following options.

Don't Look at Me Like That: Rahu sticks pins into the opponent's eyes, rendering it completely blind. Sight can be restored with a *regenerate* spell.

Not the Face!: The opponent suffers 1 point of permanent Charisma drain from horrific wounds that scar its face.

Kneel before Rahu: Using a serrated blade, Rahu saws through the tendons in the back of the opponent's legs. The opponent is rendered immobile until its legs are repaired through a *regenerate* spell.

That's Enough out of You: Rahu crushes the opponent's larynx with a set of rusty pliers. The creature cannot speak until the damage is repaired with a *regenerate* spell.

Unhand Me!: The Tormentor completely ruins one of the opponent's hands, rendering it unusable until the damage is repaired by a *regenerate* spell.

Truth through Pain (Su): As a free action, Rahu can ask a question of the being he is attacking. If the attack is successful, the opponent must make a Will save (DC 25) with a circumstance modifier of -1 for every point of damage dealt by that attack. Those who fail to save must answer the question truthfully.

Regeneration (Ex): Blessed and *holy* weapons deal normal damage to Rahu.

Schir (Tanar'ri)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 19 (+2 Dex, +7 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 17

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 12

Attacks: Halberd +10/+5 melee; or gore +9 melee

Damage: Halberd 1d10+4 and disease; gore 1d6+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Charge 3d6+3, disease, spell-like abilities, summon tanar'ri

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 5/+1, SR 7, disease immunity

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 6, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +12, Intimidate +7, Jump +12, Spot +15, Wilderness Lore +4

Feats: Run, Weapon Focus (halberd)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pack (3-8)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7-12 HD (Medium-size); 13-18 HD (Large)

The goat-headed schirim pervade the Material Plane, primarily because they can be summoned by magics easily accessible to spellcasters with very little skill. Clumsy covens fumbling with half-understood scrolls frequently bring a schir from the Abyss, and many credulous cultists believe all demons look like the bestial schirim.

The goat demons revel in their reception on the Prime, seldom speaking of their station at home. In the Abyss, schirim are little more than soldiers or guardians, expected to follow the orders of their betters at all times. Dull-witted and slow to learn, they nonetheless make superlative sentries, thanks to their spell-like abilities and otherworldly sense of focus.

A schir looks like the bastard offspring of human and goat. Its long, muscular neck supports a bestial head topped with two backward-



curving horns. The creature's nauseating yellowed teeth reek of decayed meat and human waste, and its beady eyes burn with an amber rage. A tangled, food-encrusted beard dangles from the demon's chin. Coarse hair covers a schir from head to toe, growing especially thick at the legs and shoulders. Its legs feature two knees, the lower set of which bend backwards just above cloven-hoofed feet.

Schirim carve or brand a number of mystical symbols upon their chests. These markings represent clan affiliations, and some schirim refuse to work with members of other clans; such refusals occasionally break out into open battle between the schirim serving allied demon lords. To a schir, clan allegiance is paramount to all other concerns, and no task is too important to get in the way of cons-old internecine struggle.

Though all schirim pay lip service to their creator, the demon prince Azazel, not all serve the progenitor of their race. Perhaps due to their incredible fecundity, schirim have spread to nearly every inhabitable layer of the Abyss, and rare is the demon noble who does not employ at least a pack of the creatures somewhere in its vast retinue.

Schirim speak Abyssal, relying upon their *tongues* ability to communicate with mortals.

Combat

Schirim care little for tactics, preferring to attack the nearest enemy regardless of the dictates of combat. If facing multiple foes, allied schirim gang up on a single opponent, making sure that enemy has been dealt with before moving on to the next.

Charge (Ex): A schir typically begins combat by lowering its head and charging at an opponent, aiming to gore its enemy upon powerful horns. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the schir to make a single gore attack that deals 3d6+3 points of damage. A schir may move up to three times its speed as part of a charge action.

Disease (Su): Though they are immune to disease, the grotesque inner physiology of schirim make them ideal hosts for infectious agents. Using this to their advantage, schirim continually lick the blades of their halberds, coating their weapons with disease-ridden spittle.

Demon Fever: Injury, Fortitude save (DC 18), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 Con (when damaged, creature must succeed at another Fortitude save or 1 point of temporary damage is permanent drain instead).

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*arcane lock, expeditious retreat, jump, protection from good, see invisibility, tongues*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 6th-level sorcerer (save DC 8 + spell level).

Summon Tanar'ri (Su): Once per day a schir can attempt to summon 1d3 schirim with a 20% chance of success.

Disease Immunity (Ex): Schirim are completely immune to all forms of disease (though they can and do act as carriers).

Skills: A schir receives a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks.

Shiggareb (Qlippoth Lord)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 20d8+100 (190 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 50 ft., climb 30 ft.

AC: 31 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +21 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 29

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 10

Attacks: 2 claws +26 melee, bite +24 melee, slam +24 melee

Damage: Claw 2d4+8; bite 2d6+4; slam 2d6+4

Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Eldritch mastery, rend 2d6+12, spells, summon qlippoth

Special Qualities: Qlippoth qualities, damage reduction 20/+4, SR 20, shapechange, tongues

Saves: Fort +17, Ref +14, Will +14

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 15

Skills: Balance +12, Bluff +22, Climb +26, Concentration +25, Disguise +22, Gather Information +22, Hide +14, Intimidate +24,

Jump +18, Knowledge (Abyss) +27, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Listen +12, Scream +17, Search +17,

Sense Motive +22, Spellcraft +27, Spot +22

Feats: Blind-Fight, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Multiattack, Quicken Spell

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 21

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

In the days when qlippoth ruled the Abyss, Shiggareb controlled the great foundry-city of Vorath. With millions of minions at her command, she built her metropolis into the ultimate expression of cosmic evil. In her slave pits and laboratories, new monstrosities were birthed every day.

Shiggareb and her followers used the primordial stuff of chaos to create and destroy, to twist and corrupt. Unconcerned with the rest of the multiverse, they continued their mad experiments until hosts of eladrin brought the qlippoth civilization tumbling down. While countless qlippoth died, Shiggareb escaped the wrath of the celestials by an expeditious flight to Hades. When she returned, she found

the tanar'ri in the process of taking over. She tried to rally the qliphoth and put the tanar'ri back in their place, but too few of her race remained—the tanar'ri had grown strong in the depths of the Abyss. Shiggarreb's forces were destroyed, and once again she was forced to flee. She has been hunted by the demon princes ever since but has never been caught.

Shiggarreb and most of the remaining qliphoth found refuge in the deep layers of the Abyss, in pockets hidden from the vengeful tanar'ri. Alone in the darkness, the qliphoth plot a return to power and glory. Shiggarreb remains among the most powerful of her race, though neither she nor other lords of her kind have learned how to master an entire layer of the Abyss. Lacking this knowledge and the power it represents, Shiggarreb has turned to other methods of combating the hated tanar'ri.

Over the millennia Shiggarreb has attempted many schemes and been foiled each time. Most of these plans involved outright military conquest or working with evil allies from the Lower Planes. Now Shiggarreb has hatched a new scheme. She recalls only too bitterly the glittering celestial hosts and the damage they dealt the qliphoth. Shiggarreb hopes to draw down the eladrin armies a second time and let the Lords of Good do her dirty work for her. To achieve this end, Shiggarreb has been traveling the worlds of the Material Plane and perpetrating terrible crimes in the name of various demon princes. With her shapeshifting ability and mastery of magic, it's all so easy for her to pin the blame on the tanar'ri.

Such evil acts play right into the preconceptions of the Lords of Good. In the past hundred years Shiggarreb has incited a cult of Orcus to murder every child in a populous kingdom and bring them back as an army of zombie children; burned to ashes one of the greatest repositories of knowledge in the multiverse in the name of Flauros; and spread countless plagues that seem to be the work of Abaddon. Each act is calculated to cause moral outrage in the Upper Planes. Shiggarreb feels it now only a matter of time before the Lords of Good will be forced to act.

In her natural form, Shiggarreb looks like an enormous, twelve-limbed spider creature. Her bestial appearance belies the cunning mind within. She speaks Abyssal and Infernal, but her *tongues* ability allows her to communicate with any being easily.

Combat

Shiggarreb's first action in any serious combat is to cast *time stop* and then load up on protective magic. With a huge variety of spells at her command, Shiggarreb can dispose of most opponents without entering melee, though she is more than capable of handling herself up close as well. If a fight turns against her, she *teleports* away. She has not survived since the dawn of time by being stupid.

