

LARGER THAN LIFE

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 **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

KOBOLD[™]
Press

LARGER THAN LIFE

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PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

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Press



R T N X I M R N X F M S F Y B T M R Z I X I C N F M S F Y B M

THURSIR





While one of the least powerful of the known giants, thursir have the greatest impact on humanoid settlements unfortunate enough to exist near their enclaves. Most of the time, these giants work at their vast underground forges, creating armor, weapons, and incredible engines of war. Interspersed with these bursts of industriousness are great banquets that last for days and require another day of recovery from food-induced stupor. When it comes to gathering food for these tremendous feasts, thursir possess the opposite attitude to the drive that puts them at the forge for days at a time. They use the results of their metalworking labors to obtain all that is necessary by force or through trade with unscrupulous leaders.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Thursir males have three primary concerns in their lives: metal-crafting, finding an outlet for their aggression, and, most importantly, eating. They spend most of their lives in massive, preexisting caverns they have further carved out, under mighty, frozen mountains. Thursir live in enclaves that support up to fifty giants, the majority of which are adult males. These surprisingly intelligent giants primarily apply their intellects at the forge, where they create goods that rival those produced by the greatest dwarven craftspeople. One would be wise not to make direct comparisons to dwarven craft in front of a thursir, though; to do so risks the giant's wrath.

The only outward sign of the enclaves where the giants fastidiously craft their wares is smoke from mountainside vents. When smoke stops pouring from of a thursir enclave, though, people in nearby settlements grow nervous and brace for an imminent attack. In preparation for these great raids, thursir hold wrestling contests to determine who gets the best spoils and to hone their aggressiveness. As a brutal indicator of the thursir's intelligence, the giants are careful not to completely wipe out the target of the raid or target a settlement too often. After all, they need nearby communities to remain viable and produce food and slaves for later raids.

A successful marauding trip provides the thursir with livestock, harvested crops, baked goods, and alcohol for a days-long banquet. Additionally, the giants capture women to serve alongside the female thursir, whom the males treat not much differently than the slaves, to prepare the banquet. While thursir are no gourmands, they expect their food to be flavorful, spicy, or filling, preferring that it meet all three criteria. A raucous affair complete with

impromptu wrestling matches and general destruction, the feast ends with all male thursir collapsed in a heap. The female thursir and slaves clean up the mess before the males regain consciousness and resume their forging duties.

Thursir childrearing is a community affair, with thursir women taking care of the youngest children's needs while the thursir men work at the forge or go on their raiding trips. Once a child can walk, he or she is put with other children of the same gender. Under the watchful eyes of assigned males—a duty the giants consider an honor, since the teachers develop future warriors—thursir boys are encouraged to fight and wrestle with each other. The adults overseeing their charges ignore bullying, a common occurrence among the boys that pushes the bullied thursir to grow physically powerful and turn the tables on their tormenters or perish. Older boys start working at the forge and practicing combat with armor and weapons. At night, boys learn about thursir clan heroes from their fathers, as part of the giants' oral tradition. Surprisingly, considering the thursir's intelligence and their tendency to settle in an area for many generations, they have no written works. However, their oral history goes back many generations, and all males retain this history, as well as any recent additions, so they can relay the stories to future thursir. During banquets, boys will often recite these stories to the gathered thursir as part of their rites to transition into adulthood.

Thursir girls learn and practice their duties as maids and cooks, usually in the form of games where they pretend to keep house. Occasionally, they interact with the rowdy thursir boys to perfect their skills, which marks the only real interaction between the two genders during childhood and sets the pattern for their roles during adulthood.

Girls usually continue their training as servants, but, where the clan counts spellcasting women among its population, promising girls learn the ways of magic.

At death, the duality of treatment for males and females continues. Warriors receive a banquet in their honor, including heartfelt speeches from their friends, family, and chief, before incineration at their favorite forge and interment in the burial vault. Women also receive a burial, but their funerals amount to a few quick words to a deity to accept the deceased as hard-working servants. Only the disgraced—those who have cold-bloodedly murdered another thursir or stolen food—receive worse treatment at death, as the thursir dump the bodies into an aboveground chasm for scavengers to pick at.

Thursir clans gather in weeklong, regional moots every two to five years. At these gatherings, the thursir

brag about their conquests and show off their crafts and possessions—including both thursir and slave women—but the centerpiece of these moots is the wrestling tournament the thursir use to determine the most powerful clan. Thursir leaders, or their champions, engage in a free-for-all battle where the last thursir standing is declared the victor. The winning clan gets its pick of armor, weapons, livestock, and women. A moot concludes with a massive banquet prepared by the losing clans.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A single powerful chief leads a thursir clan. He decides where and when his clan raids, calls for banquets, oversees production of metal goods (while also working at the forge himself), and engages with trade partners. Three to five thursir, usually those who have excelled at wrestling matches during the most recent banquet or have acquitted themselves well in battle, serve as his lieutenants, but they act more as bodyguards than advisors. A thursir chief does not eschew work at the forge, nor does he avoid combat during raids or the occasional skirmishes against hated dwarves. As long as his duties do not require him to be elsewhere, he works at the forge alongside his subjects.

He also leads the charge when the thursir decide to plunder nearby communities. He engenders loyalty from all the males in the clan, provided he does not falter in battle, produce shoddy goods, or father multiple daughters—all signs of weakness to thursir. While he holds his position, he gets the first choice of food at banquets and he can take any thursir woman he wants as a wife or any non-thursir woman as a personal slave. Typically, when a chief fathers a girl, he immediately exchanges wives. He does not punish the mother, though, as this would be a sure admission of weakness.

Transition of power occurs when the chief dies, when he father three daughters in a row, or when a challenger defeats the chief in a wrestling match. When the chief dies or demonstrates he is unfit by fathering female heirs, his lieutenants engage in a wrestling tournament to determine the new leader. A thursir usually challenges an existing chief when he feels the chief has shown weakness in battle, has failed to take enough tribute from neighboring communities, or has performed poorly at recent moots. Whether a former lieutenant takes over or a challenger bests the previous leader, the new leader chooses a different set of lieutenants. If the deposed leader still lives, he accepts his diminished role in the clan or asks for an honorable death at the hands of the new leader.

Thursir men have an understood pecking order that starts with the chief, flows through the lieutenants, and terminates at the weakest thursir male. However, even the least physically imposing male enjoys a better status than those who dishonor themselves in battle. Thursir who show signs of cowardice or whose weapons break during combat get relegated to duties where they oversee females in the performance of their drudgery. These dishonorable thursir also sit with the women during banquets. After a year of this demeaning treatment, the thursir return to the forge in the hope that they have learned their lesson.

However, even thursir men dealing with their punishments have a higher social standing than thursir women and the enslaved humanoid women—thursir never take men as slaves, since they figure, like themselves, other males would rather die. Thursir women clean, cook, shepherd and husband livestock, and oversee other slaves in the pursuit of the same duties. Since thursir women rarely devote all their time to these tasks, they spend their free time at either arcane or spiritual study. Typically, these studies provide a means to the end of empowering or protecting the men. Thursir are not particularly superstitious, so the men have no problem with thursir women capable of enchanting their weapons and armor. Thursir males spend very little time praying to deities, which puts the onus of divine guidance or intercession on the females. While the men certainly appreciate the arcane and divine assistance from women, and even cherish these magically adept women, this does not affect a female's overall status in thursir society. Additionally, Thursir men never mistreat women, even during their most rowdy banquets; they see the act of physical violence toward a woman as a cowardly act, since they do not envision women having the capability to defend themselves.

In some thursir clans, thursir women create a sort of shadow society, especially among the magically gifted. They do not seek overt leadership, as they realize that the vast majority of thursir clans would never accept a female leader. However, these thursir women have become adept at magically manipulating events to drive the clan's course to their liking. Women from these clans who get traded or taken at moots start up secret societies in their new homes. Many times this requires patience on their part while they convince their new female clan-mates to quietly subvert male authority. They do not expect large scale changes in the near institutional treatment of women in their lifetimes, but they imagine the status quo will evolve in a few generations' time.

Thursir mutants enjoy a peculiar place in thursir society. All non-mutant thursir regard them with a combination of awe, for reaching a pinnacle of gluttony thursir do not normally allow themselves, and fear, as many worry these mutants will eventually resort to cannibalism to sate their appetites. Thursir mutants seem content with this mixed reverence and take advantage of their status to get first dibs at banquets—after the chief of course. Thursir mutants never use their extreme girth as an excuse to avoid combat, and relish the fear their appearance generates in their opponents.

RELIGION

Thursir males in particular give only lip service to their gods, as they generally believe they alone carry the responsibility for their successes and failures. Even the many thursir who invoke the turisaz rune on their weapons do not associate the rune with a god; rather, they assume they power the rune through their personal force of will and their innate understanding of the rune. They will accept a good word on their behalf from female thursir (no known male thursir priests exist), but they feel that over-reliance on divine aid is an admission of cowardice.

Thursir women pray for good fortune in battle, divine guidance for the men at the forge, and forgiveness from the more punitive gods. Additionally, they pray for bountiful harvests and fattened livestock for the communities around them, which may seem self-serving but benefits even those locations the thursir do not raid in the near term.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Thursir naturally regard all smaller races as inferior and suited only for pillaging and enslaving, with a couple of exceptions. Meanwhile, they chafe under the rule of more powerful creatures with which they share territory, notably dragons and other giants.

DWARVES One of the exceptions to the general thursir treatment of other races, dwarves taste thursir ire towards them any time the two races come into contact. This hatred derives from an incident dating to when both races were young and the gods decided where to place the new races. Thursir and dwarves both desired underground territory replete with veins of precious ore, so the gods held a contest where they would reward the best craftspeople with the favorable land.

After the thursir crafted their pieces, they overindulged in premature celebration, confident in their metalworking skill relative to the dwarves'. While the thursir slept off their feast and left their work unguarded, dwarves snuck in and introduced hidden flaws in the thursir goods. The following day, thursir weapons and armor initially proved superior to dwarven weapons and armor, as the giants expected. However, one by one, the thursir-crafted items broke during subsequent testing, embarrassing the thursir in front of the gods and allowing the accursed dwarves to settle in areas the giants viewed as rightfully belonging to them.

This indignity, coupled with the universal view that thursir are dumber and less skillful than dwarves, drives a thursir mad with rage when he encounters one. Thursir who discover a dwarven settlement attack it relentlessly with the intent of wiping out all inhabitants. The giants never take dwarven women as slaves, as they expect nothing but treachery from dwarves. Fortunately for the continued survival of both races, they rarely neighbor each other, and thursir are more concerned with obtaining the makings of their next banquet than with dwarven genocide.

Thursir women find dwarven women fascinating, an opinion they cannot express openly. Dwarven women fight alongside dwarven men, and they receive equal treatment. Thanks to their similar appearance, thursir women who seek emancipation use magical means to quietly slip away from their enclaves, change their size to match that of a dwarf, and then integrate into dwarven society.

ELVES Thursir rarely encounter elves, except for the occasional trade agreement with those from the underworld, so they do not have an overriding view on them. Thursir who raid elven communities expect easy battles against what they see as frail creatures, so elves easily rout the unprepared giants.

While thursir may disdain elven combat styles that focus more on their agility and prowess with bows, as opposed to the thursir's straightforward attacks, the giants cannot deny the elves' effectiveness in combat. For those thursir who persevere against their elven opponents, they usually find the spoils to be unworthy of the effort. Thursir dislike the taste of most elven food, and it

proves unserviceable for filling their stomachs. The giants also refuse to take elven women as slaves, out of belief that the women will break under the rigors of their work in a thursir enclave.

GNOMES Gnomes enjoy the most equitable relationship with thursir out of any non-thursir race. Oftentimes, thursir will spare individual gnomes in a community with a mixture of races, or whole gnome settlements, from their raids. Thursir instead offer promising gnome males an apprenticeship in the underground enclaves, where the gnomes are meant to learn metalwork.

In actuality, the gnome apprentices help the giants develop more effective techniques for crafting weapons and armor, though the gnomes are usually wise enough to make it seem like the thursir devised these techniques. Thursir hold the strange belief that dwarves have also disadvantaged gnomes, and so see gnomes as kindred spirits. Gnomes do not mind the arrangement they have with thursir and are careful not to disillusion the giants about their relationship with dwarves, since the giants ward off many gnome enemies.

HALFLINGS Thursir are often delighted by the presence of pastoral halfling communities. The giants hold the diminutive folk in high regard for the ability to raise the best livestock and, more importantly, prepare the best meals. This regard does little to protect halflings from thursir raids, but those halflings taken as slaves receive the best accommodations and have shorter terms in thursir enclaves.

Additionally, a thursir chief stations a contingent of guards to stand watch over the halfling village and protect it from other creatures. While this may seem like a punishment or drudge work for thursir, they actually consider it an honor, especially since they get daily helpings of halfling-prepared meals. Outsiders liken the situation to that of a bullying older sibling who disallows harm to come to younger siblings by other people. Depending on the overall situation, halflings regard their relationship with thursir as beneficial or as an occupation by an enemy force. The former group works with the thursir to establish favorable timetables for “duty” in a thursir enclave, while the latter seek to undermine the giant invaders without getting caught.

HUMANS Thursir most often encounter humans in their raids. Many of the giants are impressed by human resilience and adaptability, especially in those settlements where the humans grow better prepared for a subsequent raid. Human women comprise the majority of thursir slaves, but thursir are often alarmed to hear the human women discuss horrifying concepts like gender equality and freedom.

Thursir refuse to make an example of these rabble-rousers because of their overall view of women. Instead, they typically drag troublesome women back to their settlements under cover of darkness. In the thursir’s backward view, these women will cause trouble for human men and undermine their ability to protect their settlement, thus making it easier to raid the village in the future.

KOBOLDS Thursir view kobolds the way other humanoids view rodents and other vermin: as pests who deserve extermination. Kobolds often steal equipment and food from neighboring thursir and then trap the entrances to their warrens. If kobolds prove too annoying, a squad of thursir crashes through the kobold lair and utterly destroys it, all the while setting off traps that maim or kill members of the squad. Kobolds rarely return after such devastation, but a particularly stubborn kobold king might rebuild in a nearby location and seek revenge. Such escalations are surprisingly detrimental to the giants.

ORCS Orcs are the most common neighbor, other than humans, to thursir. The giants admire the orcish spirit on display when they fight, but they find raids on orc settlements to be futile at best. Orcs hardly ever grow their own food or raise livestock, so thursir gain very little from a raid. Additionally, thursir who make the mistake of taking orc women as slaves discover that the women are unruly and must be monitored closely, making them much more trouble than they are worth.

OTHER GIANTS Thursir often share their mountain homes with frost giants, who dominate the mountain’s upper reaches, and fire giants, who often inhabit volcanically active mountains. The tables turn for the thursir when it comes to the more powerful giants, who force the thursir to craft weapons and armor for them, with fire giants often

taking thursir slaves to work at fire giant forges. Thursir justify this relationship as recognition of their superior metalcrafting skills.

DEGENERATE THURSIR

Thursir normally do not have a taste for humanoid flesh and live quite happily on their taken-by-might livestock, grains, vegetables, and fruit. However, due to famine and plague outside their mountain enclaves, the communities around them might not provide enough food for the thursir. Thursir are smart enough to stock up on supplies to weather the occasional setback, but extreme circumstances might force the giants to turn their appetites toward the people they raid. Once a thursir eats the flesh of a humanoid, they rarely return to their typical fare, and their pillaging becomes truly frightening for their victims, as the giants stop in mid-battle to devour chunks of flesh from still-living prey. This degeneracy affects clans in a wholesale fashion, where those few who resist end up becoming the next meal for an overwhelming number of cannibals. Eventually, these degenerate clans wipe themselves out or other thursir clans band together to destroy them.



THURSIR RACIAL RULES

Those who presume that all thursir are the same do so at their peril. Though to a lesser extent than other races, they too possess diversity in their motivations, weapons, equipment, and acceptance of magic. Their interactions with other races, notably dwarves, drives this diversity, so thursir enjoying the status quo rarely differ much from one another in terms of abilities or armaments.

THURSIR RACIAL FEATS

Thursir enjoy their prowess at the forge and in battle, and those who advance in classes often improve their abilities in both arenas. Experienced giants who frequently encounter dwarves may specifically improve their combat ability against their hated foes.

CRUSHING GRAPPLE (COMBAT)

You can give smaller opponents you have grappled a breathtaking bear hug.

Prerequisites: Thursir, Improved Grapple.

Benefit: When you deal damage to a Medium or smaller foe you have grappled, you can choose to deal 1d6 points of lethal or 2d6 points of nonlethal damage. You also receive a +2 bonus to your CMD when an opponent attempts to break free of a grapple.

DWARF CRUSHER (COMBAT)

You have studied dwarven combat techniques and know how they fight against giants.

Prerequisite: Thursir.

Benefit: When you make a melee attack against a dwarf, you gain a +4 bonus on attack rolls. This bonus only applies to dwarves with a dodge bonus against creatures with the giant subtype.

DWARF SMASHER

Your hatred towards dwarves manifests when you battle them.

Prerequisite: Thursir.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when you attack a dwarf.

FORGE ADEPT

You possess the ability to temporarily imbue weapons with magic.

Prerequisites: Thursir, 10 ranks in Craft (weapons).

Benefit: For weapons that you personally forge, you can apply *magic weapon* as a spell-like ability 3 times per day, with a caster level equal to the number of ranks you have in Craft (weapons).

FORGE HARDENED

Your time at the forge has rendered your skin impervious to the heat.

Prerequisites: Thursir.

Benefit: You gain resist fire 10.

Special: You can take this feat one additional time. Its effects stack.

FORGE SAVANT

Your ability to boost your weapons drastically improves.

Prerequisites: Thursir, Forge Adept, 15 ranks in Craft (weapons).

Benefit: For weapons that you personally forge, you can apply *greater magic weapon* as a spell-like ability 3 times per day, with a caster level equal to the number of ranks you possess in Craft (weapons).

HAMMERING CLEAVE (COMBAT)

When you wield a thursir gravity hammer, you can attempt to throw multiple opponents around.

Prerequisites: Thursir, Str 13, Cleave, Power Attack.

Benefit: When you successfully bull rush a foe with a thursir gravity hammer, you may make an additional melee attack at your highest attack bonus against an opponent within reach. You may make only one additional attack per round using this feat.

HUNGRY RAGE

Your rumbling belly drives you to great heights of anger.

Prerequisites: Thursir, rage class feature.

Benefit: If you become fatigued from lack of food, you can rage an additional 10 rounds. You cannot gain more than 10 rounds of rage per day from this feat, and you cannot use any of your rage duration from your class while you are fatigued.

Normal: You cannot rage while fatigued.

IMPROVED RUNIC BLOOD

Your connection to the *turisaz* rune strengthens.

Prerequisite: Thursir.

Benefit: You can invoke the *turisaz* rune's powers 2 additional times per day.

Special: You can take this feat additional times. Its benefits stack.

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

You have mastered the art of phrasing demands that thursir men cannot resist.

Prerequisite: Thursir female.

Benefit: You can use *suggestion* as a spell-like ability once per day (your effective caster level equals your Hit Dice plus class levels in your highest level class with *suggestion* on its spell list). Thursir males take a -4 penalty on their Will saves to resist the spell.

RESIZER

You have an innate ability to shrink or grow other humanoids, or yourself if necessary.

Prerequisite: Thursir female.

Benefit: You can use either *enlarge person* or *reduce person* as a spell-like ability a total of 3 times per day. Your caster level is equal to your Hit Dice plus class levels in your highest level class with *enlarge person* and *reduce person* on its spell list.

RESIZING MISTRESS

Your ability to invoke size changes improves drastically.

Prerequisites: Thursir female, Resizer.

Benefit: When you cast *reduce person* or *enlarge person*, either as a spell-like ability or from a spell slot, you can reduce or enlarge a humanoid by two steps. You can expend a use of the appropriate spell-like ability granted by Resizer to increase the duration of the spell or spell-like ability to 1 hour/level.

THURSIR ASCETIC

Your denial of food allows you to tap into your inner resolve.

Prerequisite: Thursir, *ki* pool feature.

Benefit: When you gain the fatigued condition from lack of food, your *ki* pool increases by 3 points. While you are fatigued from starvation, you treat the class level providing the *ki* pool as 1 higher for benefits provided by the *ki* pool. You cannot gain more than 3 points from this feat per day.

TOP OF THE WORLD

Your clan lives in a brutal area where freezing cold and thin atmosphere cull lesser beings.

Prerequisite: Thursir.

Benefit: Your racial resistance to cold increases to 20, and you gain a +4 bonus to resist high altitude effects and altitude sickness.

THURSIR EQUIPMENT

As expert craftspeople, Thursir have devised armor enhancements and weapons for their raids, as well as tools they use in their enclaves. Thursir encountered by the PCs could have any of the following items.

EXPANDING ARMOR

Price 30 gp; **Weight** +5 lbs.

Armor Bonus —

Thursir often wear their armor at banquets, not as a protective measure, but as a means to show off dents and scratches the armor endured during the latest raid.

However, as the Thursir feast and they go from full to overstuffed, normal armor becomes uncomfortable before straps burst and buckles break under the strain. A gnome apprentice came up with a series of chain links which allow the armor to support a Thursir's expanding gut without compromising the armor during battle. In addition to keeping repair costs down for a Thursir who augments his armor this way, the expanding armor grants a +2 equipment bonus to CMD against sunder attempts, as the chain links absorb the force of the blow.

FIELD FORGE

Price 1,000 gp; **Weight** 40 lbs.

Thursir prefer to keep their armor and weapons in working order at all times, even during raids. To mitigate the lack of forges during raids, a clever Thursir created a portable forge that uses alchemical means to get a fire hot enough to effect repairs on broken items. A field forge provides a +1 equipment bonus on Craft checks to repair armor and weapons, but it can only be used for a total of 4 repair checks before it must be refueled.

FIELD FORGE FUEL

Price 500 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.; **Craft DC** 25

For extended raids where the Thursir spend a lot of time in battle, a field forge does not always endure through the entirety of the journey. This heavy canister of alchemical fuel provides an additional 2 uses for a field forge. A canister is dangerous to carry, since it explodes when it takes 10 points of fire damage, dealing 4d6 points of fire damage to all creatures in a 10-foot radius. The canister can be purposely set to explode, but it takes 1d4 rounds for the explosion to occur (a DC 20 Knowledge [alchemy], Disable Device, or related check allows the creature setting the canister to explode to set the delay within a range of 1–6 rounds).

HORNED ARMOR

Price 150 gp; **Weight** +10 lbs.

Armor Bonus —

Thursir do not keep pets, but they admire the large herbivores native to their mountain homes. This armor enhancement emulates the large horns used by the animals to protect themselves from predators. The curved metal horns protrude from the part of the armor covering the shoulders, are treated as light, off-hand weapons when used with other weapons, and deal 1d8 points of damage. Additionally, on a successful attack, the wearer can attempt a free grapple attempt

without provoking an attack of opportunity. The horns are awkward and they impose a further -1 to armor check penalties. They must be enchanted separately from the armor itself.

METALCORE ROCK

Price 200 gp; **Type** simple

Thursir craftsmen developed this devastating weapon mostly for use against kobolds, which the thursir view as unworthy of straight up combat. Rocky material is packed around a tightly bound 5-inch-diameter ball forming the rock's center. When the rock strikes a target, it deals its normal damage and the metal ball expands on impact, explosively shattering the rock. This explosion deals half the rock's damage to all creatures in a 10-foot radius (Reflex save for half; the save DC is Strength-based), including the creature the rock hits.

THURSIR GRAVITY HAMMER

Price 400 gp; **Type** exotic

This warhammer's metal head has a hollowed-out center holding a dense metal ball. The weapon's damage is unchanged, but the wielder can attempt a bull rush as a free action, without provoking an attack of opportunity, when striking an opponent.

THURSIR MAGIC

Thursir males do not possess any magical ability beyond the use of the *turisaz* rune, while at least one magically gifted female lives in a thursir enclave. The men do not turn down any offer of magical assistance, especially that which makes forging easier, weapons more powerful, or armor more resistant. The following spells, weapon special ability, and magic items feature in many thursir enclaves.

