

SHADOWSFALL

GUIDE TO UMBRAL KOBOLDS

Todd Stewart



PATHEFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

**JON BRAZER
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Luis Salas

SHADOWSFALL

GUIDE TO UMBRAL KOBOLDS



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Contents

Introduction	2
Shadowsfall	2
Hymn by Fuse Light	3
Racial Traits	4
Umbral Kobold Racial Traits	4
Racial Options	6
Alternate Racial Traits	6
Racial Character Traits	7
Racial Archetypes	7
Racial Feats	7
Equipment	8
Deities	8
Umbral Kobold Magic	10
New Spells	10
New Magic Items	10
Communities	11
NPC	13
Ad	14
OGL	14

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Introduction

I love kobolds. They are easily one of my favorite races. It really does sadden me that they are so underpowered compared to the core PC races. When I was first laying out the groundwork for *Shadowfall*, before anyone outside of Paizo had considered the words “Pathfinder Roleplaying Game” and the details of D&D 4th Edition were still in preview mode, I decided that I wanted kobolds in my Plane of Shadows setting and that they would be good guys on par with humans and elves in the power curve. So imagine my disappointment to discover that Pathfinder’s goblins became equally as powerful as the player races... while kobolds just kind of stayed where they were. (Goblin propagandists!)

The solution to that seemed pretty obvious: make my own balanced kobold race. Doing so did not require much effort. All that was needed was to replace their –4 Str, +2 Dex, and –2 Cha with the standard +2 to a mental and physical ability and a –2 to any of the others. With that one simple change, the umbral kobold is just as valid a choice as a halfling. Let fans of the brave and noble (er, I mean cowardly and underhanded) kobold race rejoice!

Much of this supplement focuses on the umbral kobolds’ place in *Shadowfall*. Even in this land where the undead outnumber the living by more than 10-to-1, these scaly folk are an underclass. They are barely tolerated and in some places seen as only slightly better neighbors than a horde of shambling zombies. Kobolds, however, use that to their advantage. They can come and go as they please without the big races paying too much attention to them. And when they encounter a vampire or other smart undead spawned from the remains of one of those ‘biggies’, they can pass underfoot after suffering a minor kick and insult. Such creatures seldom take the kobolds’ traps seriously until one rends undead flesh into ribbons.

Another advantage that umbral kobolds possess involves their breeding rate. Like their Material Plane brethren, these dark-scaled creatures produce an entire new generation every few years. So unless a tribe is completely wiped out, a family of umbral kobolds can return to full strength in the time it takes a fetchling child to learn to properly use a fork.

One of the most iconic ambushes that everyone knows from fantasy RPGs is the kobold ambush: the players enter a cave, and kobolds pour out of every nook and crevice to attack. They overwhelm smaller groups initially, but once their numbers dwindle, they flee. I wanted to give players that same experience—but from the opposite side of the

table. So now, when a group of wights goes looking for some fresh kobold meat in a dark and dingy cave, it is the players that can lay the trap and lead the charge.

This supplement was written by Todd Stewart. Todd is known for his work on other JBE supplements, including **Book of Heroic Races: Half-Faerie Dragons**. He has also worked with a little company called Paizo, specifically on their **Pathfinder Chronicles: The Great Beyond** and **Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Book of the Damned—Volume 3: Horsemen of the Apocalypse**. I know you are in for even more of a treat reading this than we ourselves had in producing it for publication.

Dale C. McCoy, Jr
President, Jon Brazer Enterprises
March 2013

Shadowfall

Shadowfall is the name the denizens of the Plane of Shadows call their world. Its wan sun and blood red moon leave the bleak world cold and create unease in its visitors. Even at midday, stars can easily be seen in the purple sky. This land of eternal night is filled with the ruins of lost civilizations and the flotsam and jetsam of other planes. Living creatures find the plane arduous to survive, yet undead flourish here.

Several strongholds and their native heroes protect the inhabitants of the cities from the multitudes of undead, maddened creatures, and deadly terrors that stalk the darkness. Mushroom farmers, moss gatherers and miners exchange food and raw materials with cities, barbarian tribes and adventurers for protection. In the ever-shifting Outlands, nightmare landscapes, grotesque folk and cruel spirits

abound. Countless tribes, outposts and lost souls live and die in the tortured grayness, having fallen prey to the creatures of Shadow. Among them are those brave enough to stand against the dangers that go bump in the night.

For more information on the *Shadowfall* setting, buy **Shadowfall: Shadow Plane Player’s Companion** and **Book of Beasts: Monsters of the Shadow Plane**, available today at your local game store, JonBrazer.com, or your favorite gaming website.



A Hymn by Fuse Light

I hear them. The walking dead shamble with a predictable gait and sound, and from the dancing of the gravel on the ground and trickling from the ceiling, there are more than a large number of them headed my way. I knew I shouldn't have come this way. They told me not to, but the lure of lost gold and laying claim—reclaiming, really—a trove of rich mineral veins and a buried dwarven outpost could only trump my sense of self-preservation. That gets me and my kind in trouble often enough. We've a bit of a reputation, it seems. It's definitely gotten me in trouble now, and they're getting closer, minute by minute, shambling footstep by shambling footstep; my snout twitches with the acrid scent of putrescent flesh, and they likewise pause. One of them roars in my direction, almost sensing me when I should otherwise be hidden. That's a new trick from their kind. I'm short, cloaked in black and clad in cuirbouilli, with purple-ashen scales, and skulking in the shadowy recess of an unlit tunnel should make me near impossible to notice. No such luck—and now they're moving my way.

A hymn by fuse light. That's appropriate for what happens next. There aren't words, mind you. It's a little refrain of sounds that break the silence of an abandoned mining tunnel: a flicker of light, a shower of sparks, the glint of my teeth and sparkle of my eyes, and the roar from a shambling pack of mixed undead, zombies and more. A hymn by fuse light, indeed. We've a reputation for this as well.

At least that works to name and frame the scene, and to be perfectly honest, I wonder what rattles through its rotten skull in the seconds between when it hears me strike the match, when the fuse lights my face in a sparkling little very-much-not-holy halo, when I lob the ignited benediction in his direction, and when fifty tons of breccia comes raining down on his head—my deafening chorus line to end the first verse. Everything is dark. Everything is silent, once the rock settles. I breathe again. Second verse, and it's down the other fork since this one's blocked for good.

I wander down the passage, occasionally dropping to all fours to examine the stone floor and its layer of dust and grime, seemingly undisturbed for so many long years; the dead haven't passed this way, and that's actually disturbing for many reasons. Mind you, a part of me wouldn't mind seeing them again, since they'd have already triggered any traps these hall's original builders would have produced for just that purpose.

I whistle a soft refrain in my head like an interlude to the previous verses. Wire A to connection B, so forth and so on, as I cradle a second amalgamation of copper wires and a burlap-wrapped core of scrap-metal bits and bottled naphtha. Everything still secure and joyously eager to land, sparking and sizzling amidst a troupe of the walking dead, the wires fresh and tangy upon my tongue as I gnaw a bit of covering off to expose bare copper and check the integrity of a connection.

Twenty minutes of skittering through the passage and I'm covered in dust and the soot of that last detonation. I pause to dust it from my hands and clear the ash from my goggles, happily ignoring the fine coating of soot that likely dusts my face.