Eldritch Mastery (Ex): Shiggarreb is ancient beyond reckoning and has studied the ways of magic since the beginning of time. She casts spells as a 20th-level wizard, and all of her spells are considered "mastered" per the Spell Mastery feat (Shiggarreb does not require a spellbook).

Rend (Ex): If Shiggarreb hits with both claws, she latches on to her opponent's body and begins to tear it apart. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+12 points of damage.

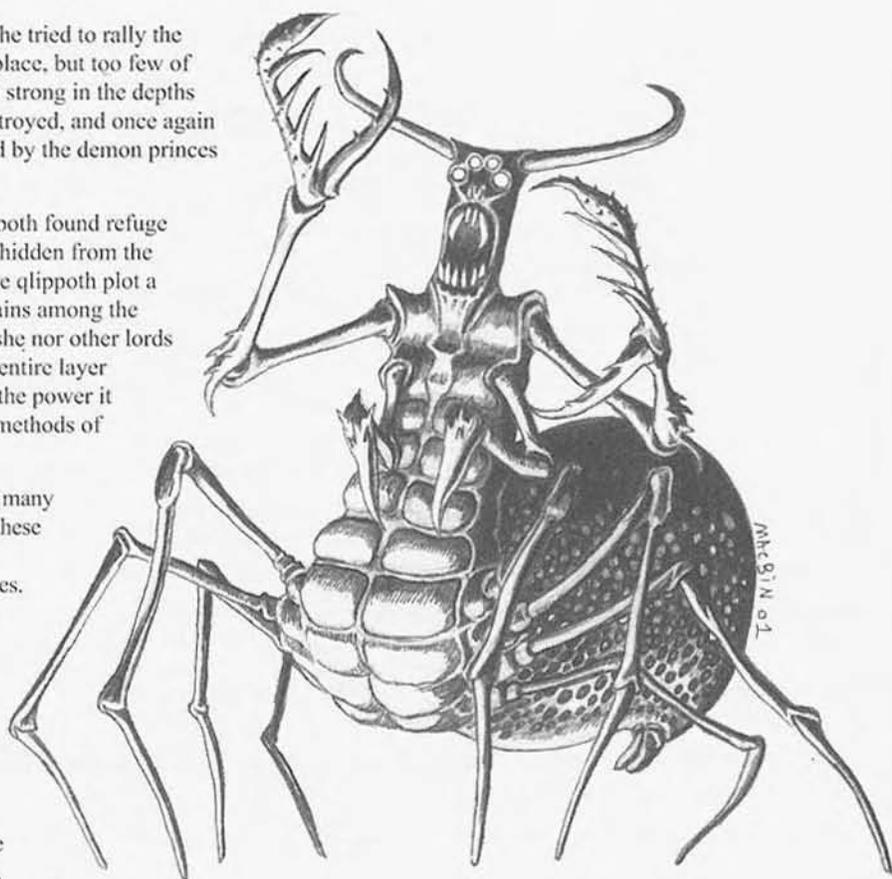
Wizard Spells Prepared (4/6/6/6/5/5/5/4/4; save DC 17 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, and read magic*; 1st—*charm person, hypnotism, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, and unseen servant*; 2nd—*darkness, detect thoughts, ghoul touch, hypnotic pattern, web, and whispering wind*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fireball, fly, nondetection, and slow*; 4th—*arcane eye, charm monster, detect scrying, dimension door, and improved invisibility*; 5th—*cloudkill, cone of cold, dominate person, teleport, and wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning, disintegrate, globe of invulnerability, mass suggestion, and true seeing*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball, ethereal jaunt, greater scrying, sequester, and teleport without error*; 8th—*horrid wilting, incendiary cloud, polymorph any object, and symbol*; 9th—*dominate monster, gate, power word, kill, and time stop*.

Summon Qliphoth (Sp): Once per day Shiggarreb can attempt to summon 1d4 shoggti (see the Shoggti entry) with a 50% chance of success.

Shapechange (Sp): Shiggarreb has stayed one step ahead of her tanar'ri pursuers by the use of her wits and her prodigious polymorphic abilities. She can *shapechange* (as the spell) at will.

Tongues (Su): Shiggarreb has a permanent *tongues* ability as the spell cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Feats: Shiggarreb receives Blind-Fight and Multiattack as bonus feats.



Shoggti (Qlippoth)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 8d8+24 (60 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 23 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +11 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 23

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 12

Attacks: 4 tentacles +13 melee, bite +7 melee

Damage: Tentacle 1d8+5; bite 2d4+2

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacle)

Special Attacks: Braincloud, improved grab, constrict 1d8+5

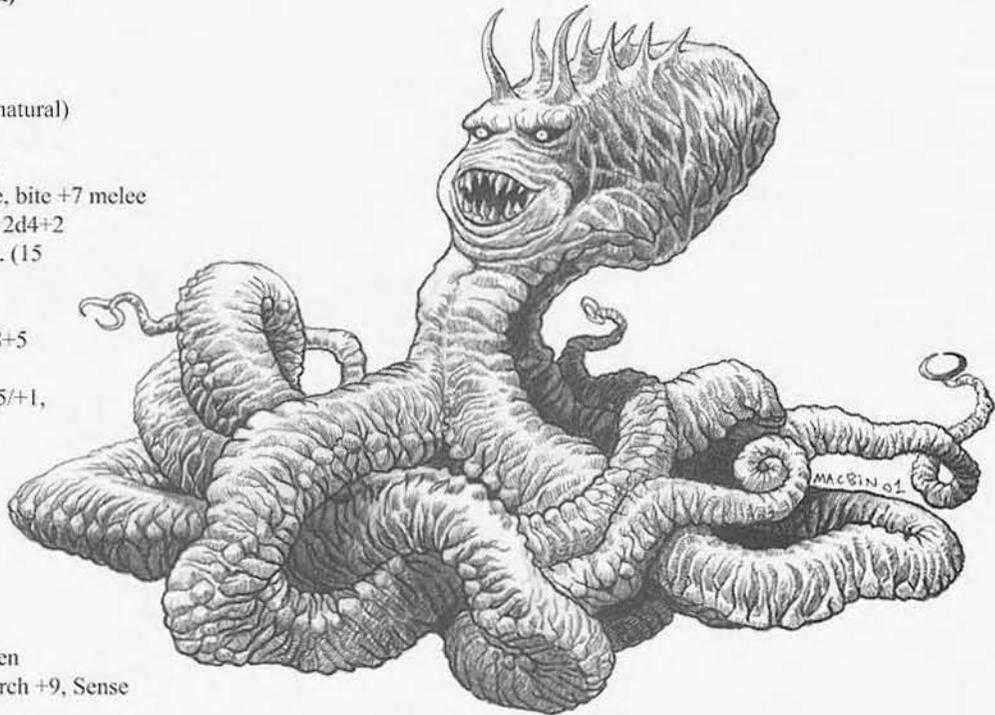
Special Qualities: Qlippoth qualities, damage reduction 5/+1, uncanny dodge

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +7

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11

Skills: Climb +13, Escape Artist +11, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (Abyss) +9, Listen +13, Move Silently +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +13

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle)



Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (2-5)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-16 HD (Huge); 17-20 HD (Gargantuan)

Shoggti are repulsive, tentacled demons that slither with uncanny grace.

In the ancient days of the Abyss, shoggti served their race as slavemasters. They worked countless servitor races to extinction, keeping the rest in line with a mind-numbing touch from their lengthy tentacles. The oldest tanar'ri still flinch in memory of the terrible tortures endured in the days before the eladrin raided the Howling Threshold, allowing the tanar'ri to escape and eventually dominate the plane.

Since the fall of the qlippoth, the shoggti have lived in the depths of the Abyss with the rest of their kin. They periodically raid tanar'ri-controlled layers and bring back fresh slaves to work on their defenses. The qlippoth sanctuaries are well-hidden, but they will need all the defensive works they can muster should the demon princes discover where their hated creators have been hiding.

Shoggti speak Abyssal.

Combat

A shoggti uses its natural abilities to the utmost in combat. Its many tentacles and exceptional reach allow it to deal with several opponents at once. It uses its braincloud ability on any obvious wizards, keeping a special eye out for telltale spellbooks or familiars.

Braincloud (Ex): Shoggti kept their slaves in line by denying them the intelligence to plot an escape or uprising. Once per round, a shoggti can forgo one of its normal tentacle attacks to make a touch attack instead, dealing 1d4 temporary Intelligence damage on a hit.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shoggti must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with a tentacle attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Constrict (Ex): A shoggti deals automatic tentacle damage to a Medium-size or smaller opponent with a successful grapple check.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): A shoggti retains its Dexterity bonus to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. Additionally, it cannot be flanked.