FORGE GIFT

School transmutation; **Level** cleric 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target forge touched

Duration 1 hour/level or until expended (see spell description)

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless, object); **Spell**

Resistance yes (harmless, object)

You enchant a forge with this spell such that a masterwork weapon crafted using the forge gains a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls.

Additionally, an inscribed *turisaz* rune on the weapon grants the weapon the *shocking burst* quality, rather than the *shock* quality. The forge can enhance a total number of weapons equal to your caster level, provided they are enhanced before the duration expires.

GUIDANCE, MASS

School divination; **Level** cleric 3, druid 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

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

Targets one creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 minute or until discharged

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell**

Resistance yes

Similarly to *guidance*, except it affects multiple creatures, each creature gets a +1 competence bonus on a single attack roll, saving throw, or skill check, choosing to gain this bonus before making the roll to which it applies.

Turisaz Imprinting (weapon special ability): A *turisaz imprinting* weapon bears a permanent *turisaz* rune that glows while it grants the shock ability to the weapon. When the weapon's wielder strikes an opponent, he can transfer the rune to the opponent, causing the rune on the weapon to go dark. At the end of the wielder's next turn, the rune unleashes its magic on the opponent, affecting the foe as if it had been successfully targeted with *shocking grasp* (5d6 electricity damage). The wielder cannot transfer the rune again until it has discharged in this way.

Faint evocation; **CL** 5th; **Craft Magic Arms and Armor**, *shocking grasp*; **Price** +2 bonus.

ARMOR OF DWARF BREAKING

Aura moderate abjuration and transmutation; **CL** 9th

Slot armor; **Price** 46,500 gp; **Weight** 40 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Thursir originally developed this +2 *full plate*, which is plastered with anti-dwarven runes and epithets, but other giants realized the effectiveness of this armor against dwarves, so its use has spread throughout lands controlled by giants. When a dwarf attacks the wearer, the armor grants a +3 deflection bonus to the wearer's Armor Class. In addition, all dwarves within 40 feet of the wearer must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or move at half speed for 9 rounds (effectively negating their slow and steady racial ability); those who save cannot be affected by this armor again for 24 hours. Magical means

to disguise a creature's race thwart these effects.

Finally, the armor negates the *returning* and *dancing* weapon abilities. Any unattended weapon with either ability entering the wearer's space resolves its attack and drops to the ground.

CONSTRUCTION

Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield of faith*, *slow*, *telekinesis*, creator must be a giant; **Cost** 24,000 gp

BRACERS OF THUNDEROUS RETORT

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 9th

Slot wrists; **Price** 22,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Sized for a giant and etched with the *turisaz* rune, these metal bracers emit a constant, low hum. Whenever an opponent threatens a critical hit, the wearer can allow the critical to automatically confirm. After damage from the critical hit has been dealt, the bracers loudly bellow a challenge in Giant to the foe who struck the wearer. This deals 8d6 points of sonic damage and deafens the opponent for 1d4 rounds (a DC 16 Fortitude save halves the damage and negates the deafness).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *shout*, creator must be thursir; **Cost** 11,000 gp

VARIANT THURSIR: DEGENERATE THURSIR (CR 8)

When thursir give into the desire to feast on humanoid flesh, they transform into feral creatures. A degenerate thursir suffers a -8 penalty to Intelligence, but gains a +4 bonus to Strength and Constitution. Its skin hardens, giving it an additional +2 natural armor bonus to its Armor Class. It loses all ranks in Craft, as well as the Master Craftsman and Skill Focus (Craft) feats, but it gains the Diehard feat in return. Finally, a degenerate thursir can take a full-round action to consume the flesh of a fallen foe, granting it temporary hit points equal to the victim's Hit Dice. During this full-round action, the thursir benefits from fighting defensively (+2 dodge bonus to AC until the start of its next turn).

THURSIR CHIEF NPC

For thursir, the chief is the most important figure and represents the pinnacle of thursir prowess. Like all things, this power fades over time, and another thursir will eventually replace the chief. During the chief's reign, though, his word is law, and all thursir look to him for direction.

One thursir chief, Karl Jagendorff, has managed to retain leadership of his clan for close to 40 years, after weathering over a dozen challenges. Thanks to a combination of a favorable location with a plentitude of settlements resigned to thursir raids and Karl's skill at fighting, the clan has thrived under his rule. Karl refuses to rest on his laurels, so he practices and spars to keep in top fighting form.

Karl Jagendorff

CR 10**XP** 9,600

Male thursir fighter 6

LE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23 (+9 armor, +3 deflection, +2 natural, -1 size)**hp** 148 (6d10+7d8+84)**Fort** +18, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8; +2 vs. fear**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2, cast iron stomach, rock catching; **Immune** disease; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *thursir gravity hammer* +24/+19/+14 (1d12+17/19-20)**Ranged** rock +13 (1d8+9)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** weapon training (hammers +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Karl drinks his *potion of heroism* and then his *potion of shield of faith*.**During Combat** Karl wades into battle and makes full attacks with his +1 *thursir gravity hammer*.**Morale** Overconfident in his prowess, the thursir chief fights to the death.**Base Statistics** Without *heroism* and *shield of faith*, the thursir chief's statistics are **Senses** Perception +10; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; **Melee** +1 *thursir gravity hammer* +22/+17/+12 (1d12+17/19-20); **Ranged** rock +11 (1d8+9) **Skills** Climb +17, Craft (armor) +18, Intimidate +16, Perception +10, Sense

Motive +2 (+3 against giants), Survival +12.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 10, **Con** 22, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +21 (+25 bull rush, +23 grapple); **CMD** 31 (33 vs. bull rush, 33 vs. grapple)

Feats Bull Rush Strike^{APG}, Cleave, Cleaving Finish^{UC}, Crushing Grapple*, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (thursir gravity hammer), Improved Grapple, Master Craftsman, Power Attack, Runic Blood (Thurs), Skill Focus (Craft [armor]), Weapon Focus (thursir gravity hammer), Weapon Specialization (thursir gravity hammer)

Skills Climb +19, Craft (armor) +20, Intimidate +18, Perception +12, Sense Motive +4 (+5 against giants), Survival +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Craft (armor)

Languages Dwarven, Giant

SQ armor training 1, masterworker, runic blood, steadfast stride

Combat Gear *potion of heroism, potion of shield of faith*; **Other Gear** +1 agile half-plate, +1 thursir gravity hammer, 276 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cast Iron Stomach (Ex) Thursir can consume up to half their weight in food without ill effect and receive a +10 racial bonus to saving throws against ingested poison and any effects that would make them nauseated.

Masterworker (Su) Thursir have a natural affinity for metalworking. They gain Master Craftsman as a bonus feat for any Craft skill involving metal, and they produce masterwork quality items in half the normal time.

Runic Blood (Su) Thursir have a natural connection to the *turisaz* rune. All thursir possess the monster feat Runic Blood (*turisaz*) as a bonus feat and can invoke the rune's powers 3/day.

Steadfast Stride (Ex) A thursir's speed never suffers a penalty from its armor or encumbrance.

THURSIR ADVENTURE SEEDS

More often than not, adventurers who encounter thursir will combat the giants rather than negotiate with them. Given the thursir's difficult-to-reach enclaves where they work their forges and celebrate their most recent raids, PCs may not encounter them "in the wild" very often. The following adventure ideas help introduce characters to the thursir.

Imposter Dwarf: The PCs meet a dwarf woman who is not what she appears. She approaches them with a story about a thursir enclave where they have resorted to killing and eating humanoids, and her escape from the enclave before the situation worsened there.

Stolen Sibling: One of the characters has a female relative or friend from a village that suffered a recent thursir raid, and the giants took the NPC as a slave.

Wrong Place/Wrong Time: The PCs pass through a village in the lower elevations of a tall mountain just as a 40-strong thursir raiding party attacks!





R T N X I M R N X F D S F Y B T M R D I X I C N F D S F Y B M

HILL GIANTS

No one would accuse hill giants of world-dominating plans, but that makes them no less frightening to those who live near them. Hill giants will not assault a well-protected settlement, since their chances of total victory are too small, but they instead send smaller raiding parties to steal livestock before any stiff resistance can build. When they attack smaller and less protected locations, they kill or drive off all the inhabitants and take over the location until they exhaust the settlement's resources.

Even hill giants who do not directly attack settlements threaten them in other ways. The giants overfish and overhunt, not only wiping out all food stock for those with whom they share the land, but also driving predators to either attack settlements for livestock or starve. Since most hill giants have no concept of conservation, they must travel from one location to another to follow game and to find new communities to plunder. Even those druidic hill giants who know how to raise livestock and understand the relationships between animals in their territories find their efforts outstripped by their voracious kin.

Communities plagued by hill giant raids are fortunate in that the loosely nomadic giants cannot support larger tribes. Bright community leaders who have dealt with hill giants also realize the dimwitted creatures are easy to fool, and they make their communities' defenses appear more formidable than they truly are to discourage the giants.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Hill giants lead simple lives, concerned with finding their next meal and sheltering from the elements. When they have found a reasonably secure location, either someplace that provides protection from the weather or an existing settlement they have depopulated, the giants stay as long as food remains plentiful. After this typically short period—lasting a year or two depending on how the giants manage their resources—ends, the giants meander throughout the hills and high plains they call home to find another source of food and shelter.

During a hill giant tribe's relatively prosperous time, hunters and fishers harvest food that sustains the tribe for a week. While hill giants are omnivorous, their meals are almost exclusively comprised of meat. The giants have neither the time nor inclination for agriculture, but they will devour any remaining crops belonging to settlements they have invaded.

With an eye on the fact that their prosperity will not last forever, the tribe's scouts look for promising settlements to raid or invade. If hill giants have recently

taken a settlement, they repurpose large buildings as sleeping quarters or tear apart existing buildings to convert them into crude shelters and firewood. Not that the giants have discerning palettes, but they prefer their meat cooked rather than raw. They leave corrals and other structures meant to pen livestock untouched, as the convenience of grabbing several sheep or cows outweighs the benefits the wood might provide. During this brief period of squatting, hill giants are quite peaceful and pose little threat to their neighbors, aside from those who have the misfortune to encounter them on the hunt or on a scouting mission.

On the other hand, when hill giants go on the hunt for a new temporary home, they become extremely aggressive. If their scouts have found a suitable settlement to attack, the giants head right away to that location. Otherwise, the tribe heads in a direction away from previously exploited lands under the impression that no settlements have sprung up in their wake. Since they lack the stealth or to inclination follow lone travelers for any distance, the giants usually capture such unfortunates and beat information out of them about nearby communities. While the giants prefer to attack from strength, desperation may force them to launch an assault against a well-fortified village or town.

Due to their mainly nomadic lifestyle, hill giants have little to no aptitude for crafting lasting equipment; they never stay long enough to establish forges to craft armor and weapons. Instead, they uproot trees or break off massive branches to use as clubs, and they layer crudely extracted furs—typically from livestock, but occasionally from lone bears that cross their paths—for protection. These items have an extremely short lifespan as the clubs splinter into uselessness, and the untreated furs wear out from the elements and general use. Hill giants treasure the rare intelligent members of their tribe who can make long-lasting equipment. Sometimes treasured slaves are kept for this purpose; hill dwarves are aware that dwarves make good (if stubborn) smiths, for instance, and elves make excellent (if slippery) woodworkers.

As another side effect of their itinerant lives and frequent combats, hill giants almost never reach the end of their natural 200-year lifespans. Additionally, for creatures with a long natural lifespan, their children mature rapidly, at the same rate as human children. This is necessary not only for the children's survival, but also for the survival of hill giants as a race. Supremely selfish creatures, hill giants allow their children to starve during lean times, or they abandon their children as they search for their next source of food and shelter. If it comes down to a choice,

useful slaves and animals receive food before hill giant children, since the adults feel that children are unproductive and a drain on their resources.

By maturing quickly and proving themselves useful, children earn their food and continue to live long enough to bear children of their own. “Late bloomers” have short lives in hill giant society. If the hill giants enjoy a fairly stable situation and find enough food for the entire tribe, child rearing follows along typical lines, with the women taking care of infants and those too young to learn. As early as eight years of age, regardless of gender, a hill giant child accompanies adults on hunting trips. Accidental fatalities occur with alarming frequency for both sexes on these hunts.

Tame, trainable animals garner more respect from hill giants than their own children, and those hill giants who can successfully train a dire wolf or mastodon enjoy high standing within their tribes, for all it is worth. Dire wolves accompany giants on hunting and scouting trips, and their keen sense of smell allows them to locate prey or evidence of civilization far earlier than the comparatively dull senses of the giants. Mastodons are not prominent beasts in hill giant tribes, so a chief who rides one into battle has incredible status among other hill giants and most likely intimidates her opponents.

Any edge helps when two hill giant tribes meet, resulting in a pitched battle between the two groups. Hill giants do not practice diplomacy and see rival tribes as competition for their conquests and resources. The winning tribe absorbs the losing tribe’s survivors to replace fallen warriors, and in this way prevents its bloodlines from stagnating. Those aware of this lead marauding tribes toward each other to weaken the giants’ overall strength and save at least one settlement from the giants’ depredations.

Despite the ebb and flow of hill giant populations, the giants have a surprisingly robust oral history. Since the giants are functionally illiterate, they write down none of their exploits and must rely on stories told around the campfire about great hill giant heroes, usually those who single-handedly defeated mighty foes or led their tribes to an era (meaning a decade) of prosperity. Those attempting to glean a detailed history about a region’s hill giant tribes from these stories come away disappointed, as many hill giants replace the original (or current) heroes with their own names. Tales of hill giant exploits sometimes corroborate ancient tales of mysteriously lost settlements, however disheartening it might be to learn that squatting giants brought down a frontier colony.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

As is typical among the lesser giants, the strongest or most combat-capable hill giant becomes the tribe’s chief. Politicking and backstabbing do not exist among hill giants; if one of these giants feels he would rule the tribe more effectively, he fights the current chief, who chooses the method of combat. The fight usually takes the form of a wrestling match or the giants bashing each other with clubs, with the loser rendered unconscious or dead. If the loser survives the fight, he remains with the tribe with no overtly hard feelings on the winner’s part, but the loser often receives the “honor” of fighting on the front lines during the next raid.

Despite being the most physically powerful giant of the tribe, the chief commands his troops from the rear while lobbing rocks at his foes. He also has the luxury of surrounding himself with other hill giant warriors, whom he can shove into the path of an oncoming combatant. Thanks to this cowardice—which a hill giant chief would call “caution”—the chief is usually the last giant to fall in an unsuccessful fight. If the chief’s tribe outlasts their leader, though, an all-out brawl determines the next chief once the tribe has regrouped.

A hill giant chief has no need for delegation to lieutenants, since their tribes are relatively small, maxing out at 40 giants. If a hill giant tribe grows too large to remain sustainable, due to an unexpected boom in births or by absorbing the remnants of another tribe, the chief exiles the weakest members of the tribe, starting with children before moving on to adults who cannot carry their weight in battle or provide another compelling reason to remain with the tribe.

Some people would assume this behavior would put female hill giants at a disadvantage, but those people have obviously never fought a hill giant woman. During settled periods, hill giant women are often relegated to the role of rearing children and other “domestic” tasks, such as tending to livestock or repairing broken down buildings. When male hill giants go on hunting trips or raids, the women often finish their chores and then engage in spirited wrestling to maintain or improve their strength. They are as physically powerful as the men, and participate in the all-out battles to overtake a humanoid settlement. Indeed, women lead at least a quarter of hill giant tribes, as they are entirely capable of outwrestling a former male chief or surviving a free-for-all fight after the chief falls in battle.

Regardless of gender, two types of hill giants are exempt from battle: craftspeople and those who are good with animals, sometimes referred to by hill

giants as goat minders, sheeptalkers, wolfrunners, or cow giants. A gifted hill giant with the ability to craft sturdy armor and powerful weapons, and especially one who can enchant such items, has nearly as high a status as the chief. A superior hill giant craftsman ensures the chief lives an extraordinarily long life and almost guarantees the chief will win battles against all challengers. These skilled hill giants rarely participate in battle—only doing so when the tribe’s survival is on the line—even if they want otherwise, since their fellows consider them far too valuable to lose in combat.

Hill giants adept at animal husbandry or training of wolves and mastodons enjoy a similar exemption from battle. Their fellows view them with a mixture of disdain and jealousy, since they appreciate the need for combat-ready animals or a mobile supply of food, but view them as “soft” since they provide no direct advantage during combat. At the same time, though, very few hill giants have the aptitude to raise animals—most of their animal training involves intimidating the creatures to do what their trainers want. The warriors are occasionally envious of those with a skill that keeps them from risking their necks in battle, at least in the wake of a failed raid or empty-handed hunt.

Beyond even weak hill giants who drain the tribe’s resources, “civilized” hill giants garner the most hatred from their fellow giants. Typically, children exiled by their tribes who both survive long enough to reach civilization and then are not killed on sight by panicked villagers integrate surprisingly well into society. As an example of nurture winning out over nature, humanoid-raised hill giants become productive members of a community, albeit in a limited capacity as a laborer or grunt soldier.

Civilized hill giants are amiable toward their fellow villagers and seem unconcerned with the differences in size and strength compared to their neighbors. Astonishingly, given their kind’s general disposition towards children, civilized hill giants are especially friendly with village children, and they often protect smaller and weaker children from bullies. Village leaders often mistakenly assume that these gentle giants make excellent envoys to their marauding kin. Unfortunately, typical hill giants view these dandified giants as the weakest of the lot, so much so they have to rely on humanoids to survive. The hapless diplomat suffers scorn at best, but the usual response is that hill giant tribespeople brutally beat the giant to death.

Ogres and orcs comprise the final group of humanoids occupying hill giant society. Technically little more than slaves, ogres and orcs join hill giants out of awe or for protection from other creatures. They

wind up with the most menial tasks when a hill giant tribe has temporarily settled a location, or the hill giants send them as a first wave to soften up communities they raid. For their part, the ogres and orcs find this arrangement better than most alternatives, and they work hard to stay in their masters’ good graces. As long as the humanoids’ contributions provide more benefit than they take in food and water, hill giants allow them to remain with the tribe. Hill giants rarely take any other slaves, since they presume treachery from any other captive humanoids.

RELIGION AND RUNE USE

Hill giants worship deities not out of any sense of reverence, but more like petulant children who expect their parents to provide everything for them. This comes down to the giants’ view that prayer does nothing for them in combat and wastes time and energy they could apply elsewhere: hunting, raiding, eating, sleeping, and other “essential” tasks. Since hill giants rarely have the aptitude to gain divine power and apply it in combat, nothing will dissuade them from that view. However, a hill giant with a high enough Wisdom score may elect to become an adept or cleric of a deity that provides the hill giant tribe with strength, prowess in battle, protection from enemies, or fortune in hunting.

More often, an unusually wise hill giant takes on the mantle of druid or shaman, preferring to honor the bounty of the land around them or their ancestors. Druids who attempt to rein their fellow tribespeople in and allow resources to replenish themselves meet with frustration, as the hill giants have become so used to wiping out an area and just moving on to the next. Quite infrequently, a druidic giant who teaches the tribe preservation techniques fosters a permanent community, from which the hill giants launch raids on neighboring settlements to supplement their livestock, game, and fish. This community usually grows to support more hill giants than is typical, and attracts vassal ogres and orcs who willingly submit to the tribe. Shamanistic hill giants preserve the integrity of the tribe’s oral history and draw strength from the tribe’s reverence of mighty warriors and leaders from its past.

When without direct spiritual support from a shaman or druid, hill giants sometimes turn to the use of runes to empower themselves. The giants’ general lack of mental capacity means that runes are usually beyond their abilities as well, but exceptionally wise hill giants who eschew deity or ancestor worship gain

and impart power from runes. These giants make use of the following runes in order of preference: uruz (wild ox and strength), raido (travel), fehu (cattle and livestock), turisaz (giants), and dagaz (laying the dead to rest). Even giants gifted with rune lore do not make full use of it, as they ignore the sacrifice aspect of the uruz rune, the wealth aspect of the fehu rune, and the day aspect of the dagaz rune. See *Deep Magic* for more information on rune magic.

Even without a spiritual leader or a partial understanding of the dagaz rune, hill giants treat the recently deceased with some care. Owing to the belief that the spirits of fallen warriors without proper burial will return to haunt the tribe, hill giants bury their dead tribesmates, or at least say a word or two before covering them up with furs if they must hurry away from a battle site. Improperly buried hill giants may spontaneously return as larger versions of ordinary ghouls. These ghouls violently quench their hatred of the tribe responsible for their unholy births before turning their jaundiced eyes towards civilization.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Hill giants look at other races in terms of the benefits from attacking them versus the risk. Despite their relative cowardice, they make excellent shock troops for dragons and more powerful races of giants that promise terrible punishments if the hill giants do not act as commanded.

DWARVES: If any non-giant, humanoid race truly frightens hill giants, it is dwarves. Hill giants believe dwarves possess incredible military strength, as evidenced by the fact that dwarves wear suits of heavy, gleaming armor and wield massive hammers and axes. Dwarves also seem incredibly regimented in combat, and hill giants do not think they can stand up to dwarven might. Additionally, most dwarven kingdoms exist underground, where hill giants feel uncomfortable.

For all these reasons, hill giants see no reason to attack dwarves, including solitary or small numbers of dwarves, unless directed to do so by more fearsome creatures. Also, if a dwarf happens to be in a mixed group of adventurers, hill giants may overcome their fear enough to attack the group, but they will either try to dispatch the dwarf first or keep away from her.

ELVES: Hill giants leave elven communities alone, and not because they necessarily fear elves. Though an elf armed with a bow gives even a boulder-throwing giant pause, hill giants have no problem attacking an individual elf or a small group. Instead, elven villages confuse them, so they see no need to risk their lives for almost no reward.

GNOMES: Gnomes look too much like dwarves at a distance for most hill giants' comfort. They give gnomes a wide berth, unless a gnome does something unlike a dwarf (for example, not wearing a full suit of armor or not obviously carrying a powerful weapon).

HALFLINGS: Hill giants underestimate halflings as puny and weak, and easy to plunder of livestock and foodstuff. This mistaken assumption has resulted in several hill giant deaths. Civilized hill giants make the same assumption about halflings, but this results in a halfling gaining a perhaps unwelcome bodyguard.

HUMANS: By far the hill giants' most-encountered foes, humans represent the richest targets in terms of resources for the giants. They are often vexed by humans' preponderance for gathering in large numbers, making full-on attacks impossible against many human communities. Due to this frequent contact, extremely powerful humans are the only creatures other than giants and dragons who can command hill giant tribes.

KOBOLDS: Kobolds offer very little to hill giants, who regard the scaly humanoids as little more than extremely large insects. Kobolds enjoy luring hill giants into traps, and the giants prove gullible enough to fall for them, especially if a lone kobold presents itself as bait. Fortunately for kobolds, their dealings with hill giants are rare; otherwise, the giants would gain a universal hatred for them and attempt to wipe them out at the first sign of kobold tomfoolery.

OGRES: While no different in terms of mental acuity, ogres revere hill giants for their physical prowess. They take on subservient roles to hill giants for protection and to partake in the spoils of their victories. Ogres understand they must make themselves useful to continue to enjoy even this menial status. Hill giants, for their part, regard ogres as miniature and less capable versions of themselves.

ORCS: Orcs have the same goals as hill giants—rout a community to reap the fruits of others' labor—but they lack the physical power or intimidation the giants have. Like ogres, orcs are willing to serve hill giants to achieve their goals, and hill giants appreciate the orcs' brutal, violent natures that make them effective shock troops.

OTHER GIANTS: Most giants are stronger and more intelligent than hill giants, and they easily cow their lesser kin to do their dirty work for them. Cloud and stone giants are the hill giant's most common neighbors, while those who wander into colder areas run afoul of frost giants. The more powerful giants do not entrust hill giants to any particularly subtle missions. Instead, they point their weaker kin at a pesky settlement and allow the hill giants to soften up the settlement before they strike the finishing blow. Hill giants are much more afraid of powerful giants than they are the humanoids they have been commanded to attack, so they hardly ever refuse to carry out the more powerful creatures' plans.