Something isn't right; the passage is virgin as a milky-skinned elven hatchling, clutching... whatever they call their kind, and however they're birthed. Regardless, virgin or whore, not a soul has passed this way in years, nor a soulless husk. This isn't good. I kneel down and peer at the dust through recently-cleaned goggles, thinking of an old joke about showing off, playing hopscotch in the dust, jumping between and around pressure plates that only you're aware of rather than anyone else in the room. I really shouldn't joke at a time like this, but I'm alone, and I'm feeling appropriately whimsical. Still, that could make me the punch line if I'm not careful.

There!

Hakamitin preserve me. Five feet ahead, beneath a centimeter of dust, virtually invisible to anyone not paying attention—and, more importantly, not knowing what they're supposed to be looking for—is a pair of conjoined pressure plates. The telltale dappled pattern on the floor ahead betrays the others. Looks like I'll get to play hopscotch after all!

I don't actually play hopscotch, mind you (that would be carelessly stupid), but I take the time to peg and pin the plates into non-functionality in case I have to beat a hasty retreat at any point ahead. It's only a few minutes for each plate, and then the passage is clear and virgin ahead of me once more, with all crises averted.

Damn, but I'm good. I smile, hands on my hips, and there's a pleasant bounce in my tail. It takes more than a few traps—even well-constructed ones—to stop me. Confident, I take a step forward.

PING!

My foot snarls into a line or wire the same color as the dust and stone, pulling it taut against both walls and then giving pull to a sudden inch of slack. Metal strikes metal somewhere deep. *Shit...*

Those traps had been the ones I was *supposed* to find.

I'm already running as ancient clockwork thrums, sending spikes shooting out from the floor where I'd been standing. Tremors shake the stone, and movement in the dust both behind and in front of me suggests in no subtle terms that the passage is going to either collapse or otherwise seal itself off, providing me with far too unglorified a cenotaph.

Caring not in the slightest for more traps ahead, and more mindful of the very much sprung one I'm currently dealing with, I dart forwards. Jumping over additional pressure plates that might as well be mock-ups to fool intruders into complacency, I come into view of a stone slab lowering into place with the rattle and regular progression of counterweighted gears. I'm half pondering how the mechanism works, half thinking that I don't want to die here.

Instinct wins over academic interest. I'll never be able to use that knowledge to climb up my tribe's social hierarchy of wit and merit if I'm sealed in here, never to see the shadows aboveground again.

I slide forward on my belly, tail jerking across the small of my back to avoid being crushed by the closing door. The floor rattles with a resounding crash, and I exhale. I'm alive. I'm safe. Smiling, I open my eyes and look up into the faces of more than twenty leering, emaciated, skeletal faces.

I've got a bomb in hand, a match ready to strike—but no, they're truly and wholly *dead*. Explorers like myself, they've

been dead a very long time, and it was their footprints that I hadn't seen; they'd died to another set of traps well before reaching the one that I'd triggered or the idiot bait I'd noticed.

Scattered about the passage, pierced through with spears rising from the floor and probably poisoned bolts from rusted holes in the walls, the bodies look to be mostly humans or maybe fetchlings; it's hard to tell once they've all been dead a while. I give them each a glance over and notice that someone has picked them clean. That's when I notice one of my own kindred, himself dead a century or more as well, slumped off to the side, gutted by a spike trap. He died holding a satchel nearly bursting at the seams, full of things taken from the others; I can only assume that they'd been corpses already when he'd made his way through.

Well, he didn't make it *through*, exactly. I'm hoping that I have a better fate down here than him. I take the wide and obviously magical hat from atop his withered skull, place it upon my own and give it a tip towards my deceased predecessor. At some point I'll have to track down his tribe if it still exists and let them know his fate.

The passage widens ahead, and, oddly enough, it appears lit. Carved stone dwarves hold a heavy lintel over my head as I step into a cavern, with floating globes of magical illumination evidently having survived their makers. Time hasn't been kind to this place, as broken statues and more than a few scattered bones can attest, and I can tell from the tracks in the dust that I'm probably not alone.

As I move out into the remains of the buried city, the lights react to me, drawing closer to better light my way, causing me—the intrepid scaly hero of my story—to squint in discomfort and awkwardly stumble towards some shade. So much for keeping some semblance of cover in case the undead infest this place like so many others.

Sure enough, they do.

I smell them before I see them: more zombies, bigger ones this time. Falling back into the shadows thrown up by a fallen statue, I rummage for a match and dispense the shadows with a strike and a sizzle, illuminating my grinning snout.

A hymn by fuse light. Second verse, same as the first.

RACIAL TRAITS

A unique subrace of kobolds, umbral kobolds appear much like the stunted, bastard children of halflings and umbral dragons, though in truth they're related to neither. Their ancestors were standard kobolds from an otherwise unknown world on the Material Plane. These forbearers dug far too deep, seeking the origin of a rich vein of gold, while also seeking to escape the depredations of either drow or adventurers of mixed origins. Rather than discovering gold, however, they inadvertently tunneled through a thin place between their world and the Shadow Plane, stranding their tribe in a sunless land of omnipresent darkness. Free from the competition of other races native to their original underground home, these kobolds adapted and flourished, spreading far and wide.

Roughly the height of standard kobolds, umbral kobolds are small, draconic humanoids, covered in scales ranging from dark blue to purple to black. Unlike their hairless Material Plane progenitors, the occasional umbral kobold will possess hair at the very top of their heads or under their chins. Their long exposure to the essence of Shadow permeates their being, darkening the pigmentation of their scales, eyes, and hair, turning them almost entirely melanistic. The harsh natural selection of the Shadow Plane's resource-scarce environment ensures that only those umbral kobolds able to easily hide and blend into their adaptive home manage

to survive and procreate. Additionally, their environment has likewise impacted their social structures and common mores, abating much of the evil sentiments of their ancestors and instilling a fiercely competitive yet highly organized social structure, both within their tribes and in their relations with other races. No longer viewed as scaly vermin (though paradoxically maligned as being both



Umbral Kobold Racial Traits

-2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence: Umbral kobolds are fast and a quick study but physically weak.

Small: Umbral kobolds are Small creatures and gain a +1 size bonus to their AC, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a -1 penalty to their CMB and CMD, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.

Normal Speed: Umbral kobolds have a base speed of 30 feet.

Darkvision: Umbral kobolds can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Natural Armor: Umbral kobolds gain a +1 natural armor bonus to AC.

Crafty: Umbral kobolds gain a +2 racial bonus on Craft (trapmaking), Perception, and Profession (miner) checks. Craft (trapmaking) and Stealth are always class skills for an umbral kobold.

Light Sensitivity: Umbral kobolds are blinded for 1 round if exposed to bright light, such as sunlight or the *daylight* spell. Umbral kobolds are also dazzled for as long as they remain in areas of bright light.

Languages: Umbral kobolds begin play speaking Common and Draconic. Umbral kobolds with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Aklo, Dwarven, Gnome, Shadowpeak, and Undercommon.

cowardly and too curious for their own good), they're valued as fellow survivors within their new home, united with the other civilized races against the undead tide that threatens to drown all life in Shadowsfall.