Skills: A shoggti receives a +4 racial bonus on Intimidate, Listen, and Spot checks.

Skulldugger

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 3d12 (19 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)

AC: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 13

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 12

Attacks: 2 claws +2 melee, horns
+0 melee

Damage: Claw 1d4+1; horns 1d6

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./ 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Undead, acid and fire
resistance 5, eyes of the master, skeletal,
telepathy, turning immunity

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis
10, Cha 12

Skills: Intimidate +7, Jump +7, Listen +6, Search
+6, Spot +6, Tumble +8

Feats: Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

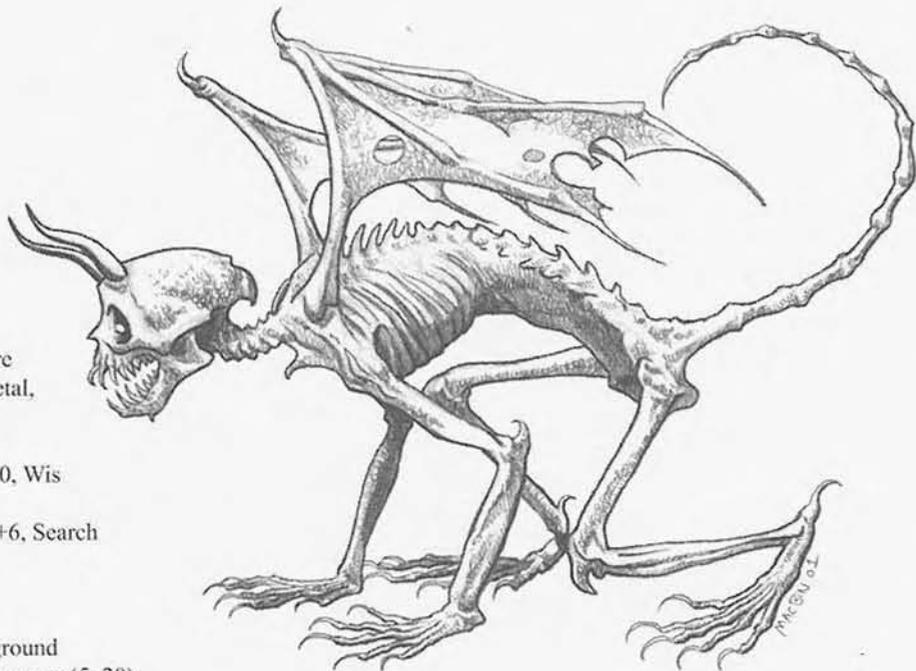
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–5), or swarm (5–20)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 4–9 HD (Large)



Only two demon princes know the secret of skulldugger creation: Gamigin and Orcus. Both of these princes are masters of necromancy and lords of undeath. Unlike mortal necromancers, they also have millions of evil souls at their command.

Skullduggers are created in blasphemous rituals enacted personally by the demon princes. They use souls to animate these undead, rather than negative energy as is usually the case. In theory the ritual can be performed on several different types of skeletons. However, both demon princes favor the remains of an extinct breed of qliphoth. They have found its winged form of great utility, so other forms of skullduggers are almost never seen.

Gamigin uses skullduggers to hunt down souls owed to him and bring them to the Jagged Tor of Final Reckoning. Orcus uses them as spies and messengers, often sending them to the Material Plane to communicate with his followers there. Skullduggers confound good clerics because their unique method of animation makes them immune to turning.

Combat

Skullduggers use their numbers to best effect in combat. They swarm around the opposition, trying to concentrate their blows where possible. They favor the use of *burning hands* to clear out large numbers of foes. Usually skullduggers have a specific mission, and they do their best to complete this as a priority. When possible, they approach enemies invisibly, announcing their presence with slashing claws and goutts of flame.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*burning hands*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *invisibility*, and *locate object*; 1/day—*see invisibility* and *teleport without error* (self only); 1/week—*plane shift*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 6th-level sorcerer (save DC 11 + spell level).

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Eyes of the Master (Su): The soul that animates a skulldugger is forever bound to its demon prince. Through this unholy bond, the creating demon prince can see with the eyes of the skulldugger at will. Normally, there is a 1% chance that the demon prince is watching at any given time. For skullduggers on important missions, this chance rises to 25%.

Skeletal (Ex): A skulldugger has cold immunity. Because it lacks flesh or internal organs, it takes only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Telepathy (Su): A skulldugger can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Turning Immunity (Ex): While most undead are animated with negative energy, a skulldugger is powered by an evil soul. It is thus immune to clerical turning.

Solesik (Tanar'ri)

Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)

AC: 21 (+3 Dex, +8 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 18

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 13

Attacks: 3 tentacles +9 melee, bite

+4 melee

Damage: Tentacle 1d3; bite

1d6 and language drain

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Garble field,

improved grab, language

drain, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri

qualities, damage reduction

20/+2, SR 12, fly

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int

19, Wis 15, Cha 15

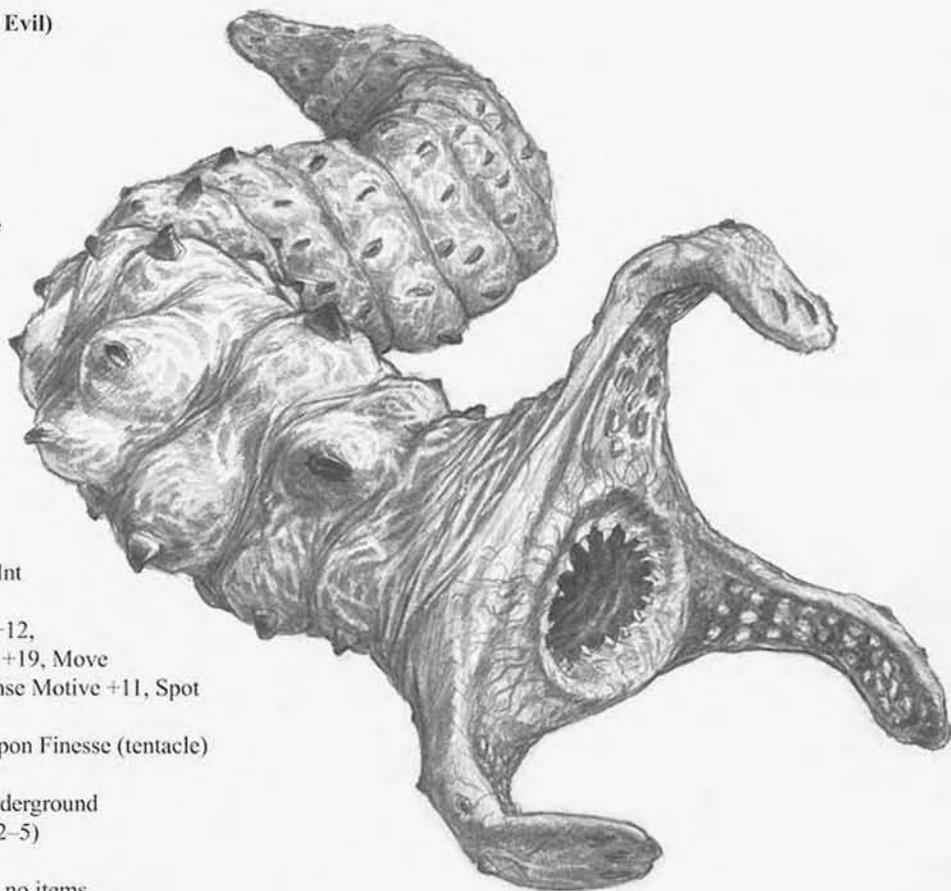
Skills: Decipher Script +13, Hide +12,

Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +19, Move

Silently +12, Read Lips +13, Sense Motive +11, Spot

+19

Feats: Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (tentacle)



Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or school (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: No coins; double goods; no items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7–12 HD (Medium-size); 13–24 HD (Large)

Solesiks are the bane of wizards and sages, and the doom of many a learned adventurer. These wormlike demons feed on language, whether in written or spoken form, and can drain the mother tongue straight from a victim's brain.

A solesik looks like a repulsive pink-gray worm about 7 feet in length. Its head is dominated by a circular, tooth-ringed mouth, which is surrounded by three flailing tentacles covered in tube feet like the arms of a starfish. Its segmented body is dotted with short hornlike nubs that help the creature move along the ground.

Solesiks speak Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, and Undercommon, and can communicate telepathically.

Combat

Solesiks attack only to defend themselves, or when defending a rich find (such as a library or wizard's study). They use their spell-like abilities to stun opponents before swooping in to attack with language drain. If pressed, they use *word of recall* to return to the Abyss.