HILL GIANT RACIAL RULES

Hill giants are capable of transcending their image as bullying brutes, but not many do so. Most merely improve their ability to effectively smash their opponents, but the rare, gifted hill giants strive to make items that help their tribes. Even rarer, spellcasting giants also develop magic that makes their comrades deadlier in battle.

HILL GIANT RACIAL FEATS

Despite the lack of nuance hill giants bring to combat, many of them have learned quite a few tricks to enhance their combat ability, particularly with clubs, rocks, and slams. These giants have also developed techniques to hasten travel from a depleted location to a potentially well-stocked location, and some can turn their apparent mental weakness to their advantage.

Note: Some of these feats can apply equally to all giants; in this case, the racial requirement shows “giant” rather than “hill giant.”

BELL RINGER (COMBAT)

Your slam attacks render smaller foes temporarily insensate.

Prerequisite: Hill giant

Benefit: When you deal damage to a Medium or

smaller opponent with a slam attack, you also inflict your choice of the blinded or deafened condition on that foe for 1 round. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 racial Hit Dice + Strength modifier) negates this effect.

CLUBBER (COMBAT)

You know your way around a greatclub, and you free up a hand to use another weapon or a shield.

Prerequisite: Hill giant

Benefit: You can use a greatclub as a one-handed weapon. As with any one-handed weapon, you add your Strength bonus instead of 1-1/2 times your Strength bonus to damage rolls.

Normal: A greatclub is a two-handed weapon.

FORCE SUBMISSION

Yelling at an animal gives you limited control over it.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Intimidate 1 rank.

Benefit: You can substitute Intimidate for Handle Animal checks, but you can only do so to handle or push an animal.

HARDY TRAVELER

Your frequent need to travel to new locations has made you used to long marches.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Endurance

Benefit: You must endure a forced march for 12 hours before you risk taking nonlethal damage.

Additionally, you do not become fatigued as a result of taking nonlethal damage from a forced march.

Normal: The first check for nonlethal damage occurs 8 hours into a forced march, and taking nonlethal damage from a forced march inflicts the fatigued condition.

IMPROVED BELL RINGER (COMBAT)

Your slam attacks make a lasting impression on your opponents.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Bell Ringer

Benefit: When you deal damage to any opponent with your slam attack, you inflict your choice of the blinded or deafened condition for 1d4+1 rounds. An affected opponent can attempt a Fortitude save (DC 12 + 1/2 racial Hit Dice + Strength modifier) to halve the duration.

IMPROVED ROCK CATCHING

You are adept at catching rocks that threaten to hit you.

Prerequisites: Giant, rock catching racial ability.

Benefit: You add +4 to your Reflex save to catch a rock thrown at you.

IMPROVED ROCK HURLER (COMBAT)

You become more proficient with your multi-rock throwing.

Prerequisites: Giant, Rock Hurler, rock throwing racial ability.

Benefit: You reduce the penalty for your second thrown rock to -2.

IMPROVED ROCK THROWING (COMBAT)

Your hands have developed such that you can throw larger rocks.

Prerequisites: Giant, rock throwing racial ability.

Benefit: You can throw rocks up to one size category smaller than your size.

Normal: Rock throwing giants can only throw rocks up to two size categories smaller than their size.

IMPROVED STUBBORNNESS

Willful ignorance grants you the ability to disregard magic that forces you to act in a way you are unaccustomed.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Stubbornness, Int 7 or lower.

Benefit: You apply the bonus from Stubbornness to Will saves against enchantment spells and effects.

KNOCKDOWN STRIKE (COMBAT)

Your rock throwing puts your foes on the ground.

Prerequisites: Giant, rock throwing racial ability.

Benefit: When you hit an opponent with a rock, you receive a free attempt to knock an opponent prone, which is resolved as a combat maneuver check. This combat maneuver does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

LINE OF FIRE (COMBAT)

When your rock knocks a foe down, it continues on to the next opponent.

Prerequisites: Giant, Knockdown Strike, rock throwing racial ability.

Benefit: If you knock an opponent prone with Knockdown Strike, the rock continues to the next opponent in a line continuing on from the first opponent. The second attack takes a -4 penalty, but it can also cause an opponent to fall prone (the combat maneuver check also takes a -4 penalty). You get no more than two attacks with the same rock using this feat.

LIFT AND SMASH (COMBAT, TEAMWORK)

Hill giants rarely engage in play, but a favorite game in which one giant lifts an object into the air with his club, while another giant strikes the object on the fly



has surprising combat applications. This marks one of the few times hill giants intentionally work together in combat.

Prerequisite: Hill giant.

Benefit: Whenever you are adjacent to an ally with this feat, you can take a -2 penalty on your attack and damage rolls with a two-handed weapon to instead lift a struck opponent into a few inches into the air. If your attack is successful, your ally can make an attack of opportunity against that opponent. During this attack of opportunity, your ally gains a +2 bonus to confirm a critical hit.

MASTER CLUBBER (COMBAT)

Your powerful grip on your club allows you to smash foes mercilessly.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Clubber.

Benefit: You add 1-1/2 times your Strength bonus to damage rolls when you wield a greatclub one handed, and you add 2 times your Strength bonus when you wield a greatclub in two hands. You also gain a +2 bonus to confirm critical hits with your greatclub.

REBOUNding ROCK THROWER (COMBAT)

You have mastered a surprising catch and release technique with rocks thrown your way.

Prerequisites: Giant, Improved Rock Catching, rock catching racial ability.

Benefit: If you successfully catch a rock and you have attacks of opportunity remaining, you may throw the rock as an immediate action. Using this feat consumes an attack of opportunity.

Special: You may take an attack of opportunity against the same opponent (provided by Combat Reflexes, for example), if the opponent moves through a threatened square.

ROCK HURLER (COMBAT)

You practically windmill rocks at your foes.

Prerequisites: Giant, rock throwing racial ability.

Benefit: You can throw an additional rock as part of a full-attack action. You incur a -5 penalty with this second attack.

STUBBORNNESS

You work your natural lack of intelligence into an advantage, as your resolute, if mistaken, beliefs are hard to shake.

Prerequisites: Hill giant, Int 7 or less.

Benefit: You gain a bonus equal to double the absolute value of your Intelligence ability penalty when you oppose Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks.

HILL GIANT EQUIPMENT

Hill giants rarely craft their own equipment, but occasionally gifted giants might devise armor enhancements, weapons, and alchemical items to make combats with other creatures easier. Hill giants encountered by the PCs could have any of the following items.

CLUB BRAMBLE

Price +1 gp

Type simple

Considering most hill giant greatclubs are nothing more than uprooted trees or massive branches broken off from trees, it is not surprising that hill giants also apply brambles surrounding those trees to their weapons. When a club bramble adorns a greatclub, the club deals an additional 1d6 points of piercing damage. However, unless properly cared for, club bramble lasts only a week before drying out and becoming ineffective.

CLUBSTRAPPER

Price +2 gp

Type simple

Another hill giant “innovation,” a clubstrapper is a band of strong grass that allows a hill giant to lash two greatclubs together. This gives the hill giant an extra 5 feet of reach when attacking with a greatclub, but it deals no extra damage. This extra reach also comes at the cost of accuracy, inflicting a -2 penalty on attack rolls. Additionally, sunder attempts against a cobbled-together greatclub gain a +4 circumstance bonus; a successful sunder attempt removes the extra reach, but leaves the attack penalty.

DUNG BOULDER

Price +1 gp

Type simple

Hill giants have very little concept of hygiene, but they are aware of the nauseating effects of animal excrement. With a successful DC 10 Craft (weapons) check, a hill giant can replace a boulder’s core with this material and return the boulder to enough of an intact state to be throwable at no penalty. Once the boulder strikes an obstacle, it deals its listed damage and then breaks apart, and any creature within 5 feet of the boulder must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

FLEXHIDE

Price 45 gp

Armor Bonus +4

Weight -5 lbs.

Flexhide is a specially treated hide armor, which weighs less than normal hide. It grants the same protection to the wearer and easier maneuverability, allowing the wearer to move 5 feet faster and reducing the armor check penalty to -2. However, the same process that allows this improved maneuverability makes the armor much more vulnerable, giving it the fragile quality and reducing its hardness to 1.

LIQUID BRAVADO

Price 50 gp

Weight 1 lb.

Craft DC 20

The terrain frequented by hill giants hosts a number of berry bushes. One such berry, when liquefied and fermented properly, gives a drinker that can stomach it an edge in battle. If a creature drinks liquid bravado, it must make a DC 12 Fortitude save (hill giants receive a +8 racial bonus on this save). Failure causes the creature to become nauseated for 1 round and the creature gains no benefits from liquid bravado. If the creature succeeds, it gains a +1 alchemical bonus to attack and damage rolls, as well as saves against fear spells and effects for 1 hour. After the hour expires, the drinker must succeed at another Fortitude save (same DC) or become sickened for an hour.

NO HEAR WAX

Price 25 gp

Weight 0.5 lbs.

Craft DC 15

This substance derives from beeswax and other found material. Hill giants who are aware that they are susceptible to mind-influencing spells and effects use no hear wax to prevent pesky spellcasters from taking over their minds. The wax sits partially within the wearer's ears, providing a +2 equipment bonus on saves against spells and effects that rely on language or have an audible component. By taking a move action to stuff the wax fully in the ears, the wearer incurs the deafened condition, but is immune to spells and effects that rely on language or have an audible component.

HILL GIANT MAGIC

Hill giants rarely devise their own spells, but curious shamans and sorcerers develop specialized magic to make their fellows more formidable in battle and in scouting. The following spells, weapon special ability, and magic items feature in many hill giant clans.

ASSESS SETTLEMENT

School divination; **Level** cleric 2

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, DF

Range 1 mile/level

Duration concentration, up to 10 min./level (D)

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You send out a sensor that finds the nearest settlement in a direction you send it; the sensor travels 1 mile per round. The sensor informs you when it locates a settlement of more than 20 people. From that time on, you can gain more information from the sensor as you study the settlement. After the 1st round, you learn the approximate size of the settlement (hamlet, village, small town, large town, small city, large city, or metropolis). After the 2nd round, you learn of any disadvantages afflicting the settlement. After the 3rd round, you learn the settlement qualities. Finally, at the end of the 4th round, the sensor returns the aura of the settlement's most powerful resident (per detect evil). More powerful creatures that do not live in the town (called outsiders, adventurers, etc.) do not register to the sensor.

At any time, you can choose to send the sensor in another direction, requiring a delay as it finds another suitable settlement.

CONCUSSIVE STRIKE

School transmutation; **Level** druid 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target 1 rock/level (all of which must be together at the time of casting) or 1 bludgeoning melee weapon touched

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless, object), see description; **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless, object)

Concussive strike imbues a bludgeoning weapon or several rocks with disharmonic resonance. If the enchanted weapon strikes a creature, that creature must succeed at a Fortitude save to avoid becoming dazed for 1 round.

CONCUSSIVE STRIKE, GREATER

School transmutation; **Level** druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Duration 1 hour/level

Greater concussive strike functions like *concussive strike*, except that an enchanted weapon stuns a creature it strikes for 1d4 rounds. If the creature succeeds at a Fortitude save, it is instead dazed for 1 round.

STRANGLEFUR (ARMOR SPECIAL ABILITY)

Only non-metal armors can add the *stranglefur* ability, which derives its name from the hill giant who used it on hide armor crafted from bearskin. *Stranglefur* armor attempts to grapple an opponent within its 5-foot reach (CMB +12 for Medium armor, +11 for Small armor, +13 for Large armor). While the armor has grappled an opponent, the wearer is considered grappled, with the exception that the wearer can take an action that requires two hands to perform.

If the armor pins its target, it forces the target to make a DC 17 Fortitude save or begin to suffocate. The target falls unconscious on its next turn, drops to -1 hit points and gains the dying condition the turn after that, and dies on the subsequent turn; a DC 17 Fortitude save delays this progression. As a swift action, the wearer can release a grappled or pinned foe. Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *suffocation*; Price +1 bonus.

MASHER BASHER

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 9th

Slot —; **Price** 36,005 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Three times per day, as a swift action, the wielder of this +1 impact greatclub can stun an opponent struck by the club for 1d4 rounds. If the opponent succeeds at a DC 14 Fortitude save, he is instead dazed for 1 round.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*, *greater concussive strike*, *lead blades*[APG], *giant form I*; **Cost** 18,005 gp

BAG OF ROCKS

Aura faint transmutation; CL 5th

Slot —; **Price** 7,500 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs. empty, 30 lbs. filled

DESCRIPTION

This grimy, moth-eaten canvas bag holds up to 32 Small rocks (or 16 Medium rocks, 8 Large rocks, or 4 Huge rocks) shrunk down to the size of marbles (or a larger equivalent for larger rocks). As a move action which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, the bag's owner may retrieve a rock from the bag which instantly grows to its full size. Strangely, the bag only affects rocks with its magic.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *shrink item*, creator must be a giant; **Cost** 3,750 gp

MASTODON MASK

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 7th

Slot head; **Price** 10,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This ivory mask, which fits over the wearer's jaw, has 5-inch long stylized tusks jutting from the chin piece. When worn, the tusks elongate to 5 feet. While worn, the mask grants the wearer a gore attack as a primary natural attack (which acts as a secondary natural attack when the wearer uses manufactured weapons in addition to the gore attack). The gore attack, to which the mask grants a +1 enhancement bonus, deals 1d6 points of piercing damage for a Medium wearer (1d4 for Small and 1d8 for Large).

Additionally, the wearer gains a +2 enhancement bonus to CMB for bull rush and overrun attempts, and she does not incur attacks of opportunity when she performs either combat maneuver.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *aspect of the bear*^{APG}, *aspect of the stag*^{APG}, creator must be a hill giant; **Cost** 5,000 gp

VARIANT HILL GIANT: CIVILIZED HILL GIANT (CR 8)

A civilized hill giant benefits greatly from the society that has accepted the giant as a member, and vice versa. A civilized hill giant gains a +2 bonus to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma, and a further +2 bonus to one of those abilities. Additionally, a civilized hill giant treats Diplomacy as a class skill. However, a civilized hill giant suffers a -4 penalty on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks against non-civilized hill giants.

HILL GIANT NPCS

Like most giants, hill giants rarely advance in classes. However, exceptional hill giants sometimes take levels in adept, cavalier, expert, barbarian, druid, fighter, ranger, sorcerer, or witch.

HIRGA TREESMASHER

When Hirga was young, the mastodon owned by her tribe's chief gave birth to a female calf. Hirga decided then she would carve out her place in the tribe by rearing the mastodon. The calf, which she named Fraint, immediately bonded with Hirga, and they became inseparable. As Fraint grew, she allowed Hirga to ride her, and she soon taught the mastodon how to compose herself in battle. Though Hirga might have followed the life of an animal training giant, fate had other plans.

When the chief's mount died in battle, he decided not to claim Frait, since Hirga had clearly proved herself the superior master of the mastodon. Hirga and Frait serve as frontline fighters, and both of them exhilarate in the sound of bones crunching under the mastodon's feet. The pair has been pivotal in the tribe's prosperity, but Hirga refuses to become chief of her tribe, ignoring the suggestions that she would make a powerful leader.

During Hirga's downtime, she continues to train Frait, but the pair has fun by engaging in a bizarre physical match where the two mash their heads together and attempt to push the other one into a kneeling position—a contest Frait often wins.

Hirga Treesmasher

CR 11

XP 12,800

Female advanced hill giant cavalier 4

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +11 natural, -2 rage, -1 size)

hp 167 (4d10+10d8+102)

Fort +20, Ref +7, Will +9

Defensive Abilities rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork greatclub +23/+18/+13 (2d8+16) and gore +17 (1d8+6) or 2 slams +21 (1d8+11) and gore +22 (1d8+12)

Ranged rock +12 (1d8+16)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks braggart, cavalier's charge, challenge (1/day), rock throwing (120 ft.)

TACTICS

Before Combat Hirga drinks her potion of rage.

During Combat Hirga first makes use of Swap Places to get a viable charge against an opponent. She then spurs Frait into a charge while she swings her greatclub wildly. She and Frait will focus on a single opponent, changing opponents once they drop their current foe, or another opponent proves troublesome.

Morale Hirga fights as long as she and her mastodon stay reasonably healthy. Once she drops to 30 hp, or Frait appears to be similarly wounded, she retreats to a vantage point where she can throw rocks.

Base Statistics Without rage, Hirga's statistics are AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Fort +19, Will +8;

Melee masterwork greatclub +22/+17/+12 (2d8+15) and gore +16 (1d8+6) or 2 slams +20 (1d8+10) and gore +21 (1d8+11), Ranged rock +11 (1d8+15); Str 30, Con 23; CMB +22; CMD 33; Skills Climb +13, Intimidate +23.

STATISTICS

Str 32, Dex 12, Con 25, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 11

Base Atk +11; CMB +23; CMD 34

Feats Cleave, Dazzling Display^B, Intimidating Prowess, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatclub), Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Swap Places^{APG}, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Skills Climb +14, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +23, Perception +8, Ride +14

Languages Common, Giant

SQ animal companion (mastodon), expert trainer +2, orders (order of the cockatrice), ride mount, tactician (1/day)

Combat Gear *potion of rage*; Other Gear hide armor, masterwork greatclub, 4 Small rocks, *cloak of resistance* +2, mastodon mask

HILL GIANT ADVENTURE SEEDS

More often than not, adventurers who encounter hill giants will do so as the giants descend on a village to oust the current residents, as the hill giants travel from a now-despoiled area to another location, or, more rarely, as they undertake a mission for a more powerful creature. The following adventure ideas help introduce characters to hill giants.

PANIC!: A runner from a nearby village breathlessly pleads with the PCs to aid her village, against which hill giants have recently launched an attack.

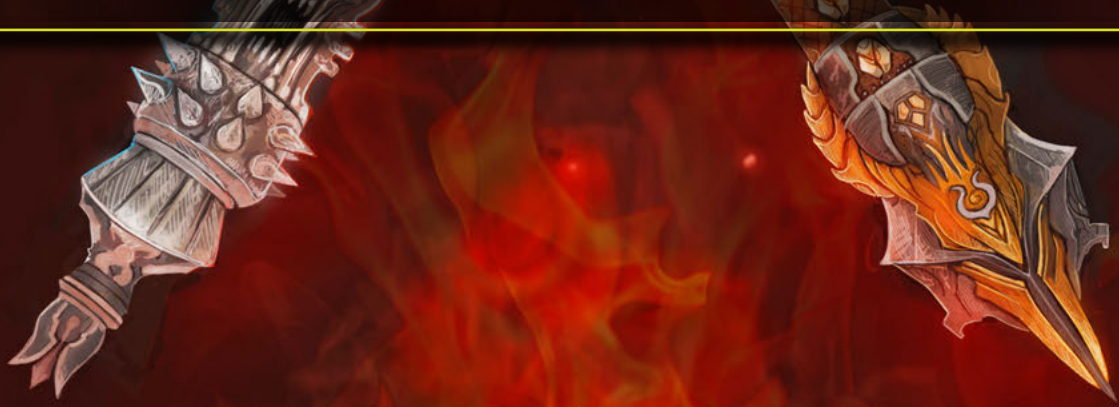
STONE'S THROW: While the PCs travel through a hilly region, an errant rock lands several feet away from one of the PCs. The sounds of a battle between two hill giant tribes reach them immediately thereafter.

CAT'S-PAWS: The characters fight against a hill giant raiding party, which includes a surprise in a hill giant with levels in an arcane caster class. Assuming the PCs defeat the giants, they discover a note on the arcane caster written in Giant describing the PCs as targets for the hill giants' attack.



R T N X I M R N X F M S F Y B T M R Z I X I C N F M S F Y B M

STONE GIANTS



Some of the longest lived of their kind, stone giants spend most of their 800 years in peaceful pursuits. They live at the rocky peaks of mountain ranges and, from their caves, raise hardy livestock and contemplate both their own lives and the passage of history. Adult and elder stone giants take a measured approach to everything—a luxury granted by their inaccessible homes.

Stone giants trust the mountains and extreme altitude to take care of most invaders, only falling back on their ability to blend into stone and their intimate knowledge of their cave homes to repel the most stubborn pursuers. For many other giants, such an invasion would provoke a devastating counterattack, but this is not the case for most stone giants. Instead, they see this as an opportunity to improve their defenses and educate captives about the tribe's peaceful intentions before releasing them.

However, not all stone giants are peaceful hermits; adults have to spend considerable effort to rein in the hotheaded adolescents in their tribe. More proactive than their seniors, young stone giants would rather change the world than observe it. The adults and elders know this phase will pass, though, and appreciate the passion expressed by the younger members of the tribe. However, a hotheaded, charismatic young leader with enough followers can take advantage of this undirected energy and unleash catastrophic attacks against lowlanders. This, in turn, drives counteroffensives, usually resulting in the giants resolving the conflict by leaving their long-standing homes for several humanoid generations, eventually returning when the hostilities have been forgotten.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Stone giants lead agrarian lives, tending to flocks of sheep and herds of goats suited for the thinner atmosphere. Their relatively slow metabolisms mean they have little need for meat from these livestock. This also means they have little desire to raid nearby settlements for their resources. The giants share the task of shepherding these animals, and usually spend the time with their charges in quiet contemplation. Other than the rare oversized raptor the giants must drive away, herding the animals requires very little attention, allowing time to dwell on matters of life, death, and the nuances of stone. Those who spend time with these giants learn far more than they may need to know about different types of stone, such as details on each type's basic properties, and esoteric information such as the intonation each type makes when struck.

Due to the giants' long lifespans, childbirth is a rare occurrence, and stone giant children account for less than a fourth of a typical tribe's population. Unlike many giants, who view children as competition for meager resources, stone giants cherish their few young and look forward to imparting their wisdom. During childhood, the young listen with rapt attention to their elders and are remarkably mindful of the adults. Much like shepherding duties, child rearing is a communal affair and allows the children to grow up with the same experiences and lessons. The giants view these formative years as a secure foundation for the rest of their children's lives—especially in light of the next stage in their development.

At roughly 80 years of age, stone giants enter a brief period of adolescence. Most older giants refer to this time as the "molten rock years," while some disparagingly call it the "porous rock years." The adolescents devote considerable energy to affecting change and scoff at their elders' desire to ponder courses of action. This is a dangerous time for the tribe, since outside forces can easily sway adolescents, causing harm to both themselves and to the giants' overall reputation. Most hostile encounters with stone giants are with adolescents, and since they are nearly the same size and strength as adults, their victims cannot tell the difference. As all adults have passed through this tumultuous phase, they understand the necessity for it and the eventual lesson that "hasty solutions to perceived problems create even greater difficulties." Most young giants reach adulthood without major harm, and gain an appreciation for taking the long view on all matters.

After this approximately 20-year period, stone giants settle into adulthood and become stalwart members of their society. At some point in an adult stone giant's life—some as early as 400 years of age, while others wait until closer to the end of their natural lifespan—they decide to "sink into stone" or "search for new stone." The giants undertake a lonely journey with the tribe's blessing. They leave behind the burden of daily concerns and either become hermits in caves at the tallest mountain peak in the tribe's range, or travel away from the region entirely.

Those giants that choose solitary existences almost literally become one with the mountain, and their tribes hold their caves as sacred; an outsider that defiles one of them finds the surest and quickest way to incur the giants' wrath. From their vantage points, the hermits can view several hundred square miles of the mountainous region and the surrounding foothills, along with an unobstructed view of the heavens.

During this decades-long period of solitude, the giants reflect on their lives and experiences while taking in the vistas afforded them. The internalization of their lessons learned unlocks personal power in them, and they return to their tribes as elder stone giants possessing mastery over stone.

Stone giants that vacate their mountain homes obtain the same power, but it derives from their desire to learn from other beings. They integrate themselves into a humanoid society, preferably one underground or on rocky terrain. Well-established communities neighboring the mountains are aware of this behavior and welcome the otherwise frightening wanderers into their midst.

The inquisitive giants do not barrage people with questions. Instead, they ask several people the same question, retreat to think on the collected answers, then follow up as needed. Villagers become used to revisiting conversations that took place days or weeks prior as the giants finally decide to pursue the thread again. In turn, the giants are happy to answer questions about their lives, physiology, and other stone giant-related matters. Additionally, they help out with menial tasks and even fight on behalf of their adopted neighbors.