Society: Organized in tribes under the rule of a single chieftain, king, or other so-elevated figurehead, umbral kobolds strictly adhere to a particular social pecking order, though that order can be relatively fluid over the course of their lifetime, with only the highest-ranking chief being beyond reproach until their death or abdication. Umbral kobolds pride themselves in rule and social order organized not by bloodline, arbitrary selection by divination, or even rule by whomever secures the most nods of approval or the least scowls and snarls, but rather by a perfect (by their standards) meritocracy. Of course, what umbral kobolds consider worthy of merit in such a tribal hierarchy is equally as arbitrary at times. The internal and external factors that determine which abilities and skills merit a higher rank vary accordingly by tribe—so while one tribe might value the ability to craft well-tailored mining tools, another might accord a much higher ranking to arcane magic, or jewel cutting, or which kobold can run the fastest. A tribe's current leader holds considerable influence in the ranking of these factors, suitably molded by the tribe's historical precedents. Among tribes living in relative safety, this can introduce an element of nepotism or cronyism, with the merits of rank handpicked to produce a small elite. The perpetual dangers in the Shadow Plane largely mitigate this sort of corruption, however, and within most tribes, personal merit genuinely rewards those striving to better themselves, their skills, and their knowledge—something that cannot always be said of other races.

Relations: While other intelligent races generally look down upon umbral kobolds, they aren't hated enough for anyone to bother specifically hunting them down. Unlike their mundane ancestors from the Material Plane, umbral kobolds aren't viewed as feral pests, and the reality of life on the Plane of Shadow and the harsh pragmatism it fosters provides a welcome niche for anyone of any race able to carve out a set of useful skills. Peddling their racial knack for mining and trap making is just that niche, and they exploit it well. Duergar and dwarves get along with umbral kobolds, and their communities have decent levels of trade,

while at the same time making them something of a racial punch line. Drow, on the other hand, actually seem to *like* umbral kobolds for the most part—as much as the drow like or appreciate anyone who isn't a drow—and many of their settlements possess small communities of umbral kobolds in-residence employed in niche craft trades, gem mining, and scouting. Among all the living, fetchlings and umbral kobolds mesh almost perfectly despite usually occupying greatly different social spheres and habitats among the intelligent races. Something about their respective adaptation to the Plane of Shadow and their embrace of its substance into their own flesh after so many generations—and surviving that process—makes them kindred in a way.

Alignment and Religion: Umbral kobolds possess a strong lawful streak that resonates throughout their society and in their individual outlooks on life. Socially reinforced as a factor in their survival in the Shadow Plane, most umbral kobolds embrace a Lawful Neutral alignment. Few members of their race fall toward the Chaotic end of the alignment spectrum, despite their stereotypical obsession with gold and explosives, which is more of a compulsion. Other umbral kobolds embrace both the benevolent and selfish sides of law, with equal numbers of Lawful Good and Lawful Evil umbral kobolds. Whatever gods they might have worshipped before arriving in the Shadow Plane, umbral kobolds now primarily worship Hakamitin. Smaller but still-significant numbers worship the twins, Bendes and Ular, as well as Akaron. Umbral kobolds also venerate a number of minor and obscure divinities unique to their race.

Adventurers: The adventuring life is not one easily accepted by most umbral kobolds. Most prefer the relative safety of caves, but will eagerly delve into deep and expansive caverns and tunnel networks in search of valuable metals to mine, often at great personal risk. Additionally, the typical adventurer's ethos of standing brave in the face of danger isn't immediately intuitive to most umbral kobolds. Why stand and fight if a well-placed explosive or tunnel deadfall trap will do the job just as well? Pragmatism above valor colors their choice of career. Umbral kobolds gravitate towards those classes devoted to stealth and trickery such as the rogue, as well as to wizards or sorcerers (often of a draconic bloodline) whose magic can be easily molded to fit their racial stereotypes with an equal mix of illusions and

Table 1: Height/Weight Table

Race	Base Height	Base Weight	Modifier	Weight Modifier
Umbral kobold, male	2 ft. 6 in.	30 lbs.	2d4	X 1 lbs.
Umbral kobold, female	2 ft. 4 in.	25 lbs.	2d4	X 1 lbs.

Table 2: Random Starting Age

Adulthood	Barbarian, Oracle, Rogue, Sorcerer	Bard, Cavalier, Fighter, Gunslinger, Paladin, Ranger, Summoner, Witch	Alchemist, Cleric, Druid, Inquisitor, Magus, Monk, Wizard
35 years	+4d6	+5d6	+6d6

Table 3: Aging Effects

Middle Age	Old Age	Venerable Age	Maximum Age
20 years	30 years	40 years	40 + 1d20 years

conflagration. Fusing magic and martial prowess, umbral kobolds produce a fair share of magi of the dusk stalker archetype. Beyond these choices, umbral kobolds count more than a few alchemists and gunslingers among their ranks due to their incessant love of explosives and tinkering (be it with mutagens, bombs, or guns themselves).

History and Lore: Much debate surrounds the original nature of the first umbral kobolds. For instance, they possess conflicting legends about their ancestors. Some believe that rather than having stumbled their way there, they were in fact banished to the Shadow Plane, either by a rival tribe, a powerful spellcaster, or a vengeful evil god or archfiend, jealous and infuriated that the kobolds would dare to turn away from his veneration. There is also much conflicting lore surrounding how and how long it took for them to become umbral kobolds. Rather than this process taking many generations of slow exposure to the plane's essence, some legends speak of an early influence by more ancient natives of the plane. These benefactors are said to have warped the umbral kobolds to their current state either as a bit of passing benevolence to ensure their survival, or a pique of amusement, remaking them to their satisfaction—or, perhaps, even in their own vain image, as certain umbral dragons have claimed in the past. For their own part, umbral kobolds rarely deny any of these stories, regardless of the truth of the matter.

Magic: Similar to fetchlings, who likewise physically evolved under the Shadow Plane's influence, umbral kobolds' magic is heavily influenced by the plane's native energies. As a result of their own infusion with shadowstuff, illusion magic of the shadow subtype comes especially easy to them, but their spellcasting style is otherwise divergent from their native fellows. While illusions and quasi-real shadow magic tend to be their stock-in-trade, their use of it is an admixture of trickery and spectacle. One umbral kobold sorcerer might transport herself through shadow to evade a pack of zombies, and ten minutes later she might assault a vampire with a burst of explosive daylight in a half-dozen flashing colors. Illusions aside, evocation magic is a particular fascination of their kind; the more explosive and potentially deafening, the better. Most denizens of the Shadow Plane know of umbral kobolds' obsession with explosives of the mundane variety, and their spellcasters are no different, except that they possess more than mundane and alchemical means of producing the same effects. When they combine both, particularly potent results emerge, not always limited to their enemies' detriment. Skill with explosives, even magical ones, doesn't always imply a skill at making longer fuses.

War: If the living dead were queried for their opinion on umbral kobolds tactics—assuming intelligent thought rather than undying hunger for the sake of argument—they would

probably deride them for not fighting fairly. Kobolds are, by their very nature, hardly the bravest of all creatures, and rather than stand their ground and fight, their first instinct is to flee, usually to then set up traps or some variety of ambush. Umbral kobolds are precisely the same in this regard. Rather than accept this characterization of themselves as cowardly—a concept which strikes them as particularly odd—they view other races as needlessly foolish when it comes to fighting. Far from cowardly, umbral kobolds view their methods of fighting as being the heights of intelligence and common sense. Informed by an original habitat surrounded by larger, more powerful, and hardly benevolent races such as drow, duergar, and various subterranean aberrations, their practice of falling back and luring foes into disadvantageous situations, and haranguing them with a multitude of traps such as engineered rock falls, concealed pits, and explosive devices, simply makes sense given their natural capabilities.