Garble Field (Su): Solesiks radiate an aura of linguistic instability within 60 feet. Every creature within the field is subject to the following effects:

- Any act of speech or communication requires a partial action instead of a free action. Longer communications require a standard action.
- Spells with verbal components require an extra action to cast.
- Intelligence-based skills and checks (including the save against language drain) suffer a –4 circumstance penalty.

Additionally, once per round the solesik may target any scroll or command-word activated magic item within the garble field. Scrolls are subjected to an *erase* effect, and command words for items are permanently changed. The solesik must pass a level check as a 12th-level wizard against the level of the item's creator to successfully garble an item.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the solesik must hit a Medium-size or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. If it gets a hold, it attaches the tentacle to the opponent's head and can deal bite damage the following round.

Language Drain (Su): A solesik drains language from its victim with a successful bite attack. The solesik's bite drains 1d2 languages from the victim, who must make a Will save using its Intelligence modifier in place of Wisdom to resist (DC 15). The solesik gains one temporary level for each language it drains. Temporary levels grant a +1 competence bonus on attacks, saves, skill checks, and level checks. The effects are lost after 1 hour. Languages without a written alphabet or component (such as Blink Dog, or the Common spoken

by an illiterate barbarian) are less nourishing and grant one temporary level for every two such languages drained. Creatures with a supernatural *tongues* ability, or casters under the effects of a *tongues* spell, are irresistible to a solesik; each language drained from these creatures grants two temporary levels. Drained languages can be regained only through a *restoration* spell. They do not recover naturally.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*command*, *erase*, *mage hand*, and *suggestion*; 1/day—*blasphemy*, *power word*, *stun*, and *word of recall*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level wizard (save DC 14 + spell level).

Fly (Su): Solesiks fly through the exercise of mental power. This power can be dispelled, but the solesik can reactivate it as a free action on its next turn.

Skills: A solesik receives a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

Soulkeeper (Tanar'ri)

Gargantuan Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 18d8+144 (225 hp)

Initiative: -2 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 30 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +26 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 30

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 4

Attacks: 2 slams +25 melee; or Gargantuan +4 *ghost touch greatclub* +30/+25/+20/+15 melee

Damage: Slam 2d10+11; Gargantuan +4 *ghost touch greatclub* 2d8+20

Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 20 ft./20 ft.

Special Attacks: Tremorstomp, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Tanar'ri qualities, damage reduction 20/+3, SR 30, soulsense

Saves: Fort +19, Ref +9, Will +14

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 6, Con 26, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 15

Skills: Balance +16, Concentration +26, Intimidate +20, Jump +29, Knowledge (Abyss) +19, Listen +23, Search +19, Sense Motive +21, Spot +23

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub)



Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 19–31 HD (Gargantuan); 32–54 HD (Colossal)

Mortal souls that have passed on to an Abyssal afterlife form an important currency in the Abyss, as demon princes covet the energy they contain. Demons in service to these princes scour the Howling Threshold, the layer upon which souls manifest themselves after making the transition from life, gathering up souls for their wicked masters. The demons herd the souls together and force them through so-called Harvest Gates to the personal layers of princes, never to be seen again. The lumbering, gigantic demons known as soulkeepers play an integral role in this process, guarding the herds by preventing the escape of captured souls and fending off attacks from rival demons.

Topping 50 feet tall with elephantine feet and hands that can crush horses, soulkeepers are highly sought after by demon princes, who reward them handsomely for their important service. Over the millennia, several princes have tried to unify the soulkeepers under a single banner to win a greater percentage of the souls harvested on the Howling Threshold, but these attempts have uniformly failed. Like all demons, soulkeepers are chaotic by nature, so they have resisted every attempt to bring them together under one master.

Soulkeepers prefer to operate alone, or rarely in pairs. With great physical strength and impressive array of magical abilities, a soulkeeper can control hundreds of souls with ease. It can also fight off dozens of opponents at once, a fact it must prove on a near-daily basis.

Soulkeepers speak Abyssal.

Combat

Soulkeepers are used to fighting alone. They use their spell-like abilities to break up enemy groupings and then close to finish them one by one. While they most often use *forcecage* to imprison unruly souls, they find the tactic also works very well against dangerous spellcasters. Their tremorstomp ability is indispensable when faced with hordes of smaller opponents.

Tremorstomp (Ex): When a hundred souls try to escape at once, a soulkeeper needs a quick way to knock them all down. Its bulk and inhuman strength both work to its advantage in this situation. As a full round action, a soulkeeper can leap in the air and land with enough force to create powerful tremors. Treat this as an *earthquake* spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*forcecage*, *hold monster*, *sending*, and *teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 3/day—*chain lightning*, *globe of invulnerability*, and *imprisonment*; 1/day—*power word, blind*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Soulsense (Ex): Soulkeepers can sense souls consigned to the Abyss. At will, a soulkeeper can ascertain the location of all chaotic evil souls within a 1,120-foot-radius circle centered upon itself. There is no saving throw to avoid the soulkeeper's soulsense, but *mislead*, *nondetection*, and *polymorph* spells can confuse it. The soulsense ability does not affect living chaotic evil creatures that happen to be in the Abyss.

Spawn of Marbas

Large Aberration

Hit Dice: 4d8+8 (26 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 15 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 13

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: Bite +5 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Color burst, pain touch

Special Qualities: Cold and fire resistance 5

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 8,

Wis 10, Cha 9

Skills: Balance +7, Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5

Feats: Blind-Fight



Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organization: Solitary, gang (2–5), or pack (5–20)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5–12 HD (Huge)

It's hard to say what the spawn of Marbas looked like before they came to the Soaking Canyon of Malignancy. Some say they were a planar breed of horse, others a type of hunting dog. What is certain is that Marbas, in a fit of inspiration, brought thousands of the creatures to his cancerous corner of the Abyss. He unleashed the raw power of chaos on the hapless animals, warping their bodies and their minds. His ultimate purpose remains unknown, because one day Marbas ceased his attentions and began to pursue some fresh inspiration. Such is the nature of chaos.

The spawn of Marbas were left to wander the Soaking Canyon of Malignancy, apparently forgotten by their creator. Native demons began to use them as mounts, attack hounds, and of course food. Thaumaturges dedicated to Marbas also began to summon them to the Material Plane. Now they can be found on many different worlds, confounding scholars and adventurers alike.

Although the spawn of Marbas appear bizarre, with their bird beaks and misshapen forms, these creatures of chaos have maintained a surprisingly stable form for several millennia. The irony is perhaps lost on Marbas, though some say he intends to finish what he started with the spawn when the time is right.

Spawn of Marbas understand Abyssal and Common but lack the ability to do more than howl.

Combat

Spawn of Marbas are not sophisticated opponents. They usually charge and bite first, following up with color burst when in the midst of a group of enemies. Packs of spawn gang up with pain touch attacks to weaken tough prey, finishing the job with their powerful beaks.

Color Burst (Su): In combat a spawn of Marbas can turn its skin translucent and expose its internal organs, which pulse with the energy of chaos. This is treated as a *color spray* spell but affects a 20-foot-radius burst (Will save DC 11). This ability can be used every 1d6 rounds.

Pain Touch (Su): To use this ability, a spawn of Marbas makes a touch attack with its stunted forelimbs. Those struck must make a successful Will save (DC 11) or experience the pain the spawn lives with every moment of every day. Affected opponents suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and Concentration checks for 1 minute.

Feats: A spawn of Marbas gains Blind-Fight as a bonus feat.

Spineseeker

Small Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 12d8+24 (78 hp)

Initiative: +7 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

AC: 26 (+1 size, +7 Dex, +8 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 19

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 18

Attacks: 3 bites +20 melee

Damage: Bite 1d4+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, spinelatch, puppetmaster

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 30/+2, SR 15, electricity and fire resistance 20

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +15, Will +8

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 24, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Concentration +17, Escape Artist +22, Hide +26, Listen +15, Move Silently +22, Search +16, Spot +15, Swim +6

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or clutch (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 13–36 HD (Small)

Voracious predators that seemingly exist only to feed, spineseekers pose a serious threat to even the demonic residents of the Abyss.

Whenever a colony of the creatures finds its way into a tanar'ri settlement, the demons do everything within their power to destroy the incursion. More devious tanar'ri can be seen at the heart of such battles squatting over injured spineseekers, forcing the creatures into specially prepared magical cages. Despite the danger they pose—and likely because of it—spineseekers represent an important commodity in the Abyss.