This pattern ends after a few months, when the giants uproot and travel to new communities. They repeat this process many times before their freshly obtained insights transform them into more powerful members of their race, at which time they return to their tribes.

Not all stone giants become elders, and not all elders live long enough to enjoy their newfound power. The giants realize death is as inevitable as the erosion of stone by the elements, and they embrace it as another step in their progression. They believe that the wisdom gathered during an individual's life endures forever, so they inter a deceased giant into a tomb directly beneath their living areas.

The duty of creating a tomb falls to an elder, who can magically influence stone to leave a space large enough to fit the dead giant. The body remains in the open grave until the following day when the elder fills in the tomb. After this ceremonial "reclamation by the mountain," the stone is said to echo the deceased giant's thoughts for those that exercise the patience to listen.

Stone giants produce other enduring legacies, both in art and with more utilitarian stone items for future generations. Foremost, they carve intricate bas reliefs on the walls of their cave homes or craft standalone art objects from stone. A minor philosophical divide separates stone giant tribes: the majority believes stone should remain intact and unseparated from other

stone and only express their art through bas reliefs, while those who also fashion standalone items believe they honor the mountain that gave up the material. Arguments between opposing giants regarding the two approaches continue for weeks and rarely sway either proponent, even as each side carefully considers points and counterpoints.

Bas reliefs provide not only a historical record of the tribe's accomplishments, but also a detailed history of the neighboring region. Long-lasting tribes have several walls covering millennia of events. Standalone objects tend toward simple spherical, cubic, or pyramidal shapes, but two or more different types of stone generally comprise these objects, expanding their array of textures and patterns. An object's aesthetic value is lost on all non-stone giants, except for the most experienced stoneworkers.

Stone giants' clubs are another set of items where their artistry shines, even though those with untrained eyes may see them as simple weapons. The giants hew their clubs from the strongest stone and fashion them for maximum effectiveness. While the giants have no problem with dozens of stone cubes and balls filling up their caves, they do not see the need for weapons cluttering up their homes, so they bequeath their clubs to the younger giants on their passing. The youths then augment their clubs to personalize them. An individual club might have several runes and counters etched along its surface, each meaningful to current or previous owners.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Unlike most giant races, stone giants rarely establish leaders among themselves. As they see it, no particular type of stone is better than another and each type has its suited purpose—which does not include rulership over the other types. The adults share responsibility for the tribe equally, with individuals trading off on various duties, such as shepherding and hunting. If they need a nominal leader to interact with envoys who insist on meeting a chief, they elect someone based on the perceived fit with the other group.

Diplomacy with stone giants is an agonizingly slow process for others, as the giants spend days deliberating on trade agreements or even something as simple as allowing a caravan to pass through mountains they control. They put nearly every major tribal decision to a vote among the adults after a period of discussion, weighing the pros and cons of all choices. While the giants put considerable weight on wisdom of age, they do not completely defer to the elders, who have

a vote just like the others. Sometimes, though, their deliberations are abandoned quickly, such as during an attack. At that point, the giants act quickly and decisively to put down the imminent threat.

Adolescents look for leaders to guide them, and the more charismatic giants readily gain influence. Sometimes this leads many young giants astray, as they do not consider the ramifications of their actions. The adults view this as necessary to the learning process, and hope that their hasty decisions do not cause too much difficulty for the tribe.

Despite their similar appearances and egalitarian nature, stone giants are distinct individuals and pursue varied interests with a deep and abiding passion. Nearly every stone giant specializes in something that few others do and brings the fruits of this joy to the tribe. The other giants encourage this development and offer considered criticism and advice about future improvements. Excellent chefs, animal handlers (for the dire bears common in a stone giant lair), stone cutters, musicians, or magically talented giants can emerge from the tribe's ranks.

While the giants appreciate the advice they receive from their tribe, they truly enjoy discussing their gifts with others who share them. Fortunately, once per decade, the various giant tribes spread throughout a mountain range hold a month-long moot, where the giants can discuss their crafts, share their tribes' experiences, and trade news regarding momentous events occurring in their territory. Several local rulers may die and numerous wars might start and end within the ten-year span between moots, but the giants do not consider such events important enough to mention. The gradual expansion of a mighty empire or the recent arrival of a dragon will spark interest, though, and the convening giants discuss long-term strategies for dealing with gradually developing situations. The tribes also trade members that wish to visit other parts of the vast mountain range.

RELIGION AND RUNE USE

Stone and the very foundations of the world garner the most worship from stone giants, and they are quite devout in that worship. However, they also pay homage to deities who oversee giants and earth. Those who follow particular deities invoke them when they inter a deceased giant into stone, but the stone itself receives the most reverence. According to the giants, since stone surrounds them rendered them in its image, it deserves their worship. Itinerant stone giants also accept the deities of their adopted cultures into

their lives, as they see this veneration as a broadening of experience. These giants who return as elders retain some respect for the gods and goddesses they discovered and will even say a relatively quick prayer to each one. However, like most stone giants, they do not feel the need to convert others.

Stone giants use runes for protection and strength more than anything else. They favor uruz (strength), fehu (livestock), thurisaz (giants), naudiz (necessity), and othala (inheritance) runes over the others. However, they also use raido (travel), gebu (hospitality), and dagaz (laying the dead to rest) depending on the situation. For more information on magical runes, see *Deep Magic* or *Northlands*.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

As far as giant races go, stone giants have the most prosperous overall relationships with the smaller races. While most giants prefer longer-lived humanoids who understand patience and prudent action, some enjoy the challenge of engaging with people who make comparatively snap judgments.

DWARVES: Given that giants and dwarves are generally enemies, it comes as a surprise to outside observers that dwarves not only tolerate stone giants but also sometimes invite them to their underground homes. In turn, the giants appreciate dwarves the most of all humanoid races, and those giants who choose travel in their path to enlightenment visit at least one dwarven community. When members of the two races meet, they usually exchange crafting techniques, and the giants consider it great good fortune to discover a dwarven clan that works with stone more than metal. Neighboring dwarves and giants sometimes enter into mutual protection pacts, which last for several centuries.

ELVES: Since most elves do not find rocky and relatively barren terrain attractive, the giants have very little interaction with elves. The rare meetings between the two have gone well, as they find common ground in taking the long view of matters of importance. Perhaps due to their wildly differing aesthetic senses, some giants enjoy visiting elven lands to broaden their artistic horizons, often alarming elves unused to non-hostile encounters with their kind. The giant is understanding of any

initial hostilities, though, and once she assures them of her peaceful intentions the elves often offer their hospitality. Even if they do not, however, the giant holds no grudge.

GNOMES: Stone giants have a similar view toward gnomes as they have toward dwarves, but they recognize the differences between the two races. The gnomes' obsession with a particular vocation impresses most giants, who see a sort of kindred spirit in the smaller folks' way of devoting several years to a single task. Even if the task makes no sense to a giant in terms of practicality, he appreciates the enduring commitment. The few giants that visit gnome communities often return with a similar monomaniacal focus.

HALFLINGS: Despite the overwhelming size difference between the two races, halflings are the most hospitable race to stone giants—they appreciate a giant race that does not reflexively attempt to squash, subjugate, or eat them. Visiting giants should expect many questions in rapid succession when they arrive, soon followed by requests to reach high items and perform feats of strength. The giants view surviving a stay with halflings with their patience intact as a true test of willpower, and avoid traveling to a successive halfling community.

HUMANS, HALF-ELVES, AND HALF-ORCS: Stone giants tend to consider all three of these races as the same, but they are willing to accept members of the races as individuals once they get to know them. The giants view them as mercurial, and find interactions with them to be dizzying. The idea that a person could choose a course of action and within minutes change their minds baffles the contemplative giants.

Members of these three races also instigate the most hostility in an effort to expand their empires. The long-lived giants see dozens of fleeting dominions that disrupt many lives and cause untold casualties, and fail to understand why these races make such shortsighted and costly decisions. Still, some giants welcome the challenge to learn from, and perhaps teach, these races when they travel.

OTHER GIANTS: Many other giant races confuse and sadden stone giants, who believe that if the other giants could quell their aggressive tendencies,

they could progress into thriving communities where they can reach their full potential. They most routinely encounter ogres and hill giants, who are belligerent at best, but since they are more powerful than their lesser cousins, they easily rebuff the disorganized attacks mounted against them. If stone giants decide the less-powerful giants might create so great a disruption as to invoke backlash against all giants in the region, they regretfully attempt to drive out or thin the numbers of their lesser kin.

Stone giants in northern climes or snow-capped peaks might run afoul of frost giants, and usually avoid already claimed areas. By comparison, a migrating band of frost giants that happens upon stone giant-controlled mountains will usually attempt to oust the native population, who must make a quick decision between fighting to keep their land and ceding it to the invaders.

STONE GIANT RACIAL RULES

Stone giants draw their strength from their rocky environment and craft or enhance items yielded by the stone. While they eschew the use of weapons, they understand the need for them, and their craftspeople prove quite adept at the development of devastating weapons using the potential energy contained within stone. Capable spellcasters intensify their ability to manipulate earth and enhance the giants' understanding of the world around them.

STONE GIANT RACIAL FEATS

Stone giants that seek to better themselves do so by strengthening their bond to the element with which they are most associated. They also like abilities that turn their methodical processes to their advantage.

ALREADY THERE

Your skin becomes stone in substance as well as appearance. While this does not grant you any physical protection, it keeps you safe from being turned to stone.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You are immune to spells and effects that cause petrification or slow you down through partial petrification.

DELIBERATOR

The longer you consider a vexing issue, the more likely you are to arrive at a solution.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: For each uninterrupted hour spent in thought on a question or problem, you gain a +1 insight bonus to any skill checks (maximum +8).

EARTHEN VEINS

You embrace your elemental nature and gain a measure of protection.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Con 21.

Benefit: You gain acid resistance 5.

EMBRACE OF STONE

Stone surfaces seem to accommodate you, keeping you hidden from view.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You gain an additional +8 bonus on your racial bonus to Stealth checks in rocky or mountainous terrain.

ENDURING CRAFTER

Your stone creations resist breakage and other damage.

Prerequisite: Stone giant, Craft (stonemasonry or weapons) 3 ranks.

Benefit: Any stone item you craft receives a +4 bonus to its break DC or grants a +4 bonus to the bearer's CMD on sunder checks, as appropriate to the item.

EXCAVATOR

Your mastery of stone allows you to affect more of it with your magic.

Prerequisite: Elder stone giant.

Benefit: You treat your caster level as 2 higher for the purposes of the volume affected by your spells and spell-like abilities that transmute stone.

GRANITE FISTS (COMBAT)

Your hands and arms take on the consistency and hardness of granite, allowing you to strike more powerful blows without your weapons.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You improve your slam attacks by one die. If you have the Improved Unarmed Strike and Weapon Focus (unarmed strike) feats, your unarmed strike also improves by one die.

Special: You can take this feat one additional time, and its benefits stack.

HIDE IN STONE

You have an almost chameleonic ability when standing in front of stone.

Prerequisite: Stone giant, Stealth 5 ranks.

Benefit: While you are in a stony area devoid of vegetation, you may use Stealth even while being observed.

IMPROVED EARTHEN VEINS

Your connection to the element of earth intensifies.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Con 23, Earthen Veins.

Benefit: Your acid resistance increases to 10.

IMPENETRABLE SKIN

All but the most powerful weapons deflect off your rocky epidermis.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Improved Rocky Skin, Rocky Skin.

Benefit: You gain hardness 8.

IMPROVED ROCKY SKIN

Your slate-like skin turns away physical attacks.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Rocky Skin.

Benefit: You gain hardness 5.

MASTER STONECRAFTER

Your stonework has an inherent quality that exceeds that of your peers.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Craft (stonemasonry or weapons) 5 ranks.

Benefit: Stone items you craft have the masterwork quality, but you do not have to pay the extra price for this quality.

ROCKY SKIN

Your skin gains the qualities of the stone that surrounds you.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You gain hardness 2.

ROOT IN PLACE

Your feet find purchase in stone, making it extremely difficult for others to move you from your spot.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Surety of Stone.

Benefit: As an immediate action, you make yourself nearly immobile, granting you a +8 bonus to CMD to resist to bull rush, drag, reposition, and trip attempts. While in this rooted state, you also take a -4 penalty on Reflex saves. You must remain in this state for at least 1 full round, after which you can return to normal as a free action at the beginning of your turn.

SHARPSTONE SAVANT

Stone weapons are normally dull and incapable of slicing or piercing opponents. This is not the case when you craft them.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Master Stonecrafter, Craft (weapons) 7 ranks.

Benefit: You may create stone weapons that deal piercing or slashing damage. These weapons do not have the fragile condition and have the full hardness of their base weapons.

Normal: Weapons made of stone have half the hardness of their base weapons and have the fragile condition.

SLOW METABOLISM

You slow your metabolism down such that you require food and water infrequently. This provides more time to ponder life's mysteries without interruption.

Prerequisites: Stone giant, Endurance.

Benefit: You can go without water for a number of days equal to your Constitution score. After this time, you make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) to avoid taking damage. You can go without food for 10 days. Afterwards, you must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check). You are also immune to spells or effects that cause starvation or dehydration.

STONE SUMMONING SPELL (METAMAGIC)

You can augment creatures you summon with the power and protection of earth.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You can alter a *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally* spell such to grant the creature(s)

summoned a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength and hardness 2. A *stone summoning* spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

SURETY OF STONE

Stone grips your feet as you walk across it. This does not impede your movement, but it gives you assurance that you will not fall even on the narrowest strips of stone.

Prerequisite: Stone giant.

Benefit: You gain a +8 bonus on Acrobatics checks to balance while on stone surfaces.

UNYIELDING MIND

Once you set yourself on a course of action, even magical influence will not deter you from it.



Prerequisites: Stone giant, Wis 11.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saves against mind-affecting (compulsion or charm) spells and effects.

STONE GIANT EQUIPMENT

Many stone giants have a penchant for item creation that extends beyond mere weapon making. While most of their works only have—some would argue dubious—artistic merit, they also fashion practical items for the tribe. Stone giants encountered by the PCs could have any of the following items.

CLARITY MOSS

Price 7 gp; **Weight** 0.5 lbs.; **Craft DC** 20

This alchemically treated gray-green moss found in barren regions opens up the mind of a creature that eats it to an array of inputs. For one hour after ingestion, it grants a +8 alchemical bonus on Perception, Sense Motive, and trained Knowledge checks, but the sensory overload renders the creature sickened otherwise.

EXPLODING ROCK

Price 8 gp

Type simple

Stone giants can work disparate types of rock together into a whole, and this weapon is a deadly example of that ability. The wielder throws it like a normal rock with no penalty, and it deals damage as usual. Additionally, when it impacts its target or a hard surface, it explodes in fragments that deal damage to all creatures in a 5-foot radius equal to 2 points of damage per die of original damage dealt by the rock.

STONE DRUMS

Price 315 gp; **Weight** 12 lbs.

With the correct equipment or drummer, these drums fashioned from different types of stone create a frightening reverberation that shakes the earth and rattles bones. To play the drums properly, the drummer must be a stone giant and either have the earth subtype or possess masterwork mallets; otherwise she takes a –5 penalty on Perform (percussion) checks. A creature trained in Perform (percussion instruments) can use the skill in place of Intimidate check to demoralize opponents.

STONE SOFTENER

Price 450 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.; **Craft DC** 25

Stone giants typically use this mildly caustic alchemical substance to render stone more pliable for art projects

and other bits of crafting. It reduces a 5-foot cube of stone to a clay-like state for 10 minutes, after which the stone returns to its natural state.

If applied to rocky ground, the 5-foot square of rock softened by the substance entangles any creature entering it. A creature stuck in the area at the end of the 10-minute duration has its base speed reduced to 0 and must break free of the stone (90 hp, Break DC 25) to regain mobility.

Stone softener cannot be used in this way on surfaces such as flagstone-set streets.

STONE GIANT MAGIC

Unsurprisingly, stone giants make liberal use of magic employing stone, both through the ground on which they stand and objects they wield. Additionally, they use magic that allows them to gain a greater understanding of the world around them.

NEW SPELLS

The following spells are known in many stone giant tribes.

BOMBARDMENT

School evocation [earth]; **Level** druid 5, sorcerer/wizard 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M/DF (handful of pebbles)

Range long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area 20-ft. spread

Duration 1 round/6 levels (D)

Saving Throw Reflex half (see below); **Spell**

Resistance no

A stone missile strikes every target in the spell's area, dealing 4d8 points of bludgeoning damage. Additionally, if the target fails its Reflex save, the stone makes a combat maneuver check (CMB equal to your caster level + modifier from your spellcasting attribute + 4) to knock the target prone. If you are able to call forth multiple rounds of stones, you can change the center of the *bombardment* as a standard action.

ERUPTING WALL

School transmutation [earth]; **Level** druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting Time 1 immediate action

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

Effect 10-ft. square stone wall

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates (object); **Spell Resistance**

yes (object)

This spell instantaneously builds an intervening wall from existing stone that provides cover. The wall cannot be used to displace items or creatures, and the spell fails if you attempt to place the wall in an occupied square. The wall returns to its natural state when the spell ends.

IMMUTABILITY

School abjuration; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 6

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (slate tablet)

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 hour/level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

The creature warded by this spell gains protection from spells and effects that change its shape. It gains spell resistance equal to 10 + your caster level against transmutation spells and effects, and it gains a +8 luck bonus on saves or checks to retain its shape (for example, against a chaos beast's corporeal instability).

INUREMENT

School divination; **Level** bard 1, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 round

Components V, S

Range personal

Target you

Duration 1 day/level (D)

By means of this spell, you acclimate to a foreign community as you quickly learn its customs and mores. For each day you spend within the community, you gain a cumulative +1 insight bonus on Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks with respect to that community's inhabitants. If you leave the community while this spell is in effect, you no longer gain the cumulative bonus, but it remains the same until you return to the community.

SHILLELAGH, COMMUNAL

Level druid 2

Target one touched nonmagical, non-metal club or quarterstaff per level

This spell functions like *shillelagh*, except you can affect a club or quarterstaff composed of any non-metal material and you divide the duration in 1 minute intervals among the weapons touched. Additionally, other creatures can wield the weapon and gain its benefits.

STONE MOTES

Casting Time 1 standard action

School conjuration (creation) [earth]; **Level** druid 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Components V, S, M/DF (one tiny spherical stone per mote created)

Range personal

Effect one rock/2 levels

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

This spell creates a number of rocks that encircle you to provide protection and which you can launch at opponents. For each intact rock encircling you, you gain a +4 shield bonus. Each rock has 20 hp and hardness 8. As a standard action, you may fling a rock at an opponent as a ranged attack using the modifier from your spellcasting attribute in place of your Dexterity modifier. The rock deals 2d8 hp bludgeoning damage, and using it to attack reduces the number of rocks protecting you.

TREMOR

Casting Time 1 standard action

School evocation; **Level** bard 2, druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 3

Components V, S

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

Area 20-ft.-radius spread

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** yes

You cause the earth to shake in the affected area, potentially tripping creatures in the area. You make a single combat maneuver check (CMB equals your caster level + modifier from your spellcasting attribute + 4) and apply that result to each creature in the spell's area.

NEW ITEMS

Stone giant magic items are, unsurprisingly, all about enchanting stone.

CIRCLET OF CALLING STONE

Aura strong conjuration and transmutation; **CL** 13th
Slot head; **Price** 91,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This heavy, unadorned granite circlet has a magnetic attraction to other stone. The circlet's wearer can pull a loose stone, no more than 300 lbs. in weight, in his line of sight toward himself at a rate of 60 ft. per round. It requires a standard action to start this process, but the wearer does not need to concentrate on moving the

stone afterward. If the stone strikes a creature or an object in its path, it deals 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage per 25 lbs. of weight.

Additionally, once per day the wearer can spend a full round action to attune the circlet to a particular stone object with the same weight limit. After this, he can teleport that object to himself three times per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *telekinesis*, *teleport object*; **Cost** 45,500 gp

ELIXIR OF SPIKE SKIN

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 7th

Slot —; **Price** 1,400 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

For up to 8 hours after the imbiber drinks this thick, chalky liquid, she can grow spikes from her body as an immediate action. The spikes act as armor spikes and remain for 1 minute. The drinker may only benefit from this effect once.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *spike stones*; **Cost** 700 gp

IOUN STONES

Stone giants have their own version of ioun stones, crafted from different types of stone rather than crystal. They take similar shapes, orbit the owner, and provide a beneficial effect as typical ioun stones. However, they are slightly more durable, having AC 26, 20 hp, and hardness 8. The powers of each stone vary depending on its composition and shape.

STONE SPHERE

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot —; **Price** 2,150 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

With a command word, this rough, stone sphere that fits in the palm of a typical Large humanoid expands in size to become a throwing rock suitable for a Large creature. The rock deals 2d8 points of bludgeoning damage and is treated as a ranged weapon with a +1 enhancement bonus. The sphere can be further enhanced with additional bonuses or ranged weapon special abilities, but it cannot have a modified bonus greater than +5.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *magic weapon*, *shrink item*; **Cost** 1,025 gp

VARIANT STONE GIANTS

At either end of the development cycle for stone giants, problematic variants can arise.

CHARISMATIC YOUTH (CR 8)

A charismatic youth is an stone giant who manages to channel his impatience with the older giants' frustrating lack of proactivity into a force of personality. A charismatic youth takes a -2 penalty to Strength and gains a +4 bonus to Dexterity and Charisma. He can use *charm person* and *suggestion*, each, 1/day. Additionally, despite being a natural leader, he is also quite impressionable, taking a -4 penalty on Will saves to resist charms and compulsions.

STONE GIANT IOUN STONES

Composition	Shape	Effect	Price (GP)	CL	Aura	Cost (GP)	Requirements
Limestone	Ellipsoid	Immunity to fear	2,000 gp	12th	strong abjuration	2,000 gp	<i>remove fear</i>
Sandstone	Pyramid	25% chance to negate critical hit or sneak attack (per <i>light fortification</i> armor quality)	12,000 gp	12th	strong abjuration	6,000 gp	<i>shield of fortification</i> ^{ACG}
Slate	Spindle	+5 bonus to saves vs. transmutation	33,000 gp	12th	strong abjuration	16,500 gp	<i>immutability</i> *
Granite	Rhomboid	Hardness 2	45,500 gp	15th	strong transmutation	22,750 gp	<i>statue</i>

MAD ELDER (CR 10)

Stone giants who lead a hermetic existence in their path to becoming an elder sometimes confront things they cannot understand. The experience transforms them into insane beings that seek to destroy all that they once cherished. A mad elder gains a +4 bonus to Strength and Constitution and has a Charisma score of at least 17. The mad elder does not gain the typical stone giant elder spell-like abilities; instead she can use *disintegrate* (DC 19, save DC is Charisma-based) three times per day. If a mad elder gains class levels, she usually takes levels in cleric with the madness (or other related) domain.

STONE GIANT NPCs

Stone giants often advance in class levels, especially when they become elders. They gravitate towards sorcerer, bard, and druid, but circumstances might force them to gain experience in martial classes, such as ranger or fighter. Rare, lawful stone giants gain levels in monk, which affords them the best path in their journey of self-reflection.

EXAMPLE NPC

Song of Slate expressed her musical talents at a very young age, at first practicing by singing soothing songs to the animals she helped shepherd. As an adolescent she spied the tribe's master craftswoman finishing a set of stone drums. Enamored with the drums, she stole them, uncaring of the consequences. The punishment turned out not too harsh and fit the nature of the crime: she was to play the drums at the beginning of each meal and she was the last to receive her food. This suited the young stone giant, and her ability with the drums soon surpassed her singing ability.

As an adult, she continued playing the drums at meals and special ceremonies, and, as she reached the age where she was ready to begin her path to becoming an elder, she knew that travel was her destiny. She met a number of musicians, some more talented and some less, during her travels, and she learned and taught much as she journeyed from community to community. She returned triumphantly as a new elder and she still plays the drums—accompanying them with her resonant voice—for her tribe.