Male Names: Bipjot, Corpaz, Datnop, Kurdag, Teangog, Vorfot

Female Names: Botzat, Dakfisk, Faxgip, Nuzlik, Tebzol, Yikfat

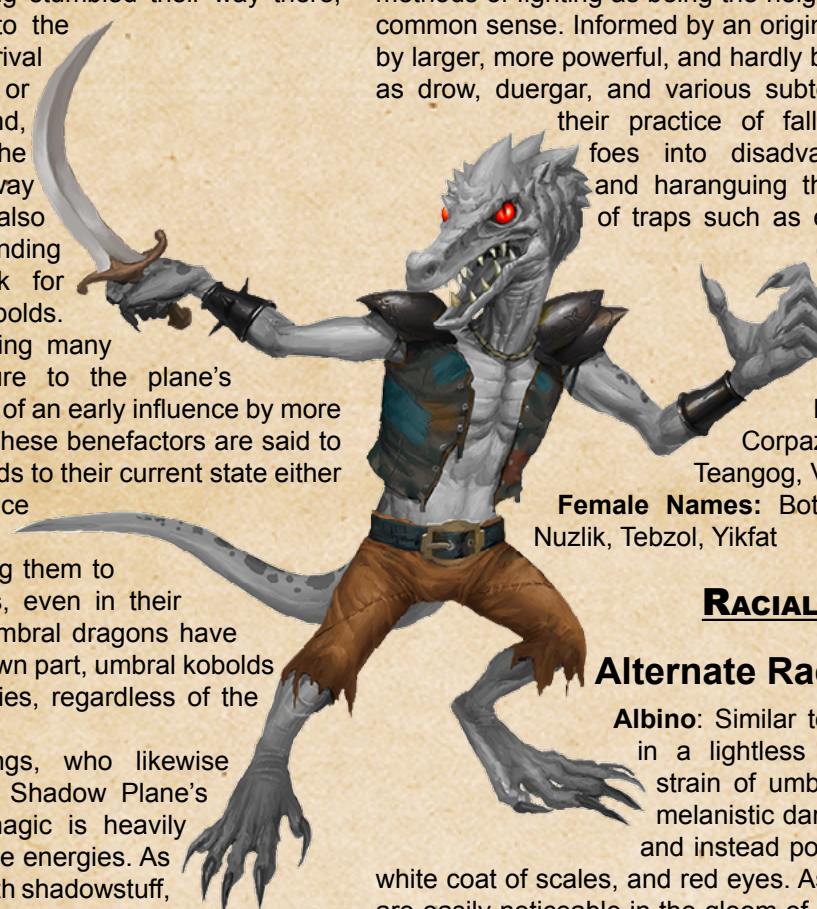
RACIAL OPTIONS

Alternate Racial Traits

Albino: Similar to animals that evolve in a lightless environment, a rare strain of umbral kobolds lacks the melanistic darkness of their kindred and instead possesses a pale, milky white coat of scales, and red eyes. As a result, their scales are easily noticeable in the gloom of Shadowsfall, resulting in a –4 penalty to Stealth checks. This trait replaces light sensitivity.

Venom: Through some quirk of evolution, or possibly the outside influence of other natives of Shadowsfall, some umbral kobolds possess specialized glands giving them the ability to spit mild venom once per day. This deep, inky black spittle can be spit up to 15 feet away and counts as a ranged touch attack. Those hit by the venom may save to avoid the effect (Fortitude DC 10 + the umbral kobold's Constitution bonus); otherwise, they are blinded for 1d3 rounds. Additionally, these umbral kobolds gain a +2 bonus on Craft (poison) checks. This racial trait replaces the crafty racial trait.

Shadowblooded: Some umbral kobolds are blessed (or cursed) with a deeper, more profound connection to the substance of their adopted homeland. As a result, they cast any spell with the shadow or darkness type at +1 caster level, but are impacted more harshly by strong sources of light. When exposed to sunlight or a *daylight* spell, they are blinded for an additional one round, and in areas of bright light they are nauseated as well as dazzled. This trait



replaces the light sensitivity racial trait.

Slink: Befitting their racial stereotype for fleeing at the first sign of danger, these umbral kobolds are swifter, slinkier, and more dexterous, but at the expense of the protective ability of their scales. These umbral kobolds gain a +1 bonus to their Dexterity and a +2 racial bonus to Stealth checks. This trait replaces the natural armor racial trait.

Racial Character Traits

Umbral kobolds may choose the character traits of their kobold brethren; however, they also have access to some unique abilities. Only umbral kobolds may select one of these traits.

Shadow Observer: Often overlooked by larger creatures, you've always been able to patiently observe the changing landscape, the workings of the plane, and a myriad of other tiny details otherwise lost in the face of other, more grandiose things. You're much more knowledgeable about the world, even if it seems fit to patently ignore you most of the time. You gain a +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (planes) and you treat Knowledge (planes), as a class skill.

Skittish: Having to perpetually dodge the attentions (and sometimes the blows) of much larger, much stronger creatures who either don't particularly like you, don't appreciate your sense of humor or helping yourself to their things, or who simply crave your flesh and blood, you've developed a bit of a nervous complex. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Reflex saving throws and a +1 trait bonus to Initiative checks.

Racial Archetypes

The following archetypes can be chosen by umbral kobolds.

SHADOWSNEAK

With a penchant for stealth and a profound dislike for fighting up close and personal as opposed to creating traps and ambushes, umbral kobold rogues often concentrate on those specialties as members of the shadowsneak archetype. Shadowsneaks often wander far afield of their companions, reporting back on approaching enemies and setting up a bevy of swift and deadly traps to catch them unawares rather than wandering into combat themselves—unless the element of surprise is simply too tempting to pass up.

Associated Class: rogue

Associated Race: umbral kobold

Replaced Abilities: trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Trapper (Ex): The shadowsneak gains a bonus to trap making and trap detection. A shadowsneak gains an insight bonus of 1/2 of his current rogue level (minimum 1) on both Craft (traps) and Perception checks to discover traps.

Swift Movement (Ex): Befitting his nimble nature, at 5th level and every 5 levels thereafter, a shadowsneak gains a 5-foot racial bonus to his movement speed. This bonus can be used only if the shadowsneak is wearing light armor or no armor.

Rogue Talents: The following rogue talents complement the shadowsneak archetype: camouflage, cunning trigger, quick trapsmith, and trap spotter.

Advanced Talents: The following advanced rogue talents

complement the shadowsneak archetype: frugal trapsmith, hunter's surprise, and stealthy sniper.

MAD BOMBER

While umbral kobolds produce more than their fair share of alchemists, their racial penchant for explosives, explosions, and flashy traps among multiple classes gives rise to a unique breed of alchemists: the so-called mad bomber. Obsessed with the incendiary potential of their research, they focus almost exclusively on bombs, eschewing other alchemists' concurrent work on mutagens and poisons. So focused, they produce bombs of terrific power and explosive results above and beyond that of similarly experienced members of the alchemist class. They are frequently responsible for many of the stereotypes about umbral kobolds among other races.

Associated Class: alchemist

Associated Race: umbral kobold

Replaced Abilities: mutagen, poison use, poison resistance, poison immunity

Modified Abilities: bombs

Bombs: The DC of a mad bomber's bombs is equal to 10 + 3/4 the mad bomber's level + the mad bomber's Intelligence modifier.