Though far from stupid, spineseekers have no language and don't seem to care whom they attack. They cannot be reasoned with and know nothing of mercy or compassion. They make incredibly effective assassins, since their lack of communication makes it extremely difficult to track the killing back to its sponsor. Demons (or even mortals) wishing to use spineseekers in this manner trap them in containers known as *stasis cages* (see the sidebar for details), which are then opened in the presence of the intended target. It doesn't always work. Sometimes the spineseeker attacks the *stasis cage*'s bearer. Usually, however, it flies right to its mark and begins its grisly work.

Cover a snake's body with the chitin of a scorpion, add a hundred spiky legs, three mouths similar to those of lampreys, several wiggling arms, and six insectoid wings, and the resulting creature will look a great deal like a spineseeker. A spineseeker's dull gray body can reach a length of 4 feet, though specimens half that size are far more common. All spineseekers are hermaphroditic and reproduce by mating. A pregnant spineseeker can give birth to up to thirty-six young, disgorging them from its three mouths in a mass of stomach acid and pulpy afterbirth.

Spineseekers get their name from their favorite combat tactic, which involves grappling (often larger) opponents. Once it has grabbed an enemy, a spineseeker attempts to attach itself to the creature's spine, draining it of vitality while at the same time controlling its motor functions.

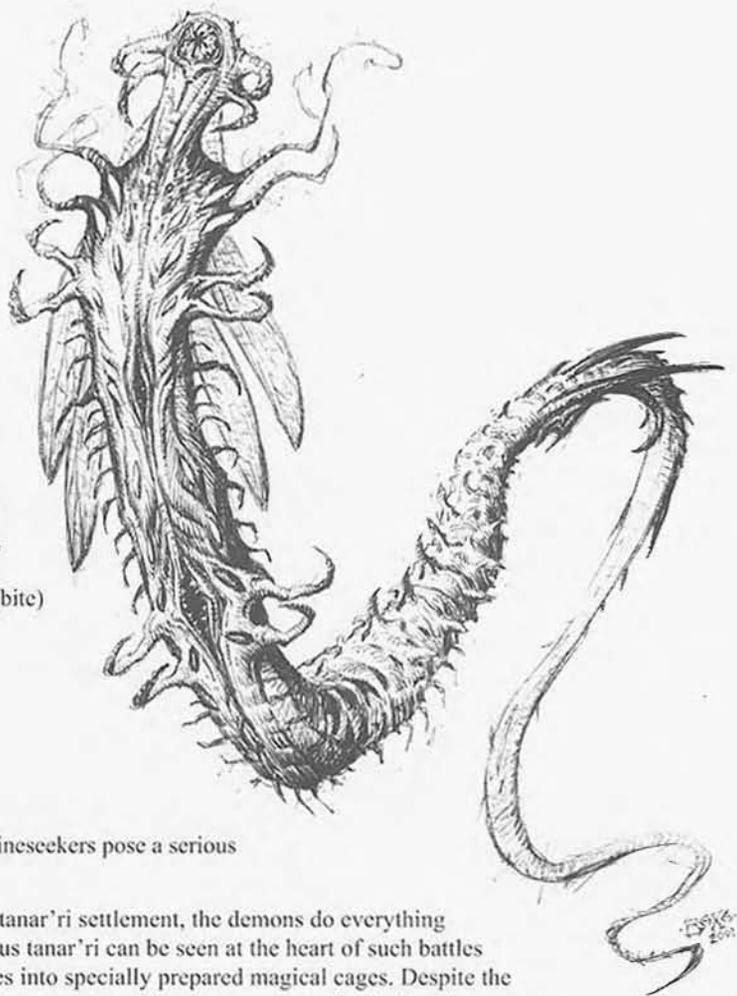
Spineseekers do not speak and do not appear to understand any languages known to demon or mortal. Some demonologists theorize that they communicate with each other when in rut by attaching themselves to other creatures, whose movements they control in mutually understood mating gestures.

Combat

Spineseekers occasionally pause to use their *detect good* ability before choosing prey (they seem to prefer good victims to others, but will do with just about any food they can get their mouths into). Once it has controlled a victim with its puppetmaster ability, a spineseeker attempts to force the creature to hurt itself or fight against the spineseeker's enemies.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a spineseeker must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with two or more bite attacks.

Spinelatch (Ex): A spineseeker that has grabbed its opponent positions itself over its enemy's spine and tries to latch onto it, biting through the skin of the back and gripping the vertebrae with its serrated teeth. To do so, the spineseeker makes a grapple check, using its Dexterity bonus instead of its Strength bonus. Before taking its size into account, a spineseeker's grapple check



New Wondrous Item: Stasis Cage

The six walls of this glass container have been etched with arcane symbols and magical formulae. One side is hinged, allowing items or creatures up to Small size to be placed within. The box holds one Small creature, two Tiny creatures, four Diminutive creatures, or eight Fine creatures. Anything within a closed *stasis cage* is affected by a *temporal stasis* spell as cast by a 17th-level sorcerer. The *stasis cage* can be used only once.

Caster Level: 17th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *temporal stasis*; **Market Price:** 7,650 gp; **Weight:** 4 lb.

for purposes of a spinelatch attack is made at +19 (its ordinary grapple check is made at +15). Once it has latched onto an enemy's spine, a spineseeker releases its prey only if killed or if it wills itself to unclench its powerful mouths (something it's loath to do while feeding). The victim suffers 1 point of permanent Constitution drain for every round in which the spineseeker is attached to its back.

Puppetmaster (Su): A spineseeker that has established a spinelatch can wind its tendrils into the opponent's spinal cord, allowing it to control the creature's movement (but not its mind or speech). Controlled creatures must make a Will save (DC 15) each time they wish to engage in an action other than speaking (including doing nothing). Failure indicates that the spineseeker has controlled the creature's body, and the spineseeker/victim hybrid takes its own action in place of the desired action. Note that spells featuring a verbal component exclusively (such as *power word*, *stun*) can be cast without the need for a saving throw to overpower the spineseeker's influence.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect good*, *emotion*, *mirror image*, *telekinesis*, and *water breathing*; 3/day—*displacement* and *feeblemind*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th-level sorcerer (save DC 9 + spell level).

Stygian Interloper

Medium-Size Outsider (Aquatic, Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

AC: 18 (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

AC (Flat-Footed): 17

AC (vs. Touch Attacks): 11

Attacks: 2 claws +7 melee

Damage: Claw 1d4+1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Assume identity, limited telepathy, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+2, SR 10, acid, electricity, and fire resistance 10, poison and cold immunity, Styx immunity, water breathing

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6

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

Skills: Balance +10, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +21, Forgery +10, Hide +10

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7–18 HD (Medium-size)

When mortals touch or drink from the River Styx, their memories flow from their minds into its waters, carried away by the current to some unthinkable corner of the underworld. Stygian interlopers, bizarre lizardlike demons that inhabit the river, swarm to these memories, inhaling them deep and relishing the play of recollecting thoughts for the very first time. When an interloper finds memories of a particularly interesting life, it assumes the form of the amnesiac individual, "returning" to the Material Plane to spread chaos in mortal guise. The interloper does its best to integrate itself into the mortal's forgotten life, taking delight in destroying family bonds, sully reputations, and betraying confidences.

In their natural form, Stygian interlopers appear reptilian, with webbed feet and an elongated, wide-mouthed skull. Ranging in coloration from dull green to deep blue, interlopers spend nearly all of their lives submerged in the waters of the Styx, where they remain relatively safe from everything but other Styx-dwelling fiends. Neither qliphoth nor tanar'ri, Stygian interlopers care little for Abyssal politics, concerning themselves with reliving the lives of others through stolen memories to the exclusion of nearly everything else.

Stygian interlopers speak Abyssal and Common (as humans are some of the most frequent victims of the Styx). When faced with other creatures or memories, they rely upon their *tongues* ability to get by.

The River Styx

The polluted, festering stream known as the River Styx (or sometimes the River Lethe) winds its way through the Lower Planes, cutting a path through several Abyssal layers. The river touches upon Hell, Hades, and Gehenna, and some say it even extends to certain Material worlds. Legends tell of riverboats disappearing into banks of thick fog and emerging into a hellscape of gibbering demons or leering devils. Whether these legends are true or not means very little. The dark reputation of the Styx extends to all corners of the multiverse.

Many inhabitants of the Abyss use the river as a convenient means of transportation. Generally, a journey upon its surface leads to a random Abyssal layer after 1d8+1 days. If the trip begins on the Howling Threshold, where the river is strongest, the journey has a 50% chance of ending up in a different randomly determined Lower Plane. Such travel brings with it horrific dangers, however. Hezrou tanar'ri plague the Styx throughout most of the Abyss, while hydraggon and Stygian interlopers swim in the regions those toadlike demons avoid.