Song of Slate

CR 13

XP 19,200

Female elder stone giant bard 8

N Large humanoid (giant)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 11, flat-footed 27 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size)

hp 178 (20d8+88)

Fort +16, **Ref** +12, **Will** +13; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 *impact greatclub* +23/+18/+13 (3d8+13) or 2 slams +22 (1d8+8)

Ranged rock +17/+12/+7 (1d8+12)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks bardic performance 21 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 17], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion [DC 17]), rock throwing (180 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +13)
1/day—*stone shape*, *stone tell*, *transmute rock to mud* (or *transmute mud to rock*) (DC 18).

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)
3rd (3/day)—*deep slumber* (DC 16), *lion's courage*^{DM}, *thundering drums*^{APG} (DC 16)

2nd (5/day)—*heroism*, *locate object*, *sculpted servant*^{DM} (DC 15), *silence* (DC 15)

1st (5/day)—*comprehend languages*, *inurement*^{*}, *invigorate*^{APG} (DC 14), *not so fast*^{DM} (DC 14), *solid note*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*know direction*, *lullaby* (DC 13), *message*, *open/close* (DC 13), *resistance*, *sift*^{APG}

APG = Spell from *Advanced Player's Guide*.

DM = Spell from *Deep Magic*.

TACTICS

Before Combat Song of Slate drinks her potion of barkskin.

During Combat If alone, the stone giant attempts to disable her foes with a combination of lullaby and deep slumber or uses suggestion to get her opponents to stand down. If she fights with other stone giants, she uses inspire competence and inspire courage as appropriate.

Morale Song of Slate retreats from combat when she reaches 40 hp, unless her comrades are still in trouble, in which case, she remains behind to help them retreat.

Base Statistics Without *barkskin*, Song of Slate's statistics are AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 22.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 15, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +24 (+27 bull rush); **CMD** 36 (38 vs. bull rush)

Feats Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatclub), Point-blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Pushing AssaultAPG, Quick Draw

Skills Acrobatics +2 (+6 to jump), Climb +12, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (local) +13, Perception +12, Perform (percussion instruments) +26, Perform (sing) +18, Stealth +7 (+15 in rocky terrain); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in rocky terrain

Languages Common, Giant

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performances (percussion, sing)

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* +5, *potion of eagle's splendor*; **Other Gear** +1 *impact greatclub*, *bracers of armor* +2, *gloves of shaping*, stone drums

STONE GIANT ADVENTURE SEEDS

Stone giants rarely instigate hostilities with others, making it rare for adventurers to encounter them in a combat situation. Enough giants become wanderers on their way to transforming into elders that characters may interact with one in a community that has accepted him into its midst. Additionally, stone giants may prove to be surprising allies to characters experiencing difficulties in mountains where the giants dwell. The following adventure ideas help integrate stone giants into a campaign or provide for a one-off game session.

APPROACHING GIANT: The PCs' visit to a village is interrupted by a lone giant striding toward the village. She seems to have peaceful intent, but the characters' experiences with other, more violent giants may put them on edge.

STIRRING THE HORNET'S NEST: An unknown creature has escalated its attacks against a nearby stone giant tribe. At first, it would kill some livestock and leave the mangled remains behind, but it soon moved up to destroying stone objects and displaying the fragments in bizarre runes. The final straw for the giants came when the creature defiled one of the tribe's mountaintop caves reserved for their hermits. Incited to rage, the stone giants launch an attack on an unsuspecting community. Hopefully, the characters can find this mysterious villain and stop its strange attacks on the tribe before the situation spirals out of control.

MAD ELDER, IMPRESSIONABLE YOUTH: A stone giant seeking to become an elder talked to an alien creature that spoke of the end times for the giant's world and showed him unsettling vistas of the creature's home world. Deranged by the contact, the elder returned and managed to suppress his urges to destroy. Instead, he has turned his attention to the tribe's youth and shared his secret knowledge with them. He spurs them to attack and raid random locations to "save the world," and the young giants have fully committed to the elder's insane mission.





R T N X I M R N X F M S F Y B T M R Z I X I C N F M S F Y B M

FROST GIANTS



Frost giants dwell in frozen, inhospitable tundras and the permanently snow-capped peaks of prodigious mountain ranges. They dominate the regions they inhabit, going so far as to exert control over the beasts and all but the most powerful dragons residing there. They either use the creatures as beasts of burden or as sport for hunts. Due to the giants' remote location, as well as the dangerous, chilling places where they live, very few humanoids dare to challenge them, especially when the giants concentrate their numbers in one location.

However, the distance between frost giant-controlled areas and civilization does not protect others from the depredations of giants that can easily make the trip in less than a day. They enjoy hunting intelligent prey and will descend from their polar and high-altitude homes to visit a savage attack on unsuspecting villages, then return to their high-inaccessible lairs before a large scale retaliatory force can form. If the giants have enough time, they wreak utter destruction on the victims of their attacks, such that they leave no building standing and no creature alive—residents are either brutally slaughtered or taken as slaves or food (or both). Their legendary brutality stems from their sense of invulnerability, as well as an inherent bloodlust. Fortunately for those who cannot withstand routine frost giant assaults, the giants oftentimes turn this brutality on each other, typically when two or more of them vie for power.

In their homelands, frost giants are able to blend in with the surrounding snow and ice, adding to the considerable difficulty in mounting attacks against them. Despite their considerable size, they are extraordinarily sneaky on frozen terrain. However, it does not take long for them to betray their hidden locations as the desire to bash, crush, or hack their foes overcomes them.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Frost giants live in places that sustain very little edible plant life, and the inhabitants there compete for prey animals. The giants regard themselves as the rulers of their domains, and they commonly hunt and tame creatures that an army of lesser humanoids would avoid. They support themselves by what they hunt or take by force. This typically demands a nomadic lifestyle where clans of frost giants follow wherever plentiful game migrates.

However, some frost giants tribes do prefer to settle in one area. Those giant jarls who rule over

of multiple clans reside in ruined castles or other abandoned fortifications. Otherwise, clans establish crude settlements of semi-permanent homes from the hides of animals and other beasts they slay. These clans either have a fair supply of game or live near enough to humanoid settlements they can occasionally raid for food and slaves.

Frost giants are immune to the harsh arctic and subarctic environment, and they spend their grim and brutal lives in bitter lands of near-eternal winter. This attitude begins shortly after childbirth, as the giants regard their children as little more than mewling parasites who compete for the clan's limited resources.

While they hold a savage disregard for their children, frost giants realize that they need heirs to continue their bloodlines. They just require their progeny become contributors to society sooner, rather than later. Similar to other giant races, children that mature slowly have low chances of survival. In extreme cases, when food is scarce and hunting has turned up nothing, frost giants sometimes cannibalize their children, especially in clans with a demonic patron. This decision often leads to a descent into madness, and the frost giant clan goes berserk in its attacks on others before burning out completely.

Seriously injured frost giants in nomadic clans with no healers find themselves in a similar predicament. If a giant's clanmates regard her highly, they allow her to accompany them on a final raid and end her life in a blaze of glory. Otherwise, they leave the giant to the cruel mercies of the land or dispatch her, depending on their immediate needs—or their whims. Injured frost giants in permanent locations or in rare clans with competent healers have a much better survival rate, provided they recover quickly.

Given the giants' willingness to attack even their own clanmates without provocation, they prefer to spend time hunting with animal or bestial companions. Since most creatures in the frozen lands are solitary, if enormous, predators, frost giants have the utmost belief in their ability to hunt on their own. In addition, they bond with the beasts they have tamed, and a hunting trip provides the opportunity to work together. Any prizes they capture are not purely for their own consumption, as their clans expect them to return with food enough for every viable member. Returning empty-handed leads to disgrace for the giant, especially if it becomes a common occurrence.

By contrast, raiding is a communal affair, primarily due to the high potential for rich spoils. Whereas

a solitary hunting trip in the tundra may turn up a valuable item, a pillaged community always has some treasure ripe for the taking by an opportunistic frost giant. Since the giants distrust one another, they all feel compelled to join in the sacking of a village or town. Treasure and slave rights go to the giant who slays the former owner or captures the slave, but a chief or jarl can claim ownership for particularly attractive prizes. Doing so too often brings on the ire of all other frost giants, so leaders must either be shrewd in their choices or confident in their ability to rebuff attacks from rivals. During combat, the giants keep a close eye on how their peers perform, so they can brag about their accomplishments after the raid and observe weaknesses in the others.

When food and drink are plentiful, or when a successful raid yielded plenty of ale and mead, the giants celebrate raucously. These celebrations last for days, until the food and drink have run out, and the boisterousness leads to several drunken brawls. Eventually, the giants pass out for a couple of days from the drink and lack of sleep, but they do not fear or even consider the possibility of reprisals from the “little folk.”

ORNAMENTATION

During the frost giants’ rest between hunts and raids, hygiene is rarely a priority. They make minor exceptions for the appearance of their hair, including facial hair. To a civilized person used to regular bathing, a frost giant’s hair looks like a greasy, tangled mess, adorned with a smattering of bones and jewels. However, frost giants meticulously braid their own hair, using a body of water’s icy surface or the reflection from a cascading sheet of ice as a mirror. Nearly all frost giants have braids reaching down to their mid-backs, with small items, such as gems and bits of bone, adorning every couple inches worth of braid.

Those who can grow facial hair do likewise with their beards, braiding and ornamenting them richly. Each item is a memento of a successful hunt or raid, and the giants regard their hair as a source of pride. As such, when a frost giant performs disgracefully in combat or fails to bring home food for a clan, and the punishment is not severe enough to warrant death or expulsion, the clan chief shears the offending giant’s hair as a mark of shame.

Frost giants also take pride in their taming of vicious predators into companions. Winter wolves, dire polar bears, remorhazes, and even white dragons are the most common companion beasts found with frost giants, and these creatures live alongside them, whether in their permanent settlements or as traveling

companions. If frost giants excel at anything other than brutality, their efforts to selectively breed hardier and more aggressive versions of mundane animals have born terrifying fruit.

Frost giants also show great prowess in crafting and maintaining mighty greataxes. For other items, the job of crafting typically is left to slaves and involves refitting chain armor sized for smaller humanoids for giant frames. On occasion, an inventive giant might work with a slave who has the skill to realize the giant’s ideas. When other frost giants see the new items in action, they invariably force their slaves to replicate them, resulting in several items that have the appearance of frost giant make.

For the most part, a frost giant’s legacy is an impermanent one, but the rare great jarl may overachieve and establish the beginnings of an empire. Warrior-bards wind up in the court of such mighty rulers and travel from holding to holding singing or poetically reciting the jarls’ accomplishments in battle. A song or poem regarding an ancient jarl and his rule might survive centuries as these bards continue to sing or recite it—or stitch its boldest boasts and choicest deeds into praise of some current jarl, if shameless flattery is required.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

While frost giants prefer to be alone, they still congregate in one place for companionship, trade, mating, and so forth. Still, no frost giant openly believes that a larger concentration of giants provides additional safety, since they consider themselves the most powerful beings in their frozen homes. Given their predilection for violence even against their own kind, they are generally safer alone. At heart, though, they gather together to publicly outdo each other. If a giant takes down a mastodon by herself and provides a feast for the tribe, then another must slay a pair of elephant seals and drag their carcasses back to the tribe a day or so later.

Whatever the reason bringing them together, one giant always assumes leadership of the clan. For a new clan, the winner of a great brawl that injures and kills many of the participants becomes the chieftain. Leadership lasts as long as the chief shows no signs of weakness. Once he does so, or if enough giants become disgruntled with their situation, a rival invariably rises as a challenger. The ensuing fight between two or more giants hacking at each other with their massive axes results in at least one death. The winner, or the one giant still standing, becomes the new chief. Frost giant

leadership is certainly not limited by gender, as nearly all clan members that survive into adulthood can match any of their fellows in a brawl.

In regions where an extremely powerful jarl holds sway, the jarl can count all giants in no smaller than a 200-square-mile region as her subjects. This mighty leader often lives in an abandoned fortification or hilltop stronghold, and she delegates local power to lesser chieftains and warlords. These auxiliary groups must provide a portion of the goods and slaves taken in raids to the court.

The jarl may always replace an existing chieftain of a clan that has not supplied enough tribute to the jarl and many frost giant rulers do so in gruesome, public display to demonstrate the price of failure. Seizing power from a jarl, however, is not as easy as issuing a challenge to combat. Several lieutenants come to their leader's defense, and it takes at least one entire clan to carry out an assault on the jarl. These large-scale battles often destroy the kingdom as both sides annihilate each other.

Nearly every group of frost giants counts one member as the cruelest by far—an impressive achievement among such exemplars of brutality. This giant is disastrously unfit for leadership but needs an outlet for his cruelty, and so instead takes on the role of slave handler. In this role, he can indulge his sadistic tendencies; after all, any slave that cannot withstand the handler's ministrations does not deserve to live. Only the most gifted craftspeople avoid the whip (or worse), and they become valuable commodities to trade—indeed, frost giants consider talented slaves as a special form of plundered goods. Other slaves wind up as glorified pack mules, and the truly unfortunate end up as meals.

Beast trainers carry the great esteem in frost giant communities. A competent giant who can partner an otherwise dangerous monster with an owner is indispensable in a culture that prefers the company of monsters over their own kind. The job of beast trainer is the safest job insofar as avoiding murder at the hands (or axe) of a fellow giant, but it is not without risk. A misstep in training easily results in the trainer getting mauled to death.

Skalds fill a considerably less important role than the others detailed above, but jarls who wish to leave a legacy of their rule like to employ them. Not only do they sing or recite the praises of the mighty ruler, they take news of the clans they visit back to their jarls. However, they are no mere traveling entertainers and must contribute more than gilded words to earn their keep.

RELIGION AND RUNE USE

As masters of their cold domain, frost giants see little need to worship deities. They believe that no gods will make the land more hospitable, and they expect only wrath from deities that might deign to pay attention to their lives. A rare believer coaxes (or forces, if she has the power to do so) fellow giants into the worship of gods of storms, cold, and brutality in combat. Prayers to these gods ask for deadly weather or combat mishaps to befall their enemies, and the giants gain respect for the gods when, for instance, a blizzard strikes an area they plan to raid in the near future.

More often, frost giants follow demon lords that take a direct interest in a clan or entire kingdom. These demonic patrons drive their worshippers to ever-more brutal acts of depravity and supplement frost giant forces with their own demonic minions. Especially clever demons send a fiendish dire wolf or other animal to a frost giant holding to help entice the giants to their worship.

Overall, frost giants believe in their own personal power, and they turn to rune use to bolster that power. Other than the obviously favored runes of *hagalaz* (hail and winter weather) and *isaz* (ice), the giants use *tewaz* (fearlessness) and *thurisaz* (giants) runes. Nomadic clans also make liberal use of *raido* (travel) runes. See *Deep Magic* for more information on rune magic.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Frost giants have little regard for what they consider the lesser races. They rank smaller humanoid races based on their ability to perform tasks without trying to rebel, and on their suitability as meals.

DWARVES: If any race garners even mild respect from frost giants, it is dwarves. Although the giants rarely attack subterranean dwarven communities, they meet enough dwarven craftsmanship during their raids to see its inherent quality. Dwarves make the most desirable slaves with respect to meaningful work, and an excellent dwarf metalworker avoids the worst of a slaver's lash. Beyond that, the giants begrudgingly respect dwarven battle prowess and see dwarves as the only race that could plausibly harm them if the small folk were to attack as a large force. Dwarves sharing the frigid terrain with them would make the giants quite nervous. As for their suitability for

the stewpot, dwarves are much too gamy for the giants' liking.

HALFLINGS: On the other hand, frost giants consider halflings to be a delicacy, but that is the only good thing about them. They are too small and frail to withstand the punishing tasks required of slaves.

HUMANS: Humans are bothersome insects in a giant's eyes, given their propensity to make themselves at home in places already staked out by the giants. Humans are the most likely humanoid race to oppose frost giants, which the giants themselves find a great nuisance. The jarls forget many of the abandoned structures they now inhabit were built by ancient human empires.

OGRES: Ogres are the preferred "workhorse" slaves, since they can best withstand the chill without much complaint. Also, many ogres revere more powerful creatures, and this reverence makes them easy to order around without worrying about them rebellions. Ogres also express a similar bloodlust in battle to that possessed by frost giants, so the larger giants use them as front-line fighters to soften up any resistance before they launch their attack.

HILL GIANTS: Frost giants rarely encounter other giants, but the occasional hill giant troop might blunder into their domain. If the hill giants are easily cowed, the frost giants take them as slaves and make use of them as shock troops in a similar fashion to ogres. Otherwise, the frost giants easily dispatch their dimwitted cousins.

THURSIR: In mountainous regions controlled by the giants, they may run into a thursir clan. Thanks to their skill at crafting armor and weapons, thursir enter into reasonably equitable arrangements with frost giants, where the more powerful giants share some of their spoils for commissioned products.

The only trouble between the two giant races occurs when the thursir attack a community the frost giants intended to raid.

WHITE DRAGONS: Frost giants have a mixed relationship with white dragons. On the one hand, young dragons have low intelligence but are still trainable enough to act as a hunting companion. However, adult white dragons are powerful competitors for frost giant-controlled hunting grounds. With reluctance, frost



giants in a clan owning a white dragon that has grown too large or become too intelligent dispatch the beast before it can become a threat. A wild dragon escaping the giants' notice until it is powerful enough to exert its influence over the region manages the rare achievement of unifying the giants, at least until they slay the dragon.

FROST GIANT RACIAL RULES

Frost giants view themselves as the preeminent race in their homes, but this does not lead to a sense of complacency. They strive to improve themselves, notably to become more efficient killing machines. This is evident in the weapons they make themselves or force slaves to craft for them. While they consider martial prowess more impressive, a powerful spellcaster that can harness the power of ice and wind can awe even the mightiest warrior, especially if the spellcaster can enchant that warrior's axe.

FROST GIANT RACIAL FEATS

Frost giants use their homeland's cold, ice, and snow as weapons against their opponents. They also devote great effort into working smoothly with the beasts they bring into their clans as hunting companions.

Note: Some of the following feats apply equally to all giants; in this case, the racial requirement shows "giant" rather than "frost giant."

AVALANCHE RIDER

Avalanches instill little fear in you. The same cannot be said for your foes.

Prerequisite: Frost giant

Benefit: If you are caught in an avalanche's bury zone, you take no damage if you succeed at the DC 15 Reflex save; otherwise you take half damage and you are not buried. If you are instead in the slide zone, you take no damage.

AXE HURLER

You catch your foe by surprise when you throw your axe at it.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Weapon Focus (battleaxe or greataxe)

Benefit: You take no penalty when you throw a battleaxe or greataxe. Additionally the range increment for your thrown axes increases to 20 ft., and the critical threat and damage remain unchanged. If you possess the Throw Anything feat, you gain an additional +2 on attack rolls.

Normal: Throwing a weapon not meant to be thrown

incurs a -4 penalty, the range increment is 10 ft., the weapon's critical threat range is 20, and it only deals double damage on a confirmed critical.

AXE SHIELD

Opponents have a difficult time getting past the barrier presented by your axe.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus (battleaxe or greataxe)

Benefit: While wielding a battleaxe or greataxe, and you have Weapon Focus for the axe, you gain a +1 shield bonus to AC. The bonus increases to +2 if you use the total defense action or fight defensively.

BRUTAL STRIKE

Your lust for opponents' blood adds power to your swings at the cost of leaving yourself open to attack.

Prerequisites: Frost giant

Benefit: You can choose to take a -1 penalty to AC and an additional -1 penalty for every 4 points of base attack bonus you possess, to gain a +2 bonus (per point of total penalty) on all melee damage rolls. The damage bonus is increased by half if you attack with a two-handed weapon. Additionally, you gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls to confirm a critical hit while using this feat.

COMPETITIVE COMBATANT

You cannot stand to see your allies take all the glory in battle.

Prerequisite: Frost giant

Benefit: If you see an ally slay an opponent, you gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and a +2 morale bonus on damage rolls until you kill an opponent. This bonus stacks for each ally you witness killing a foe.

EXTRA ANIMAL COMPANION

One animal hunting companion is not enough for you.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, animal companion class feature with an effective druid level of 3 or higher

Benefit: You gain an additional animal companion, where your effective druid level with respect to the additional companion is 2 less than your current effective druid level.

Special: You may take this feat more than once. Each additional animal companion is treated as if your effective druid level were 1 less. If your effective druid level would be 0, you may not take this feat.

FRIGHTFUL SLAVER

You use your size to cow puny mortals.

Prerequisites: Giant, Intimidate 5 ranks

Benefit: You are treated as though you are one size category larger when making Intimidate checks, and

RIMEFUR BEAST TEMPLATE

Creating a Rimefur Beast

“Rimefur beast” is an inherited template that can be added to any animal or magical beast (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A rimefur beast retains all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: Same as base creature +1.

Type: Creature type changes to magical beast. Do not recalculate HD, BAB, or saves.

Armor Class: Natural armor improves by +2.

Defenses: Gain cold resistance 5 (which improves by 5 for every 5 HD possessed by the base creature).

Melee: A rimefur beast retains all the melee attacks of the base creature, but each melee attack deals 1d6 points of cold damage (plus 1d6 for every 5 HD possessed by the base creature).

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Con +4.

you gain a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks for each effective size category larger you are compared to your target.

FRIGID AURA

Cold radiates off of you in palpable waves.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Con 21.

Benefit: You gain an aura of cold that deals 2d6 damage to all creatures within 10 feet of you at the beginning of your turn. You can suppress the aura as a move action and reactivate it as an immediate action.

FROZEN BLOOD

As accustomed as you are to numbing cold, you more readily shake off other similar effects.

Prerequisite: Frost giant

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saving throws to avoid becoming stunned, staggered or paralyzed. Additionally, if the spell or effect does not normally allow ongoing saves to break the condition, you can make one additional saving throw attempt (with no bonus) at the end of your turn against the spell or effect.

GREATER FRIGID AURA

The cold emanating from you chills your opponents to their bones.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Improved Frigid Aura, Con 23.

Benefit: Your aura of cold deals 6d6 damage to all creatures in a 20-foot radius, and any creature that takes damage from the cold must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 total HD + Con modifier) to avoid becoming staggered for 1d6 rounds.

HIDE IN SNOW

You easily blend into the bleak background of the land you call home.

Prerequisite: Frost giant, Stealth 5 ranks

Benefit: While you are in an area covered in snow or ice, you may use Stealth even while being observed.

ICE BLASTER

You are frighteningly effective with spells that freeze your foes.

Prerequisite: Frost giant, caster level 1st

Benefit: You add your caster level to damage from spells that deal cold damage.

IMPROVED FRIGID AURA

You extend the reach of your chilly aura and deal more damage to those foolish enough to remain within it.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Frigid Aura, Con 23

Benefit: The aura granted by Frigid Aura deals 4d6 damage to all creatures within 15 feet of you.

LIMB-BREAKING CRITICAL (COMBAT, CRITICAL)

When you strike true, you are rewarded by the sound of breaking bones.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Critical Focus, base attack bonus +17

Benefit: When you score a critical hit, your opponent loses the use of a limb of your choice. An opponent with a broken arm cannot attack with that arm (for an opponent with only two arms, it can no longer use two-handed weapons or make two-weapon attacks). An opponent with a broken leg has its base speed reduce to 10 ft. and takes a –2 penalty on Reflex saves; if both legs are broken, the opponent is immobilized and takes a –6 penalty on Reflex saves. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + your base attack bonus) reduces the effect; striking an arm inflicts a –2 penalty on attack and damage rolls when the target uses that arm in an attack, while striking a leg reduces the target’s speed by 5 ft.

SLOUGH OFF FIRE

The cold cascading off your body provides a buffer against fire.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Frigid Aura.

Benefit: Your aura of cold reduces fire damage you take (roll as if you were harming a creature and

subtract that result from the fire damage). However, your aura is suppressed until the beginning of your next turn.

SUPERIOR COMPANION

You benefit from your ancestors' techniques in selective animal breeding to produce a companion that is not only resistant to cold temperatures, but can also add cold damage to its natural attacks.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, animal companion class feature.

Benefit: Your animal companion gains the rimefur beast template. You treat your effective druid level as one lower when advancing your animal companion. If you lose your animal companion, you can elect to replace it with another rimefur beast.

TWIN AXES

You swing a pair of battleaxes around with surprising grace.