Fuseborne: A mad bomber's use of his bombs occurs with swift and practiced ease, so much so that he does not provoke an attack of opportunity when using a bomb. He still uses a standard action when preparing and throwing a bomb.

Explosive Zeal: Starting at 2nd level, a mad bomber qualifies for bomb-related discoveries at an advanced rate. A mad bomber receives a +2 bonus to his effective alchemist level when meeting the prerequisites for all discoveries relating to his bombs.

Racial Feats

APPRENTICE OF PAST SPLATTERS

You are deft at avoiding similarly catastrophic failures in disarming traps or avoiding firearm misfires.

Prerequisite: umbral kobold, base attack bonus +3

Benefit: Whenever you roll a 1 on a Disable Device check, or suffer a gunslinger misfire, reroll either the check or attack roll. If you succeed on this second roll, you either suffer a normal failure on the Disable Device check, or a normal miss on a misfire rather than setting off the trap or your firearm gaining the broken condition, or the normal effect of a misfire if the weapon was already broken.

SMALL BUT FIERCE [TEAMWORK]

Kobolds stand together. Kobolds brave. Kobolds stand apart. Kobolds flee. —kobold expression

Prerequisite: kobold or umbral kobold

Benefit: For every kobold or umbral kobold within 30 feet who has selected this feat (not including yourself), you gain a +1 morale bonus to saving throws versus fear effects and to resist effects from an Intimidation check.

UMBRAL BLENDING

Similar to certain other natives or adoptive natives of the Shadow Plane, your scales are colored so as to partially blend into the gloom, increasing your ability to survive and

causing attacks to more easily miss as a result of the gloom's normal obfuscation.

DEITIES

Prerequisite: umbral kobold, base attack bonus +5

Benefit: Attacks against you in dim light have a 40% miss chance, as opposed to the standard 20% miss chance. This feat does not grant total concealment; it simply increases the miss chance.

UMBRAL LEAPING

Already able to blend into the stuff of the Shadow Plane, your closer-than-normal connection to its substance allows you to physically transport yourself short distances, seemingly appearing out of nowhere to sneak around obstacles, traps, or enemies, or aid in ambushes and sneak attacks.

Prerequisite: umbral kobold, Umbral Blending; base attack bonus +8

Benefit: When standing within any light level lower than or equal to dim illumination, as a move equivalent action you gain the ability to leap forwards through the substance of the Shadow Plane, instantly appearing in another spot within 50 feet + 10 feet/level. You must be able to see where you intend to move, and any condition or effect such as *dimensional lock* that impedes planar movement likewise impairs the use of this ability. This ability is usable a number of times per day equivalent to 1 + your Charisma bonus.

Equipment

Inkspittle Concentrate: Concentrated and purified from the blinding venom excreted from some umbral kobolds' salivary glands, inkspittle poison allows any umbral kobold to easily blind a living opponent through injury, rather than simply spitting in their faces (not that this will stop them from doing just that anyway). Few others willingly use the substance, despite its utility, primarily due to the imagery of its formulation involving a dozen umbral kobolds gathered around an alchemical cauldron hacking and spitting gobbets of venom and phlegm, which smell vaguely of ammonia and whatever they most recently ate. Regardless of the nauseating method of its creation, when introduced through the wounds of a slashing or piercing weapon, it causes its victims to become staggered and possibly blind depending on their constitution or luck. **Cost:** 200 gp

Type poison—injury or ingestion; **save** Fortitude (DC 15); **onset** instantaneous (injury), 10 minutes (ingestion); **frequency** 1/round for 10 rounds; **initial effect** nauseated; **secondary effect** blinded; **cure** 2 consecutive saves.

Scale Stain: This dye stains one's scales to disguise one's heritage as an umbral kobold, and is most often used as a prank against other kobolds. It is most frequently used to denote a particular social status or stigma, such as the bright purple adopted by the clergy of Azdrelbitz the Mad. The availability of various colors depends heavily upon the resources available to alchemists and craftsmen in different regions of the Shadow Plane, and understandably the relative dearth of many colors precludes their frequent availability, as well as the limiting factor than many natural pigments available simply refuse to easily penetrate scales. Shades of blue, red, and mixtures thereof are most common, and smaller amounts of orange and green can be found. **Cost:** 300 gp.

While most umbral kobolds primarily worship Hakamitin the Steadfast Deity, and to a lesser extent the twin gods Bendes and Ular, and Akaron, they also venerate a small number of gods specific to their race. While hardly well-known outside their own tribes, these minor divinities often receive frequent worship and sacrifice, and at times placation alongside more traditional faiths. These minor and obscure divinities include Azdrelbitz the Mad (CN), Iskadzala, The Scavenger Savior / She Who Lights the Way Home (LG), and Keramak the Forgotten King (LE).

Azdrelbitz, The Mad

God of Joy, Wanderlust, and Insanity

Alignment: CN

Domains: Chaos, Fire, Madness, Trickery

Subdomains: Insanity, Protean, Smoke, Thievery

Mysteries: Flame, Joy ^{Sf:SPPC}, Life

Inquisitions ^{UM}: Conversion, Zeal

Favored Weapon: staff

Holy Symbol: umbral kobold head with green and gold eyes

Azdrelbitz the Mad represents one of the few faiths that breaks radically with the innate umbral kobold predilection towards strict law, presenting an almost antithetical reaction to the hardship, gloom, and tribulations experienced by a life lived within Shadowsfall. Far from dour and lawful, the Mad is represented in icons and holy symbols as a glossy purple umbral kobold with heterochromatic eyes of gold and green. Members of his clergy often develop the same eye coloration over time as a sign of his favor, and occasionally adopt a similar color of scales, leading to legends that Azdrelbitz himself occasionally moonlights amongst his people, spreading mischief and chaos in his wake. Whether he does or not in actuality, none can truly say.

Although largely rejected by the majority of umbral kobolds as being a faith of frivolity, unacceptable risk, and abandonment of social obligations, Azdrelbitz still manages to attract a small, faithful undercurrent among their kind. Often social outcasts prior to finding him, his followers tend to become wanderers, madmen, and thieves possessed of outright kleptomania, rather than simply a desire for wealth and obsession with gold like most umbral kobolds. These followers of the Mad provide ample reason for members of other races to judge and stereotype all of their kin, despite their relative rarity. Their thefts don't tend to be profitable, however, as one of Azdrelbitz's prohibitions is against the hoarding of wealth for one's own self. Rather, their thievery satisfies their desires, and also sees to the needs and desires of others by freely giving and taking as circumstances dictate. The same follower of the Mad derided as a scourge for pickpocketing their way through a stronghold may also be the one unknowingly lauded for subsequently paying off a gambler's debt, buying a meal and a drink for a destitute traveler, and leaving a bag of coins in the pocket of a man beaten and robbed by a brigand.

Though Azdrelbitz's faith holds little standing among the bulk of umbral kobold society, he finds a small number of deeply devoted followers, primarily among bards and certain oracles, but also among alchemists and wizards specializing

in evocation of the explosive variety. These few souls take deep comfort in the Mad's devotion to pleasure, spontaneity, and the pure bombastic nature of his presentation in the face of unrelenting gloom, expressing these values in their spellcraft and formulae.