The most insidious aspect of the River Styx, however, involves the water itself. Any mortal who touches the river must make a successful Will save (DC 15) or suffer total memory loss. Such a loss is permanent—the victim completely forgets who he or she is and loses all sense of identity (including languages, which must be repurchased using skill points for each language relearned). Those foolish enough to drink from the River Styx receive no saving throw. Once removed from the river, Stygian water loses all magical properties.

The only “safe” means of traveling upon the Styx is upon rickety barges poled by hooded daemons (sometimes called “Charons,” after a mythological figure who served the same purpose). A journey upon such a vessel halves the time it takes to travel to another layer, and Charons can direct their barges to a specifically requested layer or Lower Plane (no other creatures or vessels on record possess such power over the Styx). Charons expect to be paid for their service (very rarely in gold), and seldom appear when they are most needed.

Combat

Stygian interlopers do everything they can to avoid physical combat. Since their natures drive them to spread havoc, however, they often find themselves at the sharp end of a blade. When confronted with violence, a Stygian interloper attempts to fight its weakest opponent into unconsciousness, threatening a coup de grace unless its opponents leave it alone. If it can, it tries to *plane shift* away from overwhelming danger.



Assume Identity (Su): A Stygian interloper can assume the shape of any Small or Medium-size humanoid who has fallen prey to the mind-erasing powers of the River Styx. It does this by isolating a memory imprint from the magical waters—a record of the life of the stricken individual. This works like *alter self* as cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but the interloper can retain the form indefinitely. The interloper gains all of the stricken individual’s memories, in a sense “becoming” that person. No magic short of direct divine intervention can return the lost memories of someone whose identity has been stolen by a Stygian interloper.

Limited Telepathy (Su): Stygian interlopers can communicate telepathically with any Stygian interloper within 100 feet.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect thoughts* and *tongues*; 1/day—*plane shift* (self and 50 pounds of equipment only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 14th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Styx Immunity (Ex): Stygian interlopers are immune to the memory-stealing effects of the River Styx.

Water Breathing (Ex): Stygian interlopers can breathe easily in or out of water.

Skills: A Stygian interloper receives a +8 racial bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks.

Appendix I: Demonic Magic

This appendix presents new domains and spells for those who dare to deal with the Abyss.

New Domains

Some demon princes allow the thaumaturges who serve them to choose from a wider selection of domains than the array presented in the *PH*. The additional domains that appear here follow the standard rules for domains as described in that reference.

Spells listed with an asterisk are new and are described below. All other spells can be found in the *PH*.

Catastrophe Domain

Demon Princes: Abaddon, Raam.

Granted Power: You are adept at avoiding the disastrous effects of your own destructive spells. When caught in the area of effect of one of your own spells that allows a Reflex save for half damage, you take no damage on a successful save.

Catastrophe Domain Spells

1	<i>Doom</i>
2	<i>Shatter</i>
3	<i>Contagion</i>
4	<i>Giant vermin</i>
5	<i>Insect plague</i>
6	<i>Control weather</i>
7	<i>Creeping doom</i>
8	<i>Earthquake</i>
9	<i>Storm of vengeance</i>

Change Domain

Demon Princes: Haagenti, Lord of Many Forms, Marbas.

Granted Power: Your studies of the nature of chaos have given you limited control over probability. You are completely immune to *confusion* or similar effects. Further, if you successfully save against *polymorph other* cast upon you, you may take control of the spell as if it were *polymorph self*. (Treat it as *polymorph self* to determine duration, possible forms, and so on.) This is an extraordinary ability.

Change Domain Spells

1	<i>Enlarge</i>
2	<i>Gaseous form</i>
3	<i>Stone shape</i>
4	<i>Reincarnate</i>
5	<i>Polymorph other</i>
6	<i>Transmute rock to mud</i>
7	<i>Transmute metal to wood</i>
8	<i>Fleshy blight*</i>
9	<i>Shapechange</i>

Crippling Domain

Demon Prince: Kostchtchie, Shax.

Granted Power: Once per day you can perform a strike intended to cripple an opponent. This is a supernatural ability. Add an

enhancement bonus equal to your thaumaturge level to a damage roll from a melee or ranged attack. In addition, the damaged opponent must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 your thaumaturge level + your Constitution modifier) or become dazed for 1 round. You must declare the use of this ability before making the attack roll.

Crippling Domain Spells

1	<i>Doom</i>
2	<i>Hold person</i>
3	<i>Blindness/deafness</i>
4	<i>Enervation</i>
5	<i>Feeblemind</i>
6	<i>Harm</i>
7	<i>Femurburst*</i>
8	<i>Power word, blind</i>
9	<i>Implosion</i>

Disease Domain

Demon Princes: Azazel, Marbas, Sabnach.

Granted Power: You are immune to ability damage or drain caused by any disease, though you still suffer any superficial effects (boils, odors, sores, and so on). This is an extraordinary ability.

Disease Domain Spells

1	<i>Itchy hives*</i>
2	<i>Fit of coughing*</i>
3	<i>Contagion</i>
4	<i>Stinking cloud</i>
5	<i>Greater contagion*</i>
6	<i>Eyebite</i>
7	<i>Regenerate</i>
8	<i>Symbol (insanity only)</i>
9	<i>Energy drain</i>

Eloquence Domain

Demon Prince: Ipos, Vaz'zht, Zhar'Ub-Luur.

Granted Power: Once per day, you can force an opponent to reroll a saving throw made against a mind-affecting Enchantment spell cast by you. This is an extraordinary ability. The opponent must take the result of the second roll, even if it is better than the original roll.

Eloquence Domain Spells

1	<i>Charm person</i>
2	<i>Entrall</i>
3	<i>Charm monster</i>
4	<i>Emotion (friendship or hope only)</i>
5	<i>Modify memory</i>
6	<i>Geas/quest</i>
7	<i>Symbol (persuasion only)</i>
8	<i>Mass charm</i>
9	<i>Power word, kill</i>

Fear Domain

Demon Prince: Anarazel, Azidahaka, Demogorgon.

Granted Power: You are immune to fear (magical or otherwise). This is an extraordinary ability.

Fear Domain Spells

1	<i>Cause fear</i>
2	<i>Scare</i>
3	<i>Emotion</i> (fear only)
4	<i>Fear</i>
5	<i>Eyebite</i> (fear only)
6	<i>Phantasmal killer</i>
7	<i>Symbol</i> (fear only)
8	<i>Weird</i>
9	<i>Wail of the banshee</i>

Pain Domain

Demon Prince: Azidahaka, Demogorgon, Lord of Many Forms.

Granted Power: Your intimate knowledge of weaponry grants you the extraordinary ability to land especially painful blows on your enemies. Each day, for each of your thaumaturge levels, you may deal 1 extra point of damage. The extra damage applies only to attacks made by melee or ranged weapons with which you are proficient, not to damage from spells. You may distribute this damage as you wish until you use up the day's allotment. However, you must declare the use of this ability and the amount of extra damage desired before making the attack roll. You receive a new allotment of extra damage each time you replenish your spells.

Pain Domain Spells

1	<i>Chill touch</i>
2	<i>Inflict moderate wounds</i>
3	<i>Vampiric touch</i>
4	<i>Poison</i>
5	<i>Slay living</i>
6	<i>Harm</i>
7	<i>Destruction</i>
8	<i>Symbol</i> (pain only)
9	<i>Horrid wilting</i>

Pleasure Domain

Demon Prince: Socothbenoth.

Granted Power: You receive a +4 competence bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive checks made against a creature who would ordinarily be attracted to someone of your race and sex.

Pleasure Domain Spells

1	<i>Charm person</i>
2	<i>Tasha's hideous laughter</i>
3	<i>Ecstasy*</i>
4	<i>Phantasmal lover*</i>
5	<i>Dream</i>
6	<i>Heroes' feast</i>
7	<i>Regenerate</i>
8	<i>Otto's irresistible dance</i>
9	<i>Phantasmal orgy*</i>

Prophecy Domain

Demon Princes: Astaroth, Raum.

Granted Power: You cast Divination spells at +1 caster level.

Prophecy Domain Spells

1	<i>True strike</i>
2	<i>Augury</i>
3	<i>Dangerpeek*</i>
4	<i>Divination</i>
5	<i>Srying</i>
6	<i>Contact Other Plane</i>
7	<i>Greater srying</i>
8	<i>Vision</i>
9	<i>Foresight</i>

Subterfuge Domain

Demon Princes: Decarabia, Shax, Vaz'zht.

Granted Power: You gain the spell-like ability to *change self* once per day as the spell cast by a caster of your character level.