Prerequisites: Frost giant, Dex 13, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Benefit: You treat battleaxes as light weapons, which reduces penalties on attack rolls for fighting with two battleaxes by 2

FROST GIANT EQUIPMENT

Frost giants rarely craft their own equipment, but occasionally giants in permanent settlements with the luxury of time might devise armor enhancements, weapons, and alchemical items—and then direct slaves to produce them—to make combat with other creatures easier. Frost giants encountered by the PCs could have any of the following items.

BERSERKER DUST

Price 80 gp; **Weight** —; **Craft DC** 25

This dust is fashioned from mold that only grows in cold climates. While the dust causes a mild sneezing attack in most creatures, frost giants who snort the dust experience a short-term burst of chemically-induced rage. For 5 rounds, a giant under the dust's influence gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution, a +1 morale bonus on Will saves, and a -2 penalty to AC. Giants with the rage class ability instead benefit as per their class ability while using the dust. After the dust's effects end, the giant is fatigued for 5 minutes.

DOUBLE-BLADED AXE

Price 15 gp (battleaxe); 30 gp (greataxe)

Type exotic (frost giants are proficient with this weapon)

This augmentation of a typical axe handle allows for two thinner blades to take the place of a single blade. While this increases the damage by 1 die type, the main benefit derives from the ability to fashion the axe blades from different materials, allowing the wielder to more effectively bypass damage reduction with a single weapon. The base cost is for two blades made of standard material. Adding a special material applies only to one blade and costs the same as adding the material to a battleaxe or greataxe.

ICE VEINS

Price 75 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.; **Craft DC** 20

This sludgy, blue alchemical concoction takes a full-round action to drink. For an hour afterwards, the imbiber loses any vulnerability to fire, but the substance's interaction with the drinker's blood reduces its base speed by 10 feet and Dexterity by 2.

ICICLE DAGGER

Price 5 gp

Type simple

Shaped from solid ice—typically from a massive icicle—this weapon suits frost giants, as they cannot melt it. It deals the same damage as a dagger plus an additional 1d3 cold damage. If the wielder rolls a natural 1 with the icicle dagger, it shatters.

SHARD ROCK

Price 3 gp

Type simple

This throwing rock is treated with an alchemical agent that allows water to freeze on it in such a way that it forms shards that jut out from the rock. The rock's damage changes to bludgeoning and piercing, and it deals an additional 1d6 cold damage.

SHELL-SPLITTER AXE

Price 250 gp (battleaxe); 350 gp (greataxe)

Type martial

The head on this battleaxe or greataxe is weighted in such a way that it more effectively breaks armor. It grants a +2 equipment bonus on sunder checks, and, if the wielder scores a critical hit on an armored opponent, she can make a sunder attempt for free.

FROST GIANT SPELLS AND MAGIC ITEMS

Frost giants prefer magic that enhances their battle prowess and allows them to freeze foes or turn cold into a weapon. The following spells and magic items feature in many frost giant clans.

BATTLE FRENZY

School enchantment (compulsion) [mind-affecting];

Level bard 3, cleric 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell**

Resistance yes (harmless)

This spell induces a near-psychotic focus on combat in the recipient, who gains a +8 morale bonus on Will saves against charm, compulsion, and fear effects.

However, the recipient must spend its turn making a full attack with melee or natural weapons as long as an opponent is within reach.

BATTLE FRENZY, MASS

School enchantment (compulsion) [mind-affecting];

Level bard 5, cleric 6, sorcerer/wizard 6

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

Target one willing living creature per four levels, no two of which may be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell**

Resistance yes (harmless)

This spell functions like *battle frenzy*, except it affects more creatures, who are immune to charm, compulsion, and fear effects. Additionally, the recipients gain a +2 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls.

FROSTMARK

School transmutation; **Level** cleric 2, sorcerer/wizard 3

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

Target one creature

Duration permanent

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

If the target fails its save, this spell marks the target with the isaz rune (see *Deep Magic*, page 283). The victim takes a -4 penalty on saves against effects and spells that deal cold damage. The target also gains weakness

to cold or loses its immunity to cold. This effect can only be removed with a *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, or *wish* spell. Alternately, the victim can also remove this effect by spending one continuous hour in very hot conditions.

BRAID WHIP TOKEN

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 8th

Slot none; **Price** 6,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This intricately carved piece of ivory clasps itself to braided hair 3 feet or longer. For a total of 8 minutes per day, the wearer can animate the braided hair as a +2 *whip*, using her full attack bonus. The duration does not need to be taken consecutively, but must be used in 1-minute increments.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous item, *greater magic weapon*; **Cost** 3,000 gp

MISTWOLF (FIGURINE OF WONDROUS POWER)

Aura moderate conjuration and transmutation;

CL 11th

Slot none; **Price** 15,400 gp; **Weight** 0.5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Almost insubstantial, this figurine is shaped like a wolf and wisps of fog emanate from its surface. Upon command, it transforms into a Large wolf (use the stats for a winter wolf, but it does not possess a breath weapon and its bite attack deals 1d4+3 damage plus 1d6 cold). The wolf ignores critical hits and precision damage. With a second command, the wolf releases a fog cloud that emanates from any square it touches. The wolf can maintain its non-figurine status for only 12 hours per week. This duration does not need to be continuous, but it must be used in 1-hour increments.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *solid fog*; **Cost** 7,700 gp

FROST GIANT NPCs

Frost giants typically do not advance in class levels. While barbarian is the most popular class by far for the giants, other exceptional frost giants take levels in druid, fighter, ranger, or warrior. Occasionally, a bard, cleric, or sorcerer emerges from the giants' ranks.



BRYAN SYME

COLD DOOM

The frost giant known as Cold Doom is the subject of legends among the giants. He operates alone or with an enormous wolf companion, and he targets humans and frost giants alike in his attacks. Many frost giants speculate that Cold Doom works as an assassin for one of the jarls in the region. Surprisingly, though, no jarl claims to count the frost giant assassin as a subject—perhaps because one foolish enough to make the claim would find herself Cold Doom's next target.

Cold Doom CR 17

XP 102,400

Frost giant ranger 8

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant)

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20

Aura cold (10 ft., 2d6)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 10, flat-footed 29 (+5 armor, +2 deflection, -1 Dex, +14 natural, -1 size)

hp 291 (14d8+8d10+184)

Fort +22, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities rock catching; **Immune** cold

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +2 *wounding greataxe* +30/+25/+20/+15 (3d6+18/19-20/×3 plus 1 bleed) or 2 slams +28 (1d8+11)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks combat style (two-handed weapon), favored enemies (giants +2, humans +4), rock throwing (120 ft.)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

2nd—*greater veil companion*^{DM}, *protection from energy*

1st—*hunter's howl*^{APG} (DC 13), *invisible hunter*^{DM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Cold Doom drinks his *potion of barkskin* and casts *invisible hunter* and *greater veil companion* on Whisperfoot in that order if he plans to stay hidden before assaulting his foes.

During Combat Cold Doom works with Whisperfoot to flank opponents. He attacks humans and giants in preference to any other foes.

Morale The frost giant retreats when he drops to 20 hp or lower, unless he thinks he can win the combat. Whisperfoot fights to the death to protect her master.

Base Statistics Without *barkskin*, Cold Doom's statistics are AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24.

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 9, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +30 (+32 overrun, +32 sunder); **CMD** 41 (43 vs. overrun, 43 vs. sunder)

Feats Cleave, Frigid **Aura**, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greataxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Superior Animal Companion, Toughness

Skills Climb +16, Craft (weapons) +7, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +25, Perception +20, Stealth +21 (+25 in snow); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in snow

Languages Common, Giant

SQ favored terrains (cold +4, mountainous +2), hunter's bond (wolf named Whisperfoot), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +8, woodland stride

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* +5, *potion of greater magic fang* +1; **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, +2 *wounding greataxe*, *belt of physical might* +2 (Str, Con), *ring of protection* +2

WHISPERFOOT

Rimefur wolf

N Medium animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 34 (4d8+16)

VARIANT FROST GIANT: BERSERKER FROST GIANT (CR 10)

A berserker frost giant exemplifies the wanton battle lust that grips her fellow giants. A berserker gains a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution and gains Diehard as a bonus feat. Additionally, the berserker gains a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls for melee attacks each time it misses an opponent with a melee attack. This bonus accumulates until the berserker finally strikes his foe.

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Resist** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+5 plus 1d6 cold and trip)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)

Tricks attack, come, down, fetch, guard, heel, seek, track

Skills Acrobatics +3 (+11 to jump), Perception +6, Stealth +11

FROST GIANT ADVENTURE SEEDS

A frost giant raid is an event fit for adventurers, but not every introduction to these giants need be an overtly hostile encounter. Additionally, something behind the scenes may drive the giants' actions, and merely destroying the cat's paws will not reveal the main villain's true scheme. The following adventure ideas help integrate frost giants into a campaign or provide for a one-off game session.

Demonic Influence: A lesser demon lord claiming to be Kostchtchie leads a kingdom of frost giants as their jarl. He encourages them to commit ever more horrifying acts against the victims of their raids, and the giants are more than happy to comply with his wishes. When the PCs manage to subdue a giant, he warns them of the coming of Kostchtchie.

Other Dimensional Horror: Survivors' accounts of a recent frost giant raid speak of the giants looking fearfully over their shoulders as they attacked. When the giants left the ruined community, they travelled south, rather than returning to the north. If the characters try to repel a future raid by this band of giants, any PC who understands Giant hears frightened discussion that something in the north tore the veil to another world.

Valued Companion: A frost giant approaches the characters about finding her missing rimefur wolverine, promising a huge reward for its return.



R T N X I M R N X F M S F Y B T M R Z I X I C N F M S F Y B M

FIRE GIANTS



Whether it be to avenge a perceived slight or simply for the sheer enjoyment of it, most giant races often indulge in their savage natures—causing destruction, raiding settlements, and terrorizing lesser beings. Eons ago, fire giants were the worst example of this, their destructive tempers leading them on months-long binges of devastation that left nothing behind but scorched earth and raging forest fires. Like many giants, they also succumbed to frequent and vicious infighting, eventually becoming their own worst enemies. A council of the wisest fire giant leaders realized their people would flourish if only they could quell their chaotic tendencies. To that end, they established a dictatorial regime, recruiting trusted generals to enforce their desires, and executing those who did not fall in line with the new thinking. Over the next three generations the fire giants were forged into the highly organized, militaristic race the world knows and fears today.

While settlements that neighbor lesser giants live in fear of raids, they truly despair at the massing of a fire giant army. Whereas the more chaotic giants are disorganized and have no plan of attack, often falling to infighting, a regimented fire giant column provides no such hope. Led by incisive generals, these giant armies have contingency plans and rarely break rank on the way to their ultimate conquest. Most people faced with such an attack can only pray that the giants will offer a deal to allow the community to survive, even if this bargain is clearly one-sided. Fire giants also apply their efficiency to the weapons and armor they produce, resulting in effective and sturdy goods vastly superior to those made by ordinary craftspeople.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Fire giants rarely spend their waking moments idle, and instead constantly prepare, train, or toil for their various jobs, regardless of social class. Fire giant kings and queens do not merely sit on their thrones waiting for the next councilor or audience with a subject. Rather, they walk the halls of their vast palaces and meet with generals or appointed representatives for workaday giants. Generals, in turn, plan long-term strategies for expansion and tactics, while the representatives set quotas and ensure materials are available and equipment is in working order. The giants even treat celebration as a task and carve out a set amount of time to conduct it. Fire giant children pick up this habit from a very young age, as their parents and teachers provide a continuous stream of tasks to engage the young giants and to ascertain

their aptitudes. Despite this constant focus on work, fire giants are certainly not joyless creatures. Workers revel in enabling their superiors to work without interruption, soldiers train heartily for war, smiths beam at another solidly crafted sword, generals relish an upcoming battle, and royals feel pride at their kingdom's expansion and prosperity. Those who study the giants and know about their brutish forebears believe this nonstop pace keeps certain barbarous tendencies at bay.

While fire giants have long lifespans at 350 years, a near constant war footing means they often fall long before then. Royals and their advisors determine their approximate losses during battle and the requirements to oversee annexed territory, then determine how many children they require to replace or add to the kingdom's numbers. Surprisingly to many outsiders, the giants distribute the responsibility of childrearing equally across roles. Additionally, the giants do not wish to introduce complications arising from inbreeding among their upper tiers, and have historically sought exceptional children from even the most menial parents. Because aptitude determines one's place in fire giant society, and due to a child's constant time spent with trainers, teachers, and peers, parents rarely form strong attachments to their offspring.

Fire giants share the same practical aesthetic when it comes to their homes and workplaces, regardless of status. While this seems at odds with reports from adventurers or representatives from subjugated communities, this is merely because the giants realized long ago the impact of ostentatious displays of wealth on lesser beings. They themselves find the clutter that comes with open treasure chests full of baubles to be a distraction, and instead prefer to meet in bare chambers when dealing with their fellows. When a fire giant king or queen grants an audience to a foreign delegate and takes the meeting in a grand, treasure-filled throne room, the royal means it as an insult that typically acts as a prelude to war.

While most fire giants owe fealty to a single ruler, occasionally two or three equally powerful fire giant kingdoms arise in the same region—generally a mountain range, volcanic plain, or other suitably hot location. As long as all kingdoms remain at relatively equal strength the giants remain peaceful towards one another unless provoked. Each general sends scouts to determine her rivals' fitness and devises strategies to attack a faltering kingdom. If the conditions are right, two rulers may form a temporary alliance to take over and equitably split a third, weaker nation. Regardless of the path chosen, a war between fire giants results in

many casualties. Defeated giants often accept absorption into the victorious nation and dedicate themselves to their new sovereign, and the winning kingdom rarely worries about deceit from the conquered giants. Eventually, one nation emerges from the fractured groups, but the process may take place over centuries of tense peace. Canny humanoids chafing under this rule have struck upon the idea of enticing other fire giants to invade, thus weakening both sides, but such plans seldom end well for the conspirators.

The ever-present threat of war prepares the giants for the inevitability of death. Soldiers know their leaders may sacrifice them as part of a strategy to achieve a commanding victory, and even workers and smiths are aware that generals may enlist them to bolster a column. Generally, the giants treat death with the same practicality they apply to all other aspects of life. Since fire giants resist fire even after death, they have turned to the use of acid to destroy the corpses. Only rulers, great generals, and those who have distinguished themselves in battle receive a burial. In areas with volcanic activity, the fire giants inter their respected dead in the largest volcano's heart. Otherwise, they bury the bodies in the hottest part of the region and mark the burial site with an eternal flame.

Remarkable fire giants are also commemorated in history and, to an extent, art. Their records mostly involve military or bureaucratic details, such as the reports of battle readiness, strategies, and contingency plans for upcoming wars, along with reports on enemy strength and signed treaties. These documents are not without accolades, however, and talent in leadership or war is also noted. A non-giant clerk normally oversees all these records under giant supervision, as the giants have little patience for the bureaucracy required to manage their kingdoms. However, the clerk also composes poetic tributes to fallen leaders and generals, listing their great accomplishments and contributions. A high-ranking fire giant then recites this tribute at the deceased's funeral. This typically marks the height of artistry among the giants, aside from the rare bard or talented smith.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Every fire giant performs a function in their society, whether as menial worker, armor- or weaponsmith, soldier, military leader, or royal. The giants quietly execute those who cannot or will not perform their expected role, though this is extremely rare. However, even a permanent injury to a giant during battle is usually a death sentence, unless the giant can find

some other task to handle. Willful giants who refuse to accept their particular roles choose self-exile. However, these solitary fire giants receive no sympathy from other humanoids and certainly none from other fire giant kingdoms, and are regarded with suspicion at best.

Royals sit atop fire giant hierarchy, and all subordinate giants express their fealty to the king, queen, or married pair. Royal fire giants spend their waking hours ensuring the continued fitness of their kingdoms, either meeting with representatives from far-flung locales that they control or traveling throughout their regions to protect against any fraying of their borders. They are responsible for the overall maintenance and growth of the kingdom in a strategic and economic sense. While royals have keen military minds, they delegate the details of military operations to their generals, who are much more adept at organizing and deploying the armies. Royals also maintain a small retinue of records keepers and other functionaries, who note any treaties enacted by their rulers and track any possible signs of trouble within the kingdom. Unlike many other sovereigns, fire giant royals have no courtiers or people-in-waiting, as such roles serve no functional purpose in their society, though they do have a handful of seasoned soldiers acting as bodyguards.

Military power flows from a few generals down to three to six captains per general and a similar number of sergeants per captain. Rank-and-file soldiers comprise the largest population of fire giants, and they drill on a daily basis on combat techniques and seemingly mundane tasks like staying in formation during marches. Ultimately, these soldiers follow orders to the letter, as ingrained by the continuous drilling. The discipline and precision possessed by these giants stands even in the face of a rout, and they will carry out their instructions even if it means their deaths. This sometimes creates inflexibility in the corps, especially when enemies manage to incapacitate or kill fire giant commanders, often resulting in the soldiers continuing to follow their most recent orders, regardless of effectiveness, until another commander can issue countermanding orders.

Surprisingly, fire giants hold their smiths in lower standing than their soldiers. Since battle prowess and ability to wage war is the most highly respected ability among the giants, they see those who cannot fight as inferior. As part of an intrinsically role-oriented race, smiths accept that their lesser lot in life is to make strong, durable weapons and armor to support the giants' various war efforts. The breastplate, helms,

and greatswords produced by these smiths vary only in minor ways from one another. Centuries of refinements in the manufacturing process have resulted in powerful armor and weapons that rarely break during combat, even if the pieces look offensively plain to those who take pride in individual artisanship.

At the bottom rung of fire giant society are those who cannot manage to follow the processes to make gear for soldiers and generals. These menial workers are responsible for cleaning and running errands for giants otherwise engaged in their important tasks. They also oversee humanoid slaves, such as ogres and ettins. In contrast to most races that take slaves, fire giants do not consider owning a slave to be a sign of status. Royal and military giants regard slaves as superfluous to their duties, but realized long ago that providing slaves to their rabble keeps them from focusing on their own plight. Instead, as the lowest-standing fire giants, menial laborers possess the necessary cruelty to “motivate” the slaves properly, making the giants much less likely to consider revolt.

Once locked into a caste, a fire giant rarely moves upward. Due to injury or age, however, it is possible to move downward. This caste system also does not apply to children. The giants evaluate all children using the same criteria, regardless of their parents. Thus, it is possible for a child of royals to wind up a lowly worker, just as it is possible for a child of soldiers to show aptitude for military or royal leadership. The giants’ detachment from their children allows them to accept the pragmatism of placing children in the appropriate caste per their abilities, and keeps high-ranking giants from attempting to exert influence to keep those unfit in a position of power.

Some unique fire giants do not fall into an organized category, but rather than treating these outliers as anathema, the giants have learned how to apply the outliers’ unusual talents to the betterment of their kingdoms. A few crazed giants still embrace their anarchic ancestors’ ways, and generals literally keep these unpredictable giants on ice until they require a wild card in their battle plans, typically by turning them loose against another fire giant or other regimented army. An individual giant may have an unusual aptitude for the arcane arts, and royals may give this strange creature a hidden, but not necessarily secret, laboratory where she can conduct magical research. The fruits of this research give the giants a major advantage in combat, usually by minimizing their vulnerability to cold energy. Bards and artisans are also in this category and are tolerated if the individual giant can

demonstrate their usefulness. This usually comes in the form of booting morale during battles or creating effective war gear. A commander may even take a bard as an adjunct, to use bardic performance and to cast spells that increase his army’s effectiveness. Finally, a giant with the capability to tame and train hell hounds or young red dragons is enormously valuable in lands crawling with the creatures.

RELIGION AND RUNE USE

Fire giants generally regard their inherent discipline as incompatible with reliance on fickle deities. However, when they turn to divine worship, they worship deities embodying the principles of law primarily, especially if they regard a deity as a brilliant commander of heavenly armies. Fire giants may also enforce the worship of deities of tyranny among conquered people as a way to appease such deities and to make the point that the subjugated populace has no say in their governance. They also pay homage to deities with control over fire, but they find most such deities lean towards fire’s destructive nature, rather than as a means to hone a fine edge.

Those who study fire giants make the mistaken assumption that the giants possess a similar mindset to frost giants with respect to outsiders. The theory goes that since frost giants consort with wantonly destructive demons, fire giants must rely on deals with devils to help enforce the rigid lawfulness of their society. While a rare handful of fire giant royals prove out that theory, most royals view owing favors and fire giant souls to outside creatures as an exorbitant cost for their kingdoms’ health. On the other hand, if an equitable deal benefitting both parties presents itself, a royal may take it.

Fire giants make extensive use of runes, especially on their armor and weapons. They favor uruz (strength), thurisaz (giants), Naudiz (necessity), and Sōwilō (the sun). Their most important rune is kaunen, embroidered on all royals and generals’ clothing, but more for its enlightenment aspect than its fire aspect, as the giants highly regard the enlightenment of their ancestors who raised them up out of barbarity and hold their leaders to that same standard. They also invoke raido (travel) and ingwaz (ancestors) as necessary.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Fire giants regard all other races with respect to their military might or ability to perform jobs considered too menial for even the lowest giant. While the giants have come to general conclusions about various races, they are tactically keen enough to realize that relying on stereotypes could lead to disastrous results.

DWARVES: Of all the non-giant races, dwarves enter into conflict with fire giants the most. The giants respect dwarven skill at arms and view them as near equals in terms of military discipline. Thus, the giants devote a lot of time gathering information on their foes' abilities and prowess before attempting an attack. If fire giants enter into a treaty with a dwarven community, they usually work with dwarves to improve their smithing processes, while the dwarves try to overcome their offense at the giants' cookie-cutter manufacturing techniques.

ELVES AND HALF-ELVES: Historically, during the occasional skirmishes between fire giants and elves, typically when the giants encroach on elven territory, the giants have made the mistake of assuming that the elves were frail and flighty creatures. Word has since spread regarding elven excellence with bow and sword, so the giants take a cautious approach with them.

GNOMES: The primary non-slave race working in fire giant kingdoms, gnomes typically handle the bookkeeping necessary to the smooth running of the kingdoms. Gnomish obsession with keeping everything in perfect order suits the giants, who prefer not having to deal with the headache of managing paperwork. Royals who employ gnomes rely heavily on them.

HALFLINGS: Fire giants almost admire the halflings' pluck, but, for the most part, the small humanoids offer no real threat to the giants. In addition, while the giants primarily eat livestock as a staple of their meals and typically eschew humanoid flesh, they find roasted halfling to be a decadent delicacy.

HUMANS: To fire giants, human populations seem to vary the most, and the giants see in humans an imperative desire to explore and expand into hostile territories. Therefore, the giants warily regard humans, even those in militarily insignificant

groups. The giants may enter into treaties or alliances with them, but they keep a close watch on their ostensible allies. At the first sign of rebellion, the giants brutally crush the opposition.

OTHER GIANTS: Fire giants believe their military might grants them an inherent superiority over other giants, even those with more impressive physical might or power. They commonly enslave ogres, ettins, and thursir, the first two for menial tasks and as shock troops, and the other for their ability to produce high-quality weapons. A canny or generous fire giant ruler may even preserve the illusion that they have entered into a mutual agreement with thursir as opposed to a master-slave relationship—at least as long as the lesser giants avoid treachery.

In northern mountainous regions, fire giants share territory with frost giants, usually with the latter residing along the cold exterior, while the former enjoy the warmth provided by underground thermal vents. Fire giants believe frost giants are too disorganized to mount any real offensive threat to them, and prefer to leave the barbaric giants as a line of defense against external threats. As with the thursir, this grace persists as long as the frost giants show proper respect.

FIRE GIANT RACIAL RULES

Fire giants rely heavily on their regimented nature to drive them to victory. Since soldiers make up the vast majority of their population, fire giants focus most of their energy on improving their soldiers' ability to wage war. While fire giant soldiers are not very flexible of combatants and react slowly to changing conditions on the battlefield, their adherence to orders makes it a formidable challenge to cause them to break ranks. Fire giant generals are much more adaptable and can quickly ascertain the correct course of action from a number of contingency plans, confident that their soldiers will carry them out. Finally, the giants harness the power of fire to exhaust their enemies and destroy metal armor and weapons.