Iskadizala, The Scavenger Savior / She Who Lights the Way Home

God of Self-Sacrifice, Community, and Ingenuity

Alignment: LG

Domains: Law, Good, Community, Nobility

Subdomains: Archon, Home, Leadership, Martyr

Mysteries: Ancestor, Heavens, Life

Inquisitions^{UM}: Conversion, Illumination, Justice

Favored Weapon: Longsword

Holy Symbol: a kobold's tail with a lamp on the end

Known as the Scavenger Savior and She Who Lights the Way Home, Iskadzala was said to have been an umbral kobold in a wandering tribe dwelling in the wilderness far from the known settlements of the Southern Peninsula. Trained as a scout and scavenger, she excelled at finding both food and treasure, and in protecting her tribe from the ever-present threat of the undead. While exploring a ruined tower dragged in from another plane, hoping to discover something of practical use within it, she found instead a glowing portal back to the Material Plane. She gathered her tribe, ushered them to the portal and waited, smiling as they left the horror-filled gloom for a better and brighter world. She waited until they had all passed through to safety—and then the portal sealed shut, leaving her behind. She had provided for her tribe, but had not told them that when she found the portal, it was not unguarded. In exchange for their passage, she had promised her life to the fiend bound to the ruins. Iskadzala died that day, sacrificing herself for her people. Yet in doing so, some higher power defied the fiend's hold on her spirit in reverence of the very selflessness of her act, and transfigured her into something greater.

Iskadizalan iconography frequently depicts the goddess as little more than a standard umbral kobold, flashing a rogue's wry smile, dressed in well-tailored but worn boots, leather armor scuffed from combat, and a brace of daggers and holy water strapped across her chest. A golden, glowing halo—and only the halo—serves to distinguish her image from any other well-seasoned specimen of her kind. In her second aspect, she appears minus arms and armor, gesturing towards an open, well-lit doorway, or holding a glowing lamp (sometimes hung from the tip of her tail). Her holy symbols usually depicts a curled umbral kobold tail bedecked with a lamp hung from its tip.

Iskadizala's followers prefer to work for the betterment of their communities as a whole rather than their own enrichment, eschewing both their own innate lust for gold and their desires for recognition and social elevation within their clans. This pattern of action isn't always easy, but her followers do their best to follow her example, emulating their patron through acts of bravery, selflessness, charity, and devotion to the betterment of their wider community. Her priesthood doesn't in any way disapprove of their races' obsession with coin and treasure—in fact, they frequently

embrace it—but they twist it on its side so that it serves more than self-satisfaction and greed. A wise seeker and scavenger of things lost, buried, forgotten and shiny is he or she that shares their wealth and serves as an example to their friends, family, and clan. Her followers compete with one another in a benevolent game of oneupmanship in order to show greater and greater gifts upon their clans.

Keramak, The Forgotten King

God of Kobold Supremacy, Xenophobia, Revenge

Alignment: LE

Domains: Law, Earth, Evil, Trickery

Subdomains: Caves, Deception, Kyton^{Sf:SPPC}, Metal

Mysteries: Ancestor^{UM}, Dark Tapestry^{UM}, Stone

Inquisitions^{UM}: Anger, Conversion, Heresy, Torture

Favored Weapon: pick axe or spear

Holy Symbol: crowned kobold atop a pile of skulls

Some of the oldest legends told by umbral kobold's state that their ancestors did not so much fall by accident into the Shadow Plane, but forsook the worship of an angry god and either fled from him or were banished to the eternal darkness by his furious will. True or not, Keramak the Forgotten King claims to be that very same ancestral divinity, and his clerics alternatively tell that he seeks to embrace his forgotten children with welcoming, fatherly arms, or that he demands their devotion and following now that he has found them once again.

Keramak's followers espouse a notion of umbral kobold racial superiority. By their judgment, there can be no such thing as theft (when applied to the possessions of other races), as wealth belongs rightly to them. Doubtless the other races stole or swindled it from them at some point in the past, or else exploited kobold labor in mining and refining it. Their particular brand of racist xenophobia doesn't prevent them from living within mixed communities, but they frequently exploit other races in lower social positions than themselves, and act as thieving parasites upon those communities higher up a stronghold's social ladder. Two particular races suffer their ire, however: gnomes and kytons. Keramak's followers work with kytons, trade with them, and rarely express any of the distaste and worry that other races possess when working with the chain devils, but out of earshot they venomously mock them with ruthless disdain. For reasons unknown even to them, their deity bitterly hates gnomes and directs his followers to vent their hatred upon them, and, if possible, at least once a year to abduct and sacrifice one of their kind in Keramak's name by burying them alive, preferably with an engineered rock fall, or by stoning them to death with heavy rocks.

Keramak's holy symbol resembles a crowned kobold silhouette atop a pile of skulls. His followers rarely display this symbol, or even their veneration of the deity, in any outward fashion except amongst fellow believers. Despite his commandments favoring wealth and rulership, many of his faithful are among the worst-off of umbral kobold society, favoring those without the skill or ethic to actually gain wealth through their own efforts, and instead feeding off of their embittered selfishness and resentment of others' wealth, especially those of other races. Keramak's clergy blames this not on their own followers, but on outside forces, which

only reinforces their inculcated xenophobia. As a result, virtually all other umbral kobold faiths view them as a poor example at best, and an active threat to their communities at worst.

UMBRAL KOBOLD MAGIC

New Spells

The following spells are common among umbral kobolds.

EXPLOSIVE DOUBLE

School illusion (shadow); **Level** magus 6, sorcerer/wizard 6

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft. / 2 levels)

Effect see text

Duration 1 round/level, then instantaneous upon trigger

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell creates an illusory double within your line of sight, which then proceeds to gather the attention of nearby enemies by loudly shouting, boasting, mocking, and jesting according to your particular preference. At any point during the spell's duration, you may trigger the double to explode in a 30-foot radius burst, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage per caster level (maximum 15d6, Reflex save for half) to any creatures caught in that area. Creatures interacting with the double prior to detonation may attempt a Will save to recognize its illusory nature and take only one-fifth of the damage.

RAIN OF COINS

School illusion (shadow); **Level**

magus 5, sorcerer/wizard 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. / level)

Effect 30-ft.-radius burst

Duration 1 round/2 levels

Saving Throw see text; **Spell**

Resistance yes

This spell creates a sudden, quasi-real, illusory shower of thousands of gold coins raining down at high velocity. Creatures caught in the spell's area take 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d8, Reflex save for half). If an affected creature succeeds on a Will save, they take only one-fifth damage from the spell. The illusory storm of coins continues throughout the duration, and any creature that starts its turn within the spell's area takes an additional 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d8, Reflex save for half).

SWARM OF ANGRY KOBOLDS

School illusion (shadow); **Level** bard 5, magus 6, sorcerer/wizard 6

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft. / 2 levels)

Effect 30-ft.-radius spread

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw none, see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell summons a swath of deep gloom, and a looming, illusory swarm of kobolds emerges out of the surrounding darkness, carrying spears and torches and poised to pounce and attack any creatures they find. Within the region of darkness, visibility is limited to five feet, including creatures with darkvision. Faced with the looming attackers, creatures within the area of effect are considered panicked unless they succeed on a Will save, in which case they are shaken, and must make the save in subsequent rounds if they remain in the area. On subsequent rounds, creatures who have failed the Will save are mobbed and attacked by the quasi-real kobolds, suffering 1d4 damage/level (maximum 10d4) each round for as long as they remain in the affected area.