Subterfuge Domain Spells

1	<i>Change self</i>
2	<i>Alter self</i>
3	<i>Displacement</i>
4	<i>Improved invisibility</i>
5	<i>False vision</i>
6	<i>Mislead</i>
7	<i>Mass invisibility</i>
8	<i>Sequester</i>
9	<i>Mind Blank</i>

New Spells

The following spells are in addition to the spells listed in the *PH*. Most are exclusive to the new domains introduced in this book, but a few can be added to the core spell lists in your campaign.

Dangerpeek

Divination

Level: Clr 4, Prophecy 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous (see text)

Your subconscious mind peers into the future, viewing an upcoming moment of danger. Your conscious mind does not view the moment, and you have little immediate evidence that magic has taken place other than a warm feeling of preparedness. The next time you are called upon to make a saving throw to avoid a harmful spell's or spell-like ability's effect, your subconscious mind triggers a feeling of *déjà vu* that allows you a greater chance of success. You apply a +8 circumstance bonus to the save.

You may not be under the effects of multiple *dangerpeek* spells at any one time.

Ecstasy

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Pleasure 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One humanoid of Large size or smaller
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The subject of *ecstasy* becomes overwhelmed with sexual stimuli, quivering in place as a helpless wreck. The subject automatically drops anything in hand and can take no physical or mental actions (but continues to breathe as normal). A flying creature in *ecstasy* cannot use its wings and falls. A swimming creature cannot swim and may drown.

Femurburst

Transmutation

Level: Crippling 7,
 Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The subject of this spell's leg bones explode, dealing 1d6 points of damage to the victim per caster level (maximum 25d6). The subject cannot walk until a *regenerate* spell is cast upon the shattered limbs.

Fit of Coughing

Necromancy

Level: Disease 2
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Permanent (D)
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

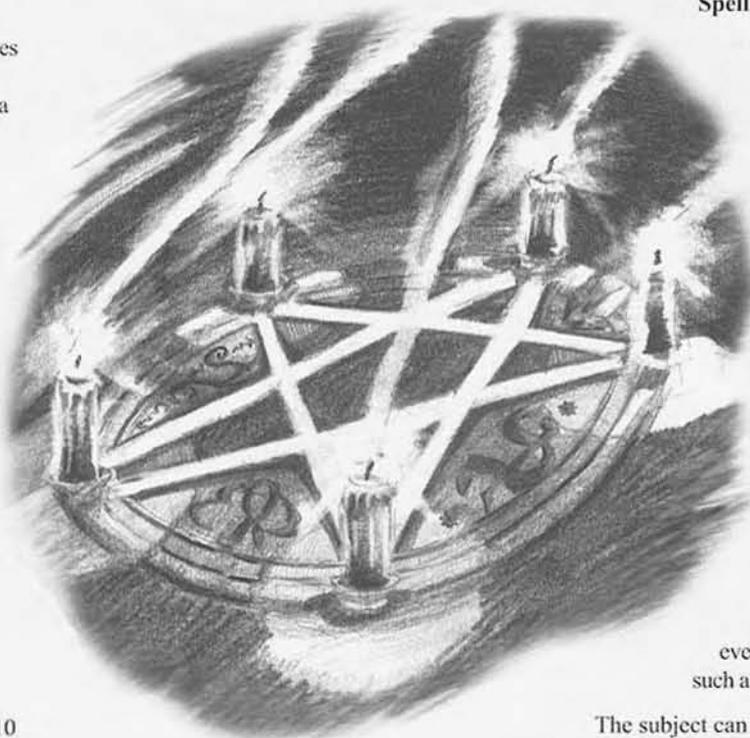
The subject of this spell becomes stricken with a terrible and incapacitating fit of coughing, impeding communication and making spellcasting a tricky proposition. Simply speaking intelligibly requires a partial action, and spells with a verbal component suffer a 30% spell failure chance.

The coughing fit lasts until dismissed by the caster or until the subject receives a *heal* or *remove disease* spell.

Fleshy Blight

Transmutation

Level: Change 8, Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One creature
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes



The subject of *fleshy blight*'s body constantly melts, warps, bubbles, and changes disturbingly from shape to shape. The affected creature is unable to hold or use any item as her limbs contort and distort. Speed is reduced to 10 feet or one-quarter the subject's normal base speed, whichever is lower. The subject becomes embroiled in a chaos of pain from stretching bones and warping flesh, and is unable to take actions of any kind. The subject suffers 1 point of permanent Wisdom drain for every round in which it remains in such a state.

The subject can fall back upon its innate sense of identity to attempt to regain its normal form. Doing so requires a Charisma check (DC 15). A success reestablishes the subject's normal form for 1 minute. On a failure, the subject can still repeat the check each round until successful.

The effects of *fleshy blight* can be cured only by a *greater restoration*, *heal*, or *restoration* spell (a separate *restoration* spell is needed to restore any lost Wisdom).

Material Components: A slice of hide from a chaos beast.

Greater Contagion

Necromancy

Level: Clr 5, Disease 5, Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

As the spell *contagion*, but in addition to blinding sickness, cackle fever, filth fever, mindfire, red ache, the shakes, or slimy doom, the caster can infect the subject with demon fever, devil chills, or mummy rot (see the *DMG*), or any of the diseases described in the **New Diseases** sidebar on page 64. At the discretion of the GM, *greater contagion* can also bestow diseases from additional sources.

New Diseases

Disease	Infection	DC	Incubation	Damage
Bone rot	Inhaled	18	1 day	1d6 temporary Con
Brainmelt	Ingested	16	1d3 days	1d8 temporary Int*
Kobold stank	Inhaled	16	1 day	1d6 temporary Cha
Musclecreak	Inhaled/Ingested	18	1 day	1d4 temporary Dex
Stoolsread	Injury	15	Instantaneous	1d6 temporary Wis**
Stumpers	Inhaled	14	1 day	1d4 temporary Str

*Each time the creature takes 2 or more damage from the disease, it must make an additional Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of permanent Intelligence drain.

**When damaged, the creature must succeed at another saving throw or 1 point of temporary damage is permanent drain instead.

Bone Rot: Often contracted by those who spend a lot of time in musty tombs fighting undead creatures, bone rot attacks the marrow, hollowing bones from the inside out.

Brainmelt: Used by some assassins' guilds to destroy wizardly enemies, brainmelt breaks down the brain's tissue into a runny slime. Symptoms include nosebleeds, earaches, and migraine headaches.

Kobold Stank: Assaulting the bowels and stomach, kobold stank turns the skin yellow and flaky to the point that it resembles lizard scales. A horrific gastrointestinal stench emerges from the bowels every time the victim speaks.

Musclecreak: Symptoms of musclecreak include aching limbs and joints. Those who suffer from the illness without being treated often completely lose the use of their limbs.

Stoolsread: A common side-effect of certain fungi used by Underdark dwellers to poison blades, stoolsread sickness assaults its victims with terrible hallucinogenic visions.

Stumpers: Named from a (mistaken) belief that the victim's atrophying limbs will eventually fall off, this disease is a bane to any who live off their strength. It is a particular nuisance in farming communities, where it can destroy an entire harvest by taking out the men and women who would reap it.

Itchy Hives

Necromancy

- Level:** Clr 2, Disease 1
- Components:** V, S
- Casting Time:** 1 action
- Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
- Target:** One living creature
- Duration:** 1 hour/level
- Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates
- Spell Resistance:** Yes

The subject's body erupts with itchy hives, causing great discomfort. The subject suffers a -1 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws due to preoccupation with the itch. The disease runs its course when the spell duration expires; the subject can also gain relief with a *remove disease* spell.

Phantasmal Lover

Illusion (Healing) [Mind-Affecting]

- Level:** Pleasure 4
- Components:** V, S
- Casting Time:** 1 action
- Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
- Target:** One conscious living creature
- Duration:** 2 rounds + 10 minutes (see text)
- Saving Throw:** None
- Spell Resistance:** Yes

Tapping into the subconscious mind of the subject, you call upon the seductive powers of the demon prince Socothenoth to create

a phantasmal image of the most alluring creature imaginable. Only the subject of the spell can clearly see the image—all others view a shadowy, indistinct form. The image hovers over the subject, writhing enticingly and whispering promises of sexual fulfillment. The image fades in 2 rounds unless the subject takes further action.

Should the subject willingly decide to succumb to its passions, it spends the next 10 minutes in vigorous erotic activity, during which it is considered helpless and from which it cannot break away for any reason. At the end of the spell's duration, the subject and image achieve climax as one. The ambient spell energy works with the subject's mind to cleanse the body of disease and injury. It completely cures all diseases, blindness, deafness, hit point damage, and temporary ability damage.