FIRE GIANT RACIAL FEATS

Fire giants build on their military discipline and work to make themselves better combatants and teammates. Additionally, soldiers learn to absorb orders from their commanders so effectively that nothing can sway

them. Of course, fire giants have also learned to apply their internal body heat to affect creatures that cannot withstand extreme temperatures.

COLOSSAL SWING (COMBAT)

You connect so well with your great sword that your opponent practically goes flying.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Mighty Swing, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Benefit: When you confirm a critical hit with a greatsword against a smaller opponent, your bull rush attempt uses the sum of the initial and confirmation attack rolls as the combat maneuver check.

Special: If your target is immune to critical hits, you can still affect it with this feat, but you only use the initial attack roll as your combat maneuver check.

COMBUSTIBLE (COMBAT)

You can ignite yourself and remain safe from harm, but you cannot say the same for your grappled foes.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Intense Body Heat.

Benefit: When you successfully grapple an opponent, you set your opponent on fire. The Reflex save DC to avoid catching fire equals the result of your grapple check.

FIERY BEAST TAMER

You have a knack for calming creatures that share your burning passion for battle.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, wild empathy class ability, Cha 13.

Benefit: You take no penalty to influence a magical beast with the fire subtype and with an Intelligence score no greater than 4. You can also use your wild empathy bonus to influence a hell hound or a young (or younger) red dragon with a -4 penalty.

Normal: You can only use wild empathy on animals and magical beasts with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, taking a -4 penalty to influence magical beasts.

ESPRIT DE CORPS (COMBAT)

You have trained closely with your comrades, which grants you boons when you fight together.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, teamwork feat.

Benefit: When you use a teamwork feat possessed by at least one ally, you and a chosen ally within 30 feet gain a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks for one round after using the teamwork feat.

Special: You can take this feat a second time. The feat's benefit applies to all allies within 30 feet who possess the teamwork feat you use.

GREATER HEAT AURA

The heat emanating from you threatens to fry your opponents.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Improved Heat Aura, Con 23.

Benefit: Your aura of fire deals 6d6 damage to all creatures in a 20-foot radius, and any creature that takes damage from the fire must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 total HD + Con modifier) to avoid becoming fatigued.

HEAT AURA

Heat radiates off you in palpable waves.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Con 21.

Benefit: You gain an aura of fire that deals 2d6 damage to all creatures within 10 feet of you at the beginning of your turn. You can suppress the aura as a move action and reactivate it as an immediate action.

IGNORE COLD

The heat cascading off your body provides a buffer against cold.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Heat Aura.

Benefit: Your aura of fire reduces cold damage you take (roll as if you were harming a creature and subtract that result from the cold damage). However, this suppresses your aura until the beginning of your next turn.

IMPROVED HEAT AURA

You extend the reach of your heat aura and deal more damage to those foolish enough to remain within it.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Heat Aura, Con 23.

Benefit: The aura granted by Heat Aura deals 4d6 damage to all creatures within 15 feet of you.

INTENSE BODY HEAT (COMBAT)

You transfer your internal heat to a grappled foe.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: When you succeed at a grapple, you force your opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) as if exposed to severe heat. Each successful attempt to maintain a grapple also forces this save.

Special: You cannot deal lethal damage using this feat. Once your opponent falls unconscious, it stops taking damage.

MELTER (COMBAT)

Heat augments any of your attempts to destroy a foe's weapons and armor.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Intense Body Heat.

Benefit: During a successful sunder attempt, you add 1d6 fire damage to the damage dealt to the object you sunder.

Special: If you possess Improved Sunder or Greater Sunder, you add 1d6 fire damage to your sunder damage per each additional feat you possess.

MIGHTY SWING (COMBAT)

Your sword blows drive your opponents before you.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Benefit: When you confirm a critical hit with a greatsword against a smaller opponent you can take a free bull rush attempt against that opponent. The combat maneuver check is equal to your initial attack roll.

PAIRED COMBATANTS (COMBAT)

Intense training with a fellow soldier makes both of you more formidable.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, teamwork feat.

Benefit: You choose an ally that you have trained with for at least 1 week. You grant that ally one teamwork feat you possess, but it only works with respect to you. If your ally already possesses the chosen teamwork feat, you both gain a +1 bonus to any bonuses provided by the feat when you work together.

Special: You can change the benefit's recipient after another week of training.

PRIORITY OF COMMAND (COMBAT)

Your commander's orders override any potential distractions.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus to Will saves against charm or compulsion effects while following a commander's direct orders. This bonus only applies during combat or other stressful situations.

RED DRAGON MASTER

You have earned the respect of red dragons, such that younger dragons will follow you into any danger.

Prerequisites: Fire giant, Fiery Beast Tamer, wild empathy class ability, Cha 17.

Benefit: When dealing with red dragons, you automatically improve their attitude towards you by one step. For young (or younger) red dragons, this attitude shift improves an additional step. You can also use wild empathy on young (or younger) red dragons without penalty.



RESPECTED COMMANDER (COMBAT)

Your soldiers look up to you, allowing you to get the most out of them in battle.

Prerequisite: Fire giant, Leadership.

Benefit: For any ability, spell, or effect that you use that grants a bonus to your allies, you increase any bonuses granted by +2.

SHIMMERING WAVE

Creating an effect similar to mirages in the desert, your body heat confounds foes at a distance.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: You are treated as having partial concealment (20% miss chance) against ranged attacks from more than 30 feet away.

SMOKE INURED

After spending all your time in volcanic areas, smoke does not obscure your vision or affect your breathing.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: You can see through smoky conditions as if it were perfectly clear up to your normal range of vision, negating the miss chance caused by smoke. Additionally, you automatically succeed at Fortitude saves to avoid choking and coughing in heavy smoke.

TARGET LOCK (COMBAT, TEAMWORK)

Allies' ranged attacks give you a clearer notion of where to strike your foe.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: Whenever an ally with this feat attacks an opponent with a ranged attack, you receive a +1 bonus (to a maximum of +4) on attack rolls with ranged weapons against that opponent for 1 round.

THIS IS MY WEAPON

Only an extremely powerful force can separate you from the weapon with which you have trained.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: You choose one weapon you have trained with for at least 1 week. You gain a +4 bonus on your CMD to resist sunder and disarm checks against that weapon. You also receive a +4 bonus on Will saves against spells or effects that would cause you to lose your weapon.

UNWAVERING CAMARADERIE

You have spent so much time training and working with your fellow soldiers that nothing can break the bonds you have formed.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: During combat or other stressful situations, you are immune to spells and effects that cause you to attack your allies. If you gain the confused condition,

you treat the "attack nearest creature" result as the "act normally" result if the nearest creature is one of your allies.

VOLCANO RUNNER

A lifetime spent in volcanic terrain grants you sure footing in those areas.

Prerequisite: Fire giant.

Benefit: You ignore the effects of difficult terrain in volcanic terrain, allowing you to move at normal speed, as well as run or charge across the terrain.

FIRE GIANT EQUIPMENT

Not particularly innovative when it comes to equipment design, fire giants create the occasional weapon that makes use of their internal heat and resistance to fire. Additionally, they make equipment to control their non-fire giant allies more effectively.

BREAKAWAY SWORD

Price +20% of greatsword's final price

Type martial

While fire giants do not give credit to the gnome inventor of this sword, astute observers realize that the design goes beyond the expected level of fire giant ingenuity. A breakaway sword helps to mitigate the loss of a weapon due to its destruction through sunder attempts or other battle damage. This greatsword acts as a shell around two smaller weapons; when the greatsword would otherwise be destroyed, the wielder can cast off the shell and use the weapon as a longsword. The longsword acts as a shell around a short sword, but if the short sword is destroyed, the weapon is truly destroyed. Any enhancements that apply to the greatsword also apply to the smaller weapons.

DRACOWHISTLE

Price 725 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

In some locations, space is at a premium for fire giants, so housing their red dragon allies becomes problematic. Additionally, even the young dragons prevalent in large fire giant holdings spend long periods in dragon sleep. Gifted arcane fire giants originally crafted this device to alert their far-flung or sleeping red dragon allies. The whistle emits a frequency that only dragons can hear, and it reaches up to 5 miles. A sleeping dragon need only succeed at a DC 5 Perception check to hear the whistle.

The whistle also produces a damaging sonic wave, allowing its owner to use it as a weapon, which deals 1d6 points of sonic damage in a 15-foot cone (DC 15 Fortitude half).

FIRELASH

Price 17 gp

Type exotic

Fire giants quickly figured out that if they can transfer heat to thrown rocks to deal extra damage to foes without the benefit of fire immunity, they could do the same with martial weapons as well. Unfortunately, they discovered that the bladed weapons they normally use did not conduct heat well enough to inflict additional harm to their foes. Thinner weapons worked better for that purpose, and the whip seemed to work best. Mostly used as a device to keep troll slaves in line, a firelash deals 1d6 points of fire damage to a creature, regardless of the target's armor or natural armor bonus. Also unlike a whip, a firelash threatens the area into which it reaches. Due to the nature of this weapon, the firelash can only be properly wielded by creatures with the fire subtype. Otherwise, the firelash functions as an ordinary whip of its size.

IGNITING CLOAK

Price 450 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.; **Craft DC** 25

This cloak provides another way for fire giants to use their inherent body heat to create a devastating weapon. Treated with flammable oils, the cloak grants the burn special attack when the wearer uses a move action to ignite it. The wearer deals 1d6 points of fire damage to a grappled foe or one struck by the wearer's slam attacks. The cloak also deals the same amount of fire damage each round to the wearer (usually not a concern for fire giants who have immunity to fire). The cloak burns out after 1 minute, at which time it is destroyed. By doubling the price and increasing the Craft DC by +5, the cloak deals an additional 1d6 points of fire damage.

LAVA-FILLED ROCK

Price 22 gp

Type simple

Like many other giant races, fire giants take something they do well (rock throwing) and apply their own unique spin on it. A lava-filled has a hard, igneous outer shell molded around lava. The shell remains impervious to the lava, but easily breaks on impact. The rock deals half its normal damage, but it douses its target with lava, which deals 3d6 points of fire damage and an additional 1d6 points of fire damage 1 round later. If the rock misses, it creates a 10-foot splash that deals 1d6 points of fire damage to creatures within 5 feet, and 1 point of fire damage to those within 10 feet. A lava-filled rock is awkward to throw, imposing a -2 penalty on attack rolls with it.

FIRE GIANT MAGIC

Fire giants rarely rely on spellcasting, but commanders recognize the value of magic to boost their soldiers or soften up their enemies. Spells unique to fire giants emphasize the use of fire, soldiers' ability to follow orders and not break rank, and other martial concerns. Divine spellcasters focus on lawful spells and those that improve fighting prowess and protect soldiers.

BLADE ECHO

School illusion (shadow); **Level** bard 3, ranger 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting Time 1 swift action

Components V, S

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

Target one bladed weapon

Duration 1 round

Saving Throw Will disbelief (if interacted with);

Spell Resistance yes

You create a shadowy version of a weapon that has successfully hit an opponent. At the beginning of your next turn, the illusory blade strikes the same square using the attack and damage rolls from the previous hit. If the blade hits an opponent who then disbelieves it, it instead deals 20% of the damage rolled. This spell can create only one illusory blade from a successful strike, even if cast by separate creatures. However, this spell can make blades for successful iterative attacks, if applicable.

BOLSTERING COMMAND

School enchantment (compulsion) [language-dependent, mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V

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

Target one willing creature

Duration 1 round

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell**

Resistance yes (harmless)

You give the targeted creature a command of no more than six words, and, if it obeys the command, it gains a +2 morale bonus on all appropriate rolls or values to accomplish it. Typical commands (and associated rolls/values) are attack (attack and damage), be alert (Perception), defend (AC and CMD), and hide (Stealth). Additionally, you may make commands to perform a combat maneuver or assist an ally.

DANCE OF FLAME

School abjuration [fire]; **Level** bard 2, sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (lit torch)

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 min./level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless), see below;

Spell Resistance yes (harmless)

Torch-sized flames flit about the spell recipient. If a creature takes an attack of opportunity against the recipient, the attacker either takes fire damage equal to 1d6 points/2 levels (Reflex half) or accepts a penalty equal to your caster level (maximum -10) to avoid the flames.

GREATER BOLSTERING COMMAND

School enchantment; **Level** bard 4

Targets one willing creature/level, no two of which can be more than 60 ft. apart

Duration 1 round/level

This powerful version of *bolstering command* affects more creatures and grants them all bonuses to following the command for a longer duration. You must give the same command to all affected creatures.

LAVA BELCH

School conjuration (summoning) [fire]; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 4

Components V, S

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

Target one living creature with immunity to fire

Duration 1 round/level

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (harmless), see below; **Spell Resistance** no

You replace the target's digestive fluids with lava. At any point within the spell's duration, the spell recipient can expel the lava in a 20-foot line or a 15-foot cone. The lava deals 6d6 points of fire damage to any creature caught in the spray (Reflex save half), and, for those creatures that failed their Reflex saves, 2d6 points of fire damage during the subsequent round, provided the creature has not removed the lava.

If the spell recipient loses its immunity to fire while holding the lava produced by this spell, it takes 20d6 points of fire damage.

ORDERED BEING

School abjuration [law]; **Level** cleric 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell**

Resistance yes

The spell's target gains spell resistance equal to 14 + your caster level against transmutation spells and effects or those with the chaotic or compulsion descriptors. Additionally, the protected creature can make a second saving throw against applicable ongoing spells or effects.

SURGING FLARE

School transmutation; **Level** bard 2, ranger 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M

Target touch

Duration weapon touched

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless, object); **Spell**

Resistance yes (harmless, object)

This spell increases the affected weapon's reach by 5 feet, creating a fiery extension of the weapon. If the weapon strikes a target outside its normal reach but within its extended reach, it deals the same amount of damage as the base weapon (without applying Strength modifiers or those from feats such as Power Attack), except as fire damage.

ENCOURAGING (ARMOR ENHANCEMENT)

A suit of armor or a shield with this property grants a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls and saving throws for allies who can see the wearer/wielder. If the owner also possesses an encouraging weapon, the morale bonus increases to +3. However, if the wearer/wielder dies, all allies instead take a -1 penalty on attack and damage rolls and saving throws for 1 minute. This penalty does not increase for a creature with more than one encouraging item

Faint enchantment; **CL** 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heroism* or *prayer*; **Price** +1 bonus.

BLADE BLOCKING (WEAPON ENHANCEMENT)

As an immediate action, a blade blocking weapon's wielder can transfer the weapon's entire enhancement bonus to his AC as a shield bonus that stacks with other shield bonuses. After using this ability, the wielder cannot attack with the weapon until the beginning of her next turn.

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*; **Price** +1 bonus.

COMMANDING (WEAPON ENHANCEMENT)

This weapon makes its bearer seem much more impressive. She gains a bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks equal to the weapon's total enhancement bonus while she has it unsheathed. If she has the Leadership feat, the weapon increases her Leadership score by the weapon's total enhancement bonus. Finally, she can use bolstering command 3/day and command 1/day as spell-like abilities.

Faint enchantment and transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor; *bolstering command, command, eagle's splendor*; **Price** +2 bonus.

ENCOURAGING (WEAPON ENHANCEMENT)

A weapon with this property grants a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls and saving throws for allies who can see the wielder. If the owner also possesses encouraging armor, the morale bonus increases to +3. However, if the wielder dies, all allies instead take a -1 penalty on attack and damage rolls and saving throws for 1 minute. This penalty does not increase for a wielder with more than one encouraging item.

Faint enchantment; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heroism* or *prayer*; **Price** +1 bonus.

LAVA HAMMER

Aura strong evocation; CL 17th

Slot none; **Price** 35,312 gp; **Weight** 7 lbs.

The head of this +1 *flaming burst warhammer* seems drawn to the ground. Once per day, when the wielder strikes the ground with the hammer, it renders ground in a 20-foot line (centered on the hammer) difficult terrain. Additionally, a spray of lava erupts, and the wielder can direct it to strike an opponent up to 10 feet away. This lava deals 10d6 points of damage (DC 22 Reflex half), and an additional 5d6 points of fire damage the following round (creatures succeeding at the initial Reflex save take no damage). If the wielder strikes the ground in a volcanically active area, he

can instead spray lava in a 20-foot line that strikes all creatures in the line (same damage and save).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Cost 17,812 gp; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fault line*^{DM}, *wall of lava*, and *fireball, flame blade, or flame strike*

VARIANT FIRE GIANTS

Most fire giants adhere to a specific appearance, body type, and set of abilities, but occasionally fire giant parents may produce a throwback to their barbaric ancestry. While the following mutants cause concern among the rank-and-file giants, royals and generals know how to use them while downplaying their differences to lower-ranking giants.

DRACONIC EMPATH (CR 13)

Fire giants have an ancestral link to red dragons, and they both worked together to terrorize inhabitants of hot regions. While that relationship has lessened due to the fire giants' rigid outlook on life conflicting with the dragons' chaotic bent, the giants still host red dragons in their kingdoms. Occasionally, a draconic empath spontaneously develops at adolescence, as the fire giant grows bright red scales and is endowed with a fiery breath weapon. These neutral evil giants possess the advanced and half-red dragon templates and gain Red Dragon Master as a bonus feat.

INFERNO GIANT (CR 12)

Fire giants in the distant past were barbaric brutes that raged across the countryside. The giants who desired a more martial and disciplined society drove off or killed those giants who could not transition to the new way of life. However, a rare throwback is sometimes born to modern parents. Once the fire giant instructors identify the unruly child as an inferno giant, they turn the creature over to high-ranking military officials, who then put it on ice. They let it out to train and to indulge its destructive tendencies, and, when it is old enough, usually heads shock troops comprised of lesser giant slaves. An inferno giant is chaotic evil, has +8 Str, +8 Con, -4 Int, and -4 Cha. It also gains and Diehard as a bonus feat, and it can rage as if it were a barbarian with levels equal to its racial Hit Dice. Finally, it has 1 rage power plus 1 per 5 racial Hit Dice (typically choosing from animal fury, knockback, mighty swing, powerful flow, raging climber, raging leaper, roused anger, strength surge, and terrifying howl).

FIRE GIANT NPCS

Fire giant soldiers and workers typically only advance in classes such as warrior or expert, but an exceptional soldier may take fighter, monk, or ranger levels.

Generals and royals always have class levels—typically fighter, ranger, or cavalier for generals and fighter, sorcerer, or wizard for royals. Rare bards, clerics, sorcerers, and wizards also appear in other ranks of fire giant society.

EXAMPLE NPC

General Korr is a rare example of a giant who moved upward in fire giant society, thanks to his own awakening ambition and a little luck. As a child, Korr showed no promise for leadership, but he had incredible martial skill, marking him as a soldier. He had a remarkable streak of kills and oftentimes came to the rescue of his fellow soldiers. Eventually, his comrades deemed him their “good luck charm,” and his popularity grew within the ranks. As this happened, Korr decided that he should have his own command, but he knew that it would not happen just because he demanded it. Hopeful that his surging popularity and war record would speak for him, he bided his time. One night, while on watch, he heard a strangled howl in the distance and took a pair of soldiers with him to investigate. They spied a barbed devil riding a Nessian hell hound and fighting a pitched battle against a glabrezu. The demon delivered a mortal blow to its foe and was about to dispatch the hell hound, when Korr acted jumped into the fray. The fire giant emerged victorious, and, with its dying words, the barbed devil gifted the giant with an oversized (for the devil) greatsword and the hell hound, named Ashkiller. Word spread of Korr’s actions, and his reputation flourished even more, prompting his general to promote him. Korr later replaced the general when she died in battle, and, to this day, he and his command enjoy an unblemished record in war.

General Korr

CR 18

XP 153,600

Male fire giant cavalier^{APG} (strategist^{UC}) 8

LE Large humanoid (fire, giant)

Init –1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 13, flat-footed 29 (+8 armor, +5 deflection, –1 Dex, +8 natural, –1 size)

hp 308 (23 HD; 15d8+8d10+192)

Fort +26, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities rock catching; **Immune** fire

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 *adamantine axiomatic, encouraging greatsword* +32/+27/+22/+17 (3d6+20/17–20) or 2 slams +30 (1d8+12)

Ranged rock +18 (2d8+18 plus 1d6 fire)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks banner +2/+1, cavalier’s charge, challenge (+10, 4/day), heated rock, rock throwing (120 ft.)

TACTICS

Before Combat General Korr uses his drill instructor class ability on allies when he knows he is about to enter a large-scale battle.

During Combat The general leads from the front of his column, usually astride Ashkiller. He holds his sword, *Doomsong*, aloft for his soldiers to see and rally to.

Morale While at least 50% of his soldiers remain alive, General Korr fights to the death. If his army is routed, the general flees when he reaches 30 hp.

STATISTICS

Str 34, **Dex** 9, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +32 (+36 overrun, +34 sunder); **CMD** 46 (48 vs. overrun, 48 vs. sunder)

Feats Cleave, Coordinated Maneuvers^{APG}, Deadly Finish^{UC}, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Melter, Paired Opportunists^{APG}, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Climb +20, Craft (weapons) +6, Intimidate +26, Perception +20, Sense Motive +16

Languages Common, Giant

SQ drill instructor (14 minutes), mount (giant Nessian hell hound), order of the dragon (aid allies,

strategy), tactician (2/day, 7 rounds, standard action)
Gear +2 breastplate, +1 adamantine, axiomatic, encouraging greatsword, belt of physical might +2 (Str, Con), boots of striding and springing, cloak of resistance +4, gauntlet of the skilled maneuver (overrun), headband of intuition, ring of freedom of movement, ring of protection +5, vambraces of the tactician

FIRE GIANT ADVENTURE SEEDS

Most likely, adventurers will encounter fire giants as adversaries, either as the characters explore fire giant-controlled land, or as they protect a community from an attack. However, even fire giants may require the assistance of seasoned adventurers to deal with a problem they cannot and will make an equitable deal with the PCs to accomplish the task. The following adventure ideas help integrate fire giants into a campaign or provide for a one-off game session.

A COLUMN APPROACHES: A scout interrupts the characters' visit to a remote village, claiming that a group of fire giants is on the march toward the village. Can the PCs raise an army to withstand the attack or organize the village's evacuation in time?

OUTBREAK! A fire giant clan settled in a region with a border to the Abyss. One by one, the giants transformed into inferno giants and attacked their former kin. The PCs witness an attack between the two types of giant. Will they aid one side or the other, or just let it play out?

DRAWING CLOSE TO THE SUN: A strange fire giant with a penchant for arcane mysteries has touched upon the mind of a creature beyond her comprehension. Thanks to the growing madness gnawing at her mind, she believes that she can create a paradise for fire giants by bringing the world nearer to the sun. More rational giants know that this will result in wide-scale destruction, but she refuses to heed them. Moreover, the creature with which the giant communicates desires this catastrophe and protects her from attack. A retinue of giants meets with the characters under the flag of truce to discuss their plight, one that has dire consequences for the world.





R T N Q I M R N X F M S F Y B T M R Q I Q I C N F M S F Y B M

CLOUD & STORM GIANTS



Some of the most powerful of their kind, cloud and storm giants tend to gather in small groups, and devote most of their attention to neighboring humanoids. Both are authoritarian figures with varying levels of beneficence. Good-aligned cloud giants enjoy building up their kingdoms' infrastructures, using labor provided by grateful subjects to construct well-tended roads, organized farmland, and defensive structures. Meanwhile, evil-aligned cloud giants rule despotically from their mountaintop homes, actively destroying any attempts at a better quality of life by their vassals and mounting random raids for livestock and provisions, all the while insisting they are a necessary evil. Indeed, the presence of these otherwise awful giants does discourage invasions that might devastate their lands. Finally, storm giants treat their subjects as an eldest child would younger siblings: they keep to themselves most of the time, pursuing surprisingly agrarian lives, but keep a sharp eye out for the territory they have claimed, viciously attacking any threat to it. Every so often, a storm giant makes his way to a settlement to make merry with his subjects, an event that usually results in the giant drunkenly damaging property and injuring fellow partygoers. The contrite giant makes amends after the bender, either by providing generous amounts of treasure or physically helping with repairs and reconstruction.