New Magic Items

The following magic items are made by umbral kobold spellcasters.

DEADSEEKER

Aura faint divination and moderate necromancy; **CL** 11th;

Price +1 bonus; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This special ability can only be placed on ranged weapons. A *deadseeker* weapon unerringly targets the undead, seemingly moving out of the way of living targets in preference for the unliving. Normally, a creature firing into melee with a ranged weapon suffers a –4 penalty to attack. Firing a *deadseeker* weapon into melee at an undead target mitigates this penalty, removes any cover bonuses granted to the target by nearby living beings, and increases the weapon's enhancement bonus to attack and damage by +1 when so used.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *detect undead*, *true strike*, *undeath to death*; **Cost** +1 bonus

DRAGONSKULL CROWN

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 11th

Slot head; **Price** 80,000 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

More helmet than crown, and carved from the skull of an umbral dragon wyrmling, the *dragonskull crown* rests atop its wearer's head, framing their face with the fleshless grin of the skull's teeth. Often decorated with preserved scales, glowing glass eyes, and other fantastical accoutrements, it projects a fearsome (if sometimes obnoxious) view, depending on what manner of creature wears it, but it has potent powers



nonetheless. The crown's wearer gains a +2 enhancement bonus to both Intelligence and Charisma while wearing the crown. In addition, once per day the wearer of the crown may cast *form of the dragon I* as a spell-like ability for its normal affect, taking the form of a Medium umbral dragon and gaining the following additional abilities instead of the spell's standard forms.

Umbral dragon: 30-foot cone of negative energy damage, resist negative energy damage 20, attacks are *ghost touch*

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *form of the dragon I*, umbral dragon or umbral kobold **Cost** 40,000 gp

NIGHTMARE OF LIFE'S RECOLLECTION

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 9th

Slot —; **Price** 2,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

Nightmare of life's recollection, stored as a faintly glittering black dust or thin liquid, acts as a potent and uniquely acting poison against the undead, who are normally immune to such toxins. This compound is usually thrown as a ranged touch attack; imbued with skillful necromantic magic, undead that come into contact with it partially reopen either the faintest, tangential connection to their long vacant, distant soul, or become aware of a memory of their time prior to undeath pulled from the husk of their corpse. Thusly affected, the undead become poignantly aware of the horror of their condition, and are affected as if by a *fear* spell. Unintelligent undead and those lacking a soul receive no save, while those with a soul (corrupted as it may be) such as vampires, liches, and ghosts must make a DC 20 Will save to avoid the effect.

For an additional 50 gp of alchemical treatment, a weapon or projectile can be coated with a dose of the magical toxin, which is expended after successfully striking a target.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fear*, *raise dead*; **Cost** 1,000 gp

SYMPATHETIC TWITCH

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 9th

Slot —; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This powerful, eclectic, and terribly kitschy object contains a sort of devotional object such as the bones of a saint or tatters of a holy man's robe. Unlike those holy relics, however, the bauble encompassing the *sympathetic twitch* contains a preserved fragment of someone who died in some horrible and possibly unintentionally hilarious way. Such was the impact of their death that their magically attuned flesh retains a faint memory of the event and seeks to avoid such a fate again. Upon exposure to the specific source of their death, be it a type of monster, a kind of natural disaster, a school of magic, etc., the charm or bauble holding the parcel of flesh goes berserk, twitching and wriggling in place, rattling any loose objects or bangles attached to the rightfully named *sympathetic twitch*. Kobold chieftains and expert scouts in Shadowsfall often carry a jingling, jangling multitude of them on their person, casually consulting them for the slightest

unique signal of their malady reoccurring. A creature carrying a *sympathetic twitch* attuned to a specific manner of death gains a +1 circumstance bonus to any saves against that specific source, with relevance adjudicated by the DM on a case-by-case basis for specificity. Each *sympathetic twitch* has its attuned malady set at the time of its manufacture, and cannot be altered after that point.

Rumors exist of more powerful versions that retain a link to the soul of those who died, capable of providing an uncannily adept warning (as per *foresight*) to those about to fall victim to that which killed them originally.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, a portion of the corpse of a creature who died by the specific malady to which the *sympathetic twitch* is to be attuned, *animate dead*, *bless*; **Cost** 2,500 gp

COMMUNITIES

Children of the Hungry Slumberer: Beyond the confines of the great strongholds, resources grow increasingly difficult to obtain, the undead range without anything to contain their numbers, and when the very terrain shifts and alters swiftly from any map, few but the most storied heroes ever survive for anything but the briefest of excursions or transitory flights. That said, umbral kobolds are often relegated to the lowest rungs of the social ladder present within whichever stronghold they dwell, with few exceptions. Few would expect heroism to emerge from a race barely ascended from the ancestral vermin that produced them prior to their reforging in the Shadow Plane's metaphorical crucible. Yet, there exists a tribe of umbral kobolds who abjectly shun the confines of each and every stronghold, preferring to slink among the shadow depths beyond their safety and resources, not only surviving, but somehow inexplicably thriving.

Calling themselves the Children of the Hungry Slumberer, the clan embodies a strain of truly brutal pragmatism that might at first glance be confused with a lack of concern or a streak of evil borne from their exposure to the horrors of the Outlands. Their attitude is one matched by the occasional loner that manages to eke out a hard, terrifying life in the wilderness, but their actions are tempered and molded by something else that gives them a strange sense of direction and purpose beyond simple, brutal survival.

Their leader—himself a less-than-welcoming figure—Ezelfetz Drake-scion (male NE sorcerer 12 (umbral dragon bloodline)), carries out the will as he divines it from their tribe's patron, supposedly a massive and slumbering umbral dragon. Ezelfetz's glossy black, nearly purple scales, and glittering yellow eyes suggest more to his surname than histrionics, and he along with all of his tribe claim descent in some capacity from their patron, the eponymous Hungry Slumberer. Yet relatively few of the clan share his decidedly pitiless and more selfish outlook; rather, they are ruthlessly pragmatic and beholden to the dreams of their patron (as discerned by their chief). Despite this, the clan has repeatedly proven its value in defending more than one village from undead attacks out of seeming benevolence, simply saying it was their patron's will and leaving it at that. If happened upon by travelers or adventurers, the clan is

typically quite amenable to trading for supplies or more often outright purchasing them, though this welcome ceases to reach intelligent undead and kytōns alike, both of whom are shunned at best, and attacked or driven off whenever possible. Curiously, they refuse to steal from anyone they come across unless first attacked, claiming the act beneath them, and frowned upon by their patron—something deeply appreciated by those running across an entire tribe of heavily-armed kobolds deep in the wilderness.

The tribe possesses no clerics, but an ample number of sorcerers and a smaller coterie of rangers and druids supply their magical and healing needs. Not entirely self-sufficient in dwelling the lightless depths, they periodically approach one of the major citadels and purchase supplies and magical items, not by trading or offering their services, but by outright purchasing them with an astounding amount of gold. Scholars are of two minds on their source: either the clan is amazingly successful as it wanders the Outlands, plundering whatever abandoned keeps or forgotten tombs they come across that have been drawn into the Shadow Plane from a myriad of other worlds, or they actually serve a gargantuan umbral dragon that lairs in fitful slumber somewhere deep within or below the mountains of the southern peninsula. The Children of the Hungry Slumberer don't care to elaborate on the truth of the matter—and whether fact or fiction, their claimed patron serves as a potent figurehead and something to dissuade any from following them into the wilds to seek the source of their wealth.