Phantasmal lover does not neutralize poison, offset the effects of a *feblemind* spell, or cure mental disorders brought about by spells or injury to the brain. It does not remove negative levels, restore permanently drained levels, or restore permanent ability drain.

Phantasmal Orgy

Illusion (Healing) [Mind-Affecting]

- Level:** Pleasure 9
- Target:** One or more conscious living creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

As *phantasmal lover*, except that it can affect more than one creature. Each creature in the area of effect receives its own *phantasmal lover*. A creature must willingly give way to its desire or the image fades within 2 rounds.

Appendix II: Monsters Ranked By CR

Demon	CR	Demon	CR
Dretch (<i>MM</i>)	2	Nyogoth	10
Mandragoras	2	Retriever (<i>MM</i>)	10
Hydraggon	3	Golem, Razorwire	11
Quasit (<i>MM</i>)	3	Eurynomus	13
Spawn of Marbas	3	Paigoel	13
Alrune	4	Vrock (<i>MM</i>)	13
Schir	4	Alastor	14
Skulldugger	4	Hezrou (<i>MM</i>)	14
Jahi	5	Glabrezu (<i>MM</i>)	15
Stygian Interloper	5	Abyssal Dragon (example)	16
Darba	6	Nalfeshnee (<i>MM</i>)	16
Shoggti	7	Marilith (<i>MM</i>)	17
Enveloper of the Innocent	8	Balor (<i>MM</i>)	18
Solesik	8	Malohin	19
Spineseeker	8	Merihim	20
Bebilith (<i>MM</i>)	9	Rahu	20
Incubus	9	Soulkeeper	20
Succubus (<i>MM</i>)	9	Shiggarreth	21
Locust Demon	10	Armageddon Beast	25

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Public Domain.

† Especially recommended.

The Abyssal Dragon

A d20 System Web Enhancement for Armies of the Abyss

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Even the mighty dragon is not immune to the corrupting influence of the Abyss. The Abyssal dragon template can be used to make creatures that are either native to the Abyss or have sworn their allegiance to a demon prince. Though the Lords of Good would deny it, there are metallic dragons among the ranks of the Abyssal dragons. Some were trapped in the Abyss and forcibly converted, while others were slowly corrupted by the insidious whisperings of demon princes.

Creating An Abyssal Dragon

“Abyssal dragon” is a template that can be added to any creature of the dragon type (hereafter referred to as the base creature). An Abyssal dragon retains all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Armor Class: An Abyssal dragon has blasphemous runes inscribed on its already formidable natural armor. This grants a +2 profane bonus to AC.

Special Attacks: An Abyssal dragon retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below.

Breath Weapon (Su): An Abyssal dragon gains a new type of breath weapon. It expels a horrible gas infused with the madness of the blackest souls consigned to the Abyss. This is a cone attack that deals 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage (Reflex half, base creature’s breath weapon DC). For Abyssal dragons with 20–30 HD, this temporary Wisdom damage increases to 2d6, and for those of 31 HD or more it increases to 3d6. This new breath weapon is in addition to the base creature’s regular breath weapon attack(s). The Abyssal dragon can choose among any of its breath weapons but still can breathe only once every 1d4 rounds.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day per 10 HD (round down) of the base creature, an Abyssal dragon can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (maximum +20) against a good foe.

Smite Law (Su): As smite good, but affecting lawful opponents.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dispel good* and *dispel law*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of a level equal to the dragon’s age category or the dragon’s caster level, whichever is higher (save DC 10 + dragon’s Charisma modifier + spell level).

Special Qualities: An Abyssal dragon retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains tanar’ri qualities.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: As base creature +2

Alignment: Always chaotic evil



Sample Abyssal Dragon

This example uses an adult red dragon as the base creature.

Kolemvox (Abyssal Red Dragon)

Huge Dragon (Fire)

Hit Dice: 22d12+110 (253 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor)

AC: 31 (–2 size, +21 natural, +2 profane)

AC (flat-footed): 31

AC (vs. touch attacks): 10

Attacks: 1 bite +31 melee, 2 claws +29 melee, 2 wings +29 melee, 1 tail slap +29 melee; or 1 crush +29 melee

Damage: Bite 2d8+11; claw 2d6+5; wing 1d8+5; tail slap 2d6+16; crush 2d8+16

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./ 10 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapons, frightful presence, crush, smite good (+20, 2/day), smite law (+20, 2/day), spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Tanar’ri qualities, blindsight 180 ft., damage reduction 5/+1, dragon immunities, fire subtype, keen senses, SR 21

Saves: Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +17

Abilities: Str 33, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +25, Concentration +27, Diplomacy +25, Jump +33, Knowledge (Abyss) +25, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Listen +26, Search +25, Sense Motive + 26, Spot +26

Feats: Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Wingover

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 16

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: As red dragon

Combat

Breath Weapons (Su): Cone, 50 feet long, once every 1d4 rounds; fire, damage 12d10, Reflex half DC 26; or madness, damage 2d6 temporary Wisdom, Reflex half DC 26.

Frightful Presence (Ex): Kolemvox can unsettle opponents whenever it attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a 180-foot radius must make a Will save (DC 24). A creature that succeeds is unaffected by Kolemvox’s frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

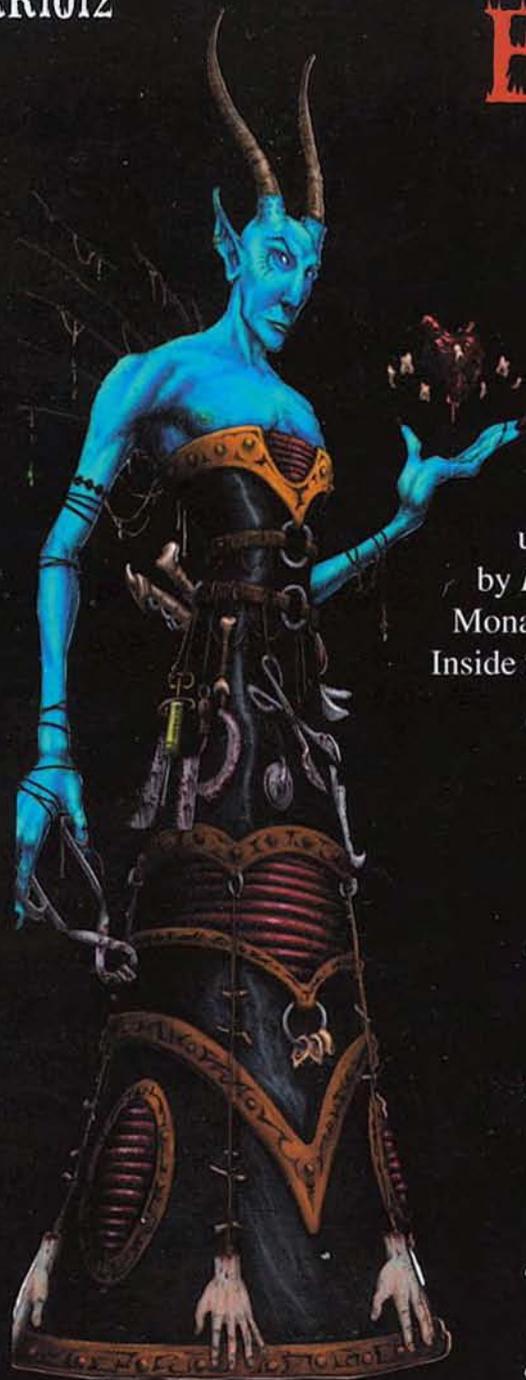
Crush (Ex): If Kolemvox is flying or jumping, it can land on opponents as a standard action. This affects as many creatures as can fit under its body (10 feet by 20 feet area). All affected creatures must succeed at a Reflex save DC 26 or be pinned, automatically taking 2d8+16 bludgeoning damage the next round and each subsequent round they remain pinned.

Spell-like Abilities: 6/day—*locate object*; 3/day—*suggestion*; 1/day—*discern location*, *dispel good*, *dispel law*, and *eyebite*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 7th-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Fire Subtype (Ex): Fire immunity, double damage from cold except on a successful save.

GRR1012

Behold the Power of Chaos!



Last year Green Ronin Publishing gave devils their due in the critically acclaimed *Legions of Hell* sourcebook, but the Lower Planes are home to evil every bit as ancient and potent as that of the Pit: the demons of the Abyss. Embodying chaos and evil, demons are frequent and unwelcome visitors to the Material plane. *Armies of the Abyss*, by *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer* author and *Polyhedron* editor Erik Mona, is your essential guide to the denizens of the infinite layers. Inside these covers you'll find:

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