Clan Inkscale: While umbral kobolds often serve as a distinct and bullied underclass within many of the older, more established strongholds, the members of Clan Inkscale transcend that experience as full and welcome members of their particular society. Unlike in many other strongholds, in Blackbat (the newest and arguably least secure of the great strongholds) Inkscale's umbral kobolds aren't pigeonholed into any one specific role, nor are they typecast like so many other of their kindred elsewhere in the Shadow Plane. The future isn't secure enough to afford anyone the opportunity to so dismissively patronize anyone else because of arbitrary social bigotries so long as they prove their worth and pull their own weight, which the Inkscale clan does without the least of objections.

Members of the clan excel at a number of professions, and unlike in other strongholds they don't face resistance in openly learning them in the same ways as other races. Apprenticeships are open and masters don't automatically reject their requests or have them removed from their workshops or studios—something relatively common in other strongholds. More than a few members of Clan Inkscale study arcane magic at the stronghold's University, producing a number of wizards, sorcerers, alchemists, and smaller numbers of magi every year. Every other class receives the same attention, but the aforementioned ones are those that

stand out the most, given the lengthy and often expensive training they require.

Many other tribe members work in the stronghold's mines, seeking out veins of ore, handling explosives to drive new passages, and corralling the mine's captive zombies to do most of the heavy labor. Others make a living as scouts and zombie hunters among the outlying regions, utilizing their small size and quickness to avoid detection and harm. Still others profit off of the brushfire conflicts among several of the other races that populate Blackbat in various number. These perhaps less-upstanding clan members use the enmities cultivated there and the relatively pacified reaction towards themselves by most others to steal, with convenient scapegoats and patsies readily available (whereas in other strongholds that role would often fall to them). In less exploitative pursuits, they also act as hired blades in various inter-communal conflicts, as well as in any number of adventurers' tasks for hire, asking few questions and often serving alongside the even mix of races typified by Blackbat's population itself.

Taking careful stewardship of Clan Inkscale, a pair of identical siblings, the sisters Belagret (female LN alchemist 7/rogue 3), and Belarasla (female LG fighter 7/rogue 3) co-rule the tribe in a curious variation of their race's standard meritocracy. Indistinguishable except for their professions' typical clothing, they frequently moonlight as one another, with Belagret donning a half dozen blades and armor, and Belarasla robes and a bandolier of alchemical bombs (with a conveniently concealed brace of daggers handily present as well). They find the ruse incredibly amusing, and oftentimes the only way to discern one posing as the other is to notice the occasional high-pitched chuckle (assuming of course that they don't pull the same break in character when not posing as their sister to simply keep everyone else off balance and unaware). Having held their role for only the past several years, they've striven to increase the opportunities available to their tribe mates, while also cultivating a reputation for the clan itself and their race as a whole for skill and cooperation with the other races on par with the assumed default those others already possess. Unlike many other authorities in umbral kobold society and other races as well, the twin sisters don't blink at leaving the safety of their stronghold to pursue work for hire or self-motivated activities either. This in and of itself earns them a measure of respect above and beyond their relatively scant years of life.

Clan Skitterclaw: Within Gear's Gate, the oldest functioning stronghold in Shadowsfall, umbral kobolds live in relative safety, filling a much-needed social niche within which they thrive, but at the expense of having virtually no respect from their racial peers. The other citizens of Gear's



Gate view them as the lowest of the low, but unfortunately necessary for the greater good of Gear's Gate. Within the stronghold's social hierarchy, Clan Skitterclaw serves the various social houses as unobtrusive, ubiquitous, nameless cogs in the houses' metaphorical machines and intrigues. Relatively interchangeable and paid little notice by their employers, they serve as mercenaries, spies, go-betweens, thieves and obtainers of whatever components or raw materials the houses need—be it mined, scoured for in the surrounding countryside, below the city itself, or from another house—with no questions asked. They exist everywhere and nowhere, and with their ubiquity they thrive in the shadows.

Most of the clan's members function in many varied capacities; over their lives they become jacks of all trades, beloved by none, often multi-classing rather than focusing on single, specific professions. As much of the clan serves as a perpetual underclass largely out of sight and out of mind, or even in plain sight but similarly out of mind. Accordingly and not without surprise, Clan Skitterclaw perpetrates a significant amount of petty theft within Gear's Gate, and occasionally major thefts of magical objects or alchemical materials, the latter of which is oftentimes blamed on one or another of the various feuding houses.

Some of the clan's members learn enough from observing the stronghold's wizards and alchemists (or by stealing enough material and tomes of lore to learn on their own) that they gain a scattered and illicit, but relatively profound, education in those classes. Additionally, a number of gunslingers exist within the clan, gleefully utilizing firearms found in ancient tombs or pilfered from the vaults of other houses. These classes, though small in number within the clan, often occupy powerful roles as leaders within the clan, or as individuals that break through the wall of anonymity that typically stifles their clan mates' attempts at exceeding their traditional societal station. This frequently involves the discharge of a pistol into the ceiling and the subsequent rain of dirt upon the clan.

Lurking happily behind that wall of anonymity, the elderly matron Tsilzeszifir the Scampering Witch (female LN witch 14) serves as the unquestioned leader of Clan Skitterclaw. Rarely seen by anyone outside of the clan, and rare still within, she typically operates through a half-dozen intermediaries spanning both martial and magical talents, each of whom could step forward to replace her when she reaches the end of her lifespan... which she hasn't for at least three centuries of extant records in Gear's Gate. In fact, no one within the clan or without remembers a time when she wasn't the clan's matriarch. Rumors abound that she survives via undeath, that she steals the youthful body of one of her lieutenants before she would die of old age, or that she isn't one person at all, but a combination of intentionally-cultured urban myths and a name and title passed down to each new clan chief upon the previous one's death. Few have met the supposedly powerful witch, and her clan cultivates that aura of mystery, perhaps as a deviously successful, generations-long inside joke.

NPC

DAKFISK DARKSCALE

CR 11

XP 12,800

Umbral kobold rogue (shadowsneak) 12

LG Small humanoid (extraplanar, reptilian)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 105 (12d8+48)

Fort +7, **Ref** +13 (+4 bonus vs. traps), **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense, uncanny dodge

Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +2 *rapier* +17/+12 (1d4+1/18-20/x2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +7 (+9 dirty trick); **CMD** 22 (24 vs. dirty trick)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Dirty Trick ^{APG}, Small but Fierce, Stealth Synergy ^{UC}, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +20, Bluff +16, Climb +14, Craft (traps) +27, Disable Device +22, Knowledge (local) +17, Perception +16 (+22 to locate traps), Sleight of Hand +20, Stealth +29, Use Magic Device +16; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Craft (trapmaking), +4 Perception, +4 Profession (miner)

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Shadowpeak

SQ crafty, rogue talents (cunning trigger ^{APG}, hunter's surprise ^{APG}, quick disable ^{APG}, quick trapsmith, resiliency, trap spotter), swift movement, trapper +6

Gear +1 *shadow studded leather armor*, +2 *rapier*, *belt of mighty constitution* +2, mwk artisan's tools, mwk thieves' tools, *wand of cure moderate wounds*.



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