Owing to an eons-old curse, cloud giants split evenly between good and evil alignments. A cloud giant's alignment is not fixed at birth, but her society helps shape it at the outset. However, they are mercurial at best—a cloud giant's attitude can easily flip to an opposing point of view: a benevolent giant might grow angry at a perceived lack of adoration and become increasingly malevolent, or an evil cloud giant's outlook may soften towards those he torments as a seed of compassion grows within him. All cloud giants, regardless of alignment, are most concerned with their appearance and ensure they have—or launch—the most recent fashions, which include ostentatious displays of jewelry.

Storm giants always believe themselves magnanimous champions of all creatures within their purview. They anger easily, though, and may unleash powerful storms on those who displease them, causing collateral damage and accidentally harming or slaying the subjects they claim to protect. When an angry storm giant regains her senses, though, she offers considerable compensation for the losses she inflicted.

LIVES AND CUSTOMS

Cloud giants collect in groups dependent on alignment, so neighboring tribes often enter into prolonged, bloody wars with each other. While these wars result in numerous cloud giant deaths and the destruction of territory with no appreciable gain for either group, the curse influencing the giants seems to heighten their antagonism. Cloud giants do not experience the same level of hatred when one of their own changes alignment, however, perhaps out of a sense of sentimentality. Such an opposing giant winds up imprisoned and receives treatment based on the tribe's nature: evil giants taunt newly good giants, only strengthening the prisoners' resolve to be kind to others, while good giants show pity toward nascent evil giants, enforcing their kin's notion that goodness equates to weakness. Eventually, cloud giants tribes exile these outcasts, or, in the case of neighboring tribes, engage in an exchange of "damaged" giants under truce. All former social ties end once an exchange concludes. As an odd side effect of these meetings, each group of giants adopts some aspect of the opposing group's fashions.

In extremely rare cases, entire cloud giant tribes transition to an opposing alignment, as if the first giant to undergo this change infects the remainder of the tribe. People suffering under the tyrannical grip of evil cloud giants brace for yet another destructive raid only to watch in astonishment as the giants set down stones as foundations for permanent constructions like homes and protective walls. Meanwhile, in a neighboring mountain range, subjects of formerly good cloud giants can only watch helplessly as the giants descend on their settlements and obliterate everything.

The roads and structures in cloud giant-controlled territory are fair indicators of the tribe's overall alignment. Good cloud giants build castles and ensure they have well-maintained roads leading from their lofty homes to the settlements they oversee. The settlements themselves feature strong fortifications, well-built homes, and sound infrastructure. Naturally, no village structure is as grand as any of the cloud giants' castles, and the materials used improve as one climbs toward the giants' dwellings. On the other hand, evil cloud giants use whatever shelter they can find, and only build structures to house forges and other equipment necessary to craft weapons and armor. These paranoid giants do not permit their vassals to erect any large buildings, since they view that as a prelude to organized resistance. Communities used to

the evil giants' presence know not to build anything better than the crudest domiciles and pens to house their livestock. They also know they must raise at least three times the amount of livestock and grow far more than they can eat in order to provide for the giants when they make their random raids.

Many outside observers believe that cloud giants are dictatorial, with the only distinction between the two types of rule deriving from how they treat their thralls. Certainly, the people living in the benign dictatorship enjoy considerably better quality of life than their counterparts in despotic regimes do, but they are ultimately dependent on and enslaved to the giants. An invasion is the telltale sign of this, as very few giants, regardless of philosophy, will come to the defense of their subjects, instead concerning themselves with protection of their own immediate holdings. In the meantime, hapless villagers find themselves ill-equipped to defend themselves, either because they do not need weapons in "paradise" or because their masters refuse to allow them to craft weapons out of fear of an uprising.

Cloud giants are aware of the curse that governs their outlooks. Some even believe that once they break the curse they will gain access to legendary castles that float on permanent clouds. A small sect of giants holds to the notion they must find these cloud castles, which actually contain the means to break the curse. These "cloudseekers" manage to eschew both alignment extremes during their quests.

Whereas cloud giants often directly involve themselves with their vassals, storm giants either maintain a solitary existence or share their homes with a small family unit. For the most part, these giants prefer a reclusive, pastoral life wherein they tend large gardens, shepherd hardy mountain livestock, and watch over their territory for signs of trouble. They also control the weather from their lofty abodes, such that they and their subjects enjoy bountiful yields. Storm giant-surveyed land experiences mild weather, even if surrounding areas are subject to extreme conditions. Provided nothing serves to rouse the storm giant's ire, he contentedly spends time with these mundane pursuits away from the hustle and bustle of the ordinary folks the giant shepherds. Once a threat rears up, he acts decisively to repel the threat. The regulated weather suddenly turns violent, and lightning strikes where potential invaders encroach. Subjects who make demands of a storm giant, especially if they arrive in force, also provoke the giant's wrath, to similar results.

While the giants spend the bulk of their time alone or with their families in their mountaintop homes, they occasionally like to visit other intelligent beings, with whom they drink and otherwise overindulge. A community receives a storm giant guest every one to two years, and the residents treat it as a combination of grand celebration and natural disaster. The giant times this visit such that the community has completed its harvest and can afford the time and energy for a festival. The giant shares the bounty from her gardens and vineyards, so as not to put any strain on winter stores. A two-day carousal commences, during which younger villagers attempt to keep up with the giant in her consumption of food and drink or challenge the giant to wrestling matches. The overlarge visitor eventually becomes so inebriated that she cannot help but destroy stumbled-over buildings, and the wrestling matches usually end with challengers nursing broken arms and legs. However, as an inherently good being, a storm giant makes restitution for all damages she causes, and communities, for their part, take precautions when a storm giant visit is imminent and set up an area where the giant's revelries inflict the least amount of harm. Despite broken bones and days of recovery, as well as warnings by elders (some of whom bear similar scars and pains of their own), youths still risk further harm during the following years.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Cloud giants gather in smaller groups than lesser giants, partially on account of both their small population and the logistical strain caused by a large gathering, but mostly because the alignment curse manifests strongly for large groups. Rather than destabilizing their own societies, they keep their tribal populations below thirty. Even in these small groups, a leader emerges, and the leader's selection is the same regardless of tribe. Cloud giants revel in fine clothing and jewelry and either make it themselves or coerce their subjects to make it for them. A cloud giant who introduces a new fashion trend that the rest of the tribe subsequently accepts becomes the tribe's leader. To outsiders, this appears to be a shallow method to choose a leader—not that they express this opinion directly to cloud giants—but the giants believe that someone with an eye for a new style and the ability to influence the group to adopt it has incredible leadership qualities. A change in fashion is an organic process, and no giant may force a new style on his tribe mates. A new cloud giant fashion trend requires roughly ten years to take

hold; considering the giant's typical 400-year lifespan, it equates to a couple of seasons for most humanoids.

Adding to the perspective of cloud giant hedonism, they all have some ability with musical instruments, the harp in particular, and they spend the majority of their time practicing. A tribe superstitiously regards a cloud giant who cannot play an instrument as catastrophically flawed, and exiles the giant before some great calamity occurs. An outcast giant finds a humanoid settlement where she can live out her life and usually reverts to a neutral alignment, as if the exile exempts her from the pervasive curse.

A cloud giant tribe has very little specialization; only exceptional craftspeople or griffon wranglers mark themselves out from the rest of the group. All giants with musical talent know how to craft and repair their chosen instruments, but very few of them can make other items. An armor- or weaponsmith gains considerable respect, since the vast majority of the giants have little patience for smithing, yet they require equipment in the rare cases where they have to fight competent opposition. Likewise, while griffons like to share their aeries with cloud giants, mostly for purposes of protection, only the rare druid or ranger can command the creatures. Martial giants or those concerned with companion creatures rarely gain control of their tribes, since the rest of the tribe would stubbornly refuse to follow such a leader.

Storm giants have even smaller groups, numbering no more than six, owing to both a much smaller global population and the storm giant notion that they are divine creatures and need only gather in localized "pantheons" of related giants. Families have diverse leadership structures, with matriarchies just as likely patriarchies, and the eldest giant making decisions or voting families appearing in equal measure. The only exception is when a storm giant is born with or develops violet coloration, at which point the family defers to the supernaturally gifted giant when he is old enough.

Neither race technically takes slaves, but they motivate followers to do their bidding in ways that bear little difference to slavery: good cloud giants essentially put their subjects in a gilded cage, where people feel obligated to serve the superior giants to avoid displeasing them; evil cloud giants convince their thralls that the alternative to their rule is anarchy or an even worse tyrant; and finally, awe and a little fear keep storm giants' subjects in check, though their reclusiveness keeps them from relying on servants.

Surprisingly, they have no dragon minions. Most dragons distrust the cloud giants' fluid alignments,

and so avoid them. Cloud dragons in the same region become rivals for territory or ally with the giants, only to turn on them at an opportune moment. Storm giants sometimes befriend bronze dragons, but the dragons eventually tire of the giants' raucousness and caprice, and depart.

RELIGION AND RUNE USE

Devotion to deities is not a strong component of life for either cloud or storm giants. Both giant races worship—or at least pay homage to—deities that control weather. Cloud giants also follow deities that have beauty and fashion in their portfolios, while storm giants worship deities of the sea. Devout giants encourage—or enforce—worship of their deities in the humanoids they oversee. The majority of these giants, especially storm giants, view themselves as worthy of worship by the humanoids under their purview, whether as intermediaries to more powerful gods and goddesses or as divinities in their own right.

Cloud giants make little use of runes, unless they incorporate them in a current style of clothing. When they decide to invoke runes, they use Purisaz (giants) and Perþø (things not what they seem). They also teach their subordinates Gebu (gifts) and Uruz (sacrifice to the gods) runes as part of a not-so-subtle indoctrination.

Storm giants enjoy the most comprehensive rune use of all giant races and find an application for many of them. In rough descending order of importance, they use Purisaz (thunder and lightning, giants), Laukaz (the sea), Ōþalan (family), JĒra (abundant harvest), Fehu (cattle and livestock), Gebu (generosity and hospitality), Uruz (strength), Raido (travel), Wunjø (happiness and joy), TĒwaz (fearlessness), and Ehwaz (freedom). Solitary giants downplay Ōþalan and emphasize Gebu.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RACES

Cloud and storm giants interact with other humanoid races more often than many giant races, even though they still view them as inferior. They treat members of these races per their given philosophies and favor certain races over others depending on individual criteria.

DWARVES: Good cloud giants value dwarves as advisors on sound construction and defenses, and partner with dwarves to help with their kingdoms' infrastructures. Storm giants rely on

dwarven crafters to fashion their greatswords and breastplates, as the giants acknowledge superior dwarven smithing skill. On the other hand, the lack of dwarves marks a sure sign of an evil cloud giant-controlled region. These giants believe that the smaller race's capacity for making weapons of war, their discipline, and their hatred of giants makes them a clear threat and eradicate them whenever they appear. In the case where a cloud giant tribe transitions from good to evil, this means a violent war as the surprised dwarves come under attack from their former allies.

ELVES AND HALF-ELVES: Cloud giants of both alignments appreciate elven aesthetics. In the rare times where a pocket of elves populate an alpine forest ruled by cloud giants, they emulate and modify styles favored by the elves. However, as elven fashion seems to be static to the giants, this modification happens quickly. Otherwise, cloud giants treat elves as they would any other race: good giants work with elves to improve their kingdoms without unduly despoiling the elves harmony with nature, while evil giants actively destroy anything they see as a fortification. Elves who cannot defeat cloud giant tyrants typically flee their homes to find better places to live.

Storm giants enjoy elven food and wine, but view the elves as too fragile for any meaningful carousing; however, they admire elven skill with the bow and spend time training with expert archers to learn new techniques.

GNOMES: All giants value gnomish inventiveness, and many of the mundane and alchemical items they regularly use owe their origins to an obsessive gnome solving a giant-raised problem presented to her. They usually have a gnome "on staff" to create marvelous new items for them, and, in the case of evil cloud giants, keep them from turning his energies toward thwarting them.

HALFLINGS: Cloud giants, regardless of alignment, see halflings as little more than overly energetic pets, while storm giants find them the

most hospitable of humanoid races, and often visit villages with a sizable halfling population. Most halflings also show the appropriate amount of awe, which also endears them to the giants. They are so fond of halflings that they become overprotective of the diminutive folk and intervene harshly when one is in trouble.

HUMANS: Generally, a populous and tenacious race, humans have the most contact with both races of giants. They work hard to appease good cloud giants, weather the destruction and demands wrought by evil cloud giants, and extend hospitality—while minimizing damage—to visiting storm giants.

OTHER GIANTS: Both cloud and storm giants brook no aggression by lesser giants, whom they generally view as flawed beings without any of the redeeming qualities of the smaller humanoid races. Those inferior giants who have a penchant for raiding undermine the superior giants' authority, especially for humanoids who paint all giants with the same brush. Cloud and storm giants drive other giants out



of their territories, but they make an exception for stone giants, who keep to themselves. Evil cloud giants sometimes permit a band of frost giants, provided the lesser giants keep their raids on humanoid settlements to a minimum.

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT RACIAL RULES

While cloud giants and storm giants typically rely on their inherent strength and abilities to exert their will, exceptional individuals discover ways to augment their already formidable powers. Both races can manipulate weather to suit their needs, and several have learned to enhance that ability. Cloud giants wield fog as a weapon, rather than use it as passive cover. Storm giants become living lightning generators, making themselves incredibly difficult foes for unprepared creatures. Additionally, both races use abilities, items, or magic to reinforce their philosophies, or, in the cloud giants' case, derive benefits from their curse.

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT RACIAL FEATS

Cloud and storm giants exert their will on different aspects of the weather. Cloud giants are less showy than storm giants are, but they show much more versatility. Cloud giants also find the subtle show of force in an unseasonable and nigh impenetrable unseasonable fog bank generates greater fear. Storm giants are much more straightforward in their tactics, easily give into anger, and have little to fear from their opponents, so they can afford to be flashier. Cloud giants simply reserve such displays in their choice of accoutrement and their musical ability.

ACCOMPLISHED PERFORMANCE

Your way with music improves interactions with others.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, versatile performance class ability, two versatile performances.

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to all Charisma-based skills you can substitute with Perform skills you gain through versatile performance. This does not enhance your Perform skill check in any other way.

ALIGNMENT ACQUISITION

You mimic an alignment and surround yourself with a specific alignment aura for a short period.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, Falsify Alignment, Cha 15.

Benefit: For a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier, you can change your alignment to

neutral good or neutral evil for an hour. If you select neutral good, you benefit from spells and effects that aid good creatures, and you ignore spells and effects that harm evil creatures (or vice versa, if you choose neutral evil). Your alignment registers as the chosen alignment, but you may use Falsified Alignment to appear as the opposite alignment if you wish.

CLOUD BOLSTERER

Fog and cloud effects that you generate persist in even the most powerful winds.

Prerequisite: Cloud giant.

Benefit: When you use a spell-like ability or cast a spell creating an effect that wind can disperse, you increase the dispersal time from rounds to minutes. For example, it would take 4 minutes to disperse a fog cloud spell-like ability you use. Additionally, an effect you create that would normally immediately disperse due to wind instead remains for 1 round.

CLOUD MANIPULATION

You gain versatility with your cloud creation, allowing you to sicken your foes.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, fog cloud spell-like ability.

Benefit: You can use *stinking cloud* as a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to the number of times you can use fog cloud.

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

Your ostentatious displays of wealth make an impression on people you encounter.

Prerequisite: Cloud giant.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks to influence a humanoid creature per 1,000 gp worth of appraised clothing and jewelry you openly wear (to a maximum of +8). Effects from items like gem luster apply towards this total.

ELECTROMAGNETIC

You have learned how to magnetically charge opponents struck by lightning you create.

Prerequisite: Storm giant.

Benefit: If a creature takes electricity damage from a spell or effect you generate, that creature must make a Fortitude save (same DC as the spell or effect, or $10 + 1/2$ Hit Dice + Cha modifier if there was no save DC). If the target fails, his metal items become magnetically repellent. This imposes a further -2 armor check penalty for a creature with metal armor, and a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls with metal weapons when the creature attacks an opponent wearing metal armor (or made of metal).

ENHANCED CLOUD MANIPULATION

Your mastery of fogs and clouds allow you to create extremely dense compounds of mist.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, Cloud Manipulation.

Benefit: You can use *solid fog* as a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to the number of times you can use fog cloud minus 1.

EXTRA WEATHER MANIPULATION

Your natural control over the weather expands.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant or storm giant.

Benefit: When you take this feat, choose a spell-like ability you possess. For an ability with 1/day usage, you gain 2 additional uses per day; for an ability with 2/day usage, you gain 3 additional uses per day.

Special: You can take this feat more than once. You must apply its benefits to a different spell-like ability each time you take it.

FALSIFIED ALIGNMENT

You can tap into the curse that afflicts your kind to give yourself the semblance of an opposite alignment.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, Cha 13.

Benefit: A number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier, you can use *misdirection* as a spell-like ability. You can only affect yourself with this ability, and you can only choose neutral good or neutral evil as your apparent alignment.

FOG CLARITY

Fog you create does not impede your vision.

Prerequisite: Cloud giant.

Benefit: You can clearly see through fog- or cloud-based spells or effects you generate that grant concealment, and you suffer no miss chance when you attack an opponent in the area of such spells and effects.

Special: You can take this feat an additional time to gain *mistsight*, negating the miss chance for all fogs and clouds, regardless of origin.

GRABBING FOG

You grant tendrils of fog substance, allowing it to assist you in holding down opponents.

Prerequisite: Cloud giant.

Benefit: When you are in the area of a self-generated spell or effect that creates a cloud or fog, you gain a +4 enhancement bonus on grapple checks.

You also do not provoke attacks of opportunity when you attempt to grapple an opponent.

GREATER LIGHTNING AURA

The electricity emanating from you threatens to stun your opponents.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, Improved Lightning Aura, Con 25.

Benefit: Your aura of lightning deals 6d6 damage to all creatures in a 20-foot radius, and any creature that takes damage from the lightning must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 total HD + Con modifier) to avoid becoming stunned for 1 round. A creature that succeeds at the Fortitude save can no longer be stunned by your aura for 24 hours.

GRIFFON COMPANION

A griffon agrees to be your companion creature.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant or storm giant, animal companion class ability, effective druid level 5th for animal companion class ability.

Benefit: You gain a full-grown griffon as a companion creature. It gains the link, share spells, and evasion special abilities of animal companions. It also gains +1 Str and Dex and learns 2 bonus tricks. It does not gain any other benefits, but progresses per a normal animal companion as you gain levels in the class that grants you an animal companion (for example, it gains 1 HD,



+1 BAB, +1 Fort Save, +1 Ref Save, +1 Will Save, 1 skill rank, +2 natural armor bonus, +1 Str and Dex, an extra bonus trick, and the devotion special ability, when you improve your effective druid level from 5th to 6th).

IMBUE WITH LIGHTNING

The ability to allow a subject to wield electricity backs up your claim of divine agency.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, Cha 19.

Benefit: Once per day, you can grant a humanoid who succeeds at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 total HD + Cha modifier) resist electricity 20 and shocking grasp as a spell-like ability usable 3 times per day. These abilities last for 24 hours.

Special: You may take this feat one additional time, at which point you can grant the above abilities to a number of humanoids equal to your Charisma modifier.

IMPROVED LIGHTNING AURA

You extend the reach of your electrical aura and deal more damage to those foolish enough to remain within it.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, Lightning Aura, Con 23.

Benefit: The aura granted by Lightning Aura deals 4d6 damage to all creatures within 15 feet of you.

LIGHTNING AURA

Lightning crackles around you in an impressive display.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, Con 23.

Benefit: You gain an aura of electricity that deals 2d6 damage to all creatures within 10 feet of you at the beginning of your turn. You can suppress the aura as a move action and reactivate it as an immediate action.

LIGHTNING RELAY

Your weather manipulating powers become more devastating as you progress as a spellcaster.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, caster level 1.

Benefit: If you choose a spellcasting class as a favored class, the caster level for your spell-like abilities increases by the number of levels in that class.

NERVE SCRAMBLER

Lightning that you generate creates electrical feedback that threatens to overwhelm opponents struck by it.

Prerequisite: Storm giant.

Benefit: An opponent that takes electricity damage from a spell or effect that you invoke must succeed at a Fortitude save (same DC as the original spell or effect, or DC 10 + 1/2 total HD + Cha modifier if no original save DC) or become staggered for 1d6 rounds.

ONE OF THE LITTLE PEOPLE

Sometimes you desire to visit a village without invoking the awe due to your stature.

Prerequisite: Storm giant.

Benefit: You gain the use of alter self as a spell-like ability once per day. The effect lasts for up to 24 hours, and you take a form corresponding to the most populous humanoid race within 30 miles.

OVERSIZED EXTEND

Your inherent ability with oversized weapons allows you to extend your reach when attacking an opponent.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, Weapon Focus.

Benefit: You gain an additional 5-foot reach with an oversized weapon for which you have selected the Weapon Focus feat.

Special: This feat applies to all weapons for which you have Weapon Focus.

OVERSIZED SURPRISE

Foes who assume they know all your tricks get a horrific surprise when they think they are safely out of your reach.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant, Oversized Extend, Weapon Focus.

Benefit: The first time you take an attack of opportunity against an opponent in the extended reach granted by Oversized Extend, the opponent is flat-footed. Uncanny Dodge negates this ability.

QUICK TO ANGER

When you see a mortal enemy, your blood boils.

Prerequisites: Storm giant, favored enemy class ability.

Benefit: When you fight one of your favored enemies, you gain the benefits of the *rage* spell.

SLICING ARROWS

Even while standing in the middle of a tempest, your arrows fly true.

Prerequisite: Storm giant.

Benefit: You can use *slice the air*^{DM} as a spell-like ability three times per day.

WEATHER SAVANT

Your control of weather borders on the divine.

Prerequisites: Cloud giant or storm giant, Wis 17.

Benefit: Choose one of the following domains/subdomains: air (or cloud or wind subdomains), water (or ocean subdomain), weather (or storms subdomain). You can cast domain/subdomain spells and use domain/subdomain abilities as if you were a cleric with levels equal to your caster level for your spell-like abilities. If you have levels in a class that grants you the chosen domain/subdomain, add your levels in that class

to your spell-like ability caster level for purposes of the domain/subdomain spells and powers.

Special: You can take this feat additional times, but you must choose a new domain (you can take a subdomain from the new domain instead). You can cast only one domain/subdomain spell per level per day, but you do not have to choose the spell ahead of time.

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT EQUIPMENT

Storm and cloud giants rarely are motivated to craft new types of equipment, as the typical array of armor, weapons, and other items suits their needs. Because of this—and their general conceitedness that a reliance on most tools is beneath them—they eschew the invention of new items. This stagnation is sometimes offset when a third party develops tools and weapons the giants find useful.

EXTENDABLE WEAPON

Price +10% of weapon's final price

Type martial or exotic

Cloud giants are capable of wielding larger weapons than their size would suggest, but these weapons only give them the capability to clobber foes more powerfully. Gnomish inventors responded to the giants' demands to craft weapons with greater reach to go with the greater force. A weapon that does not already have reach can become an extendable weapon, which increases the wielders reach by 5 ft. However, the weapons are easier for opponents to break, and the wielder takes a –4 penalty to her CMD against sunder checks.

FASHION INK

Price 750 gp; **Weight** —; Craft DC 20

Used by cloud giants who wish to remain in style regardless of their travels, this morphic dye, applied to fabric, mimics the pattern and coloration of material worn by the majority of those with whom the wearer comes into contact. It does not create an exact match, in order to avoid giving the wearer an off-putting appearance, but it comes close enough to create an almost empathic connection between the wearer and observers. The ink grants a +2 alchemical bonus to the wearer's Diplomacy and Bluff checks after it has acclimated to the local styles (a process that takes 30 minutes). The effects of the ink last for 8 hours before fading away.

GEM LUSTER

Price 200 gp; **Weight** —; Craft DC 25

Glittering gaudily, this sticky paste blends with a surprising seamlessness to any gem. After application, the paste enhances the gem, increasing its apparent value for all but the most expert appraisers. The paste increases the DC of an Appraise check to determine the gem's value by 10. If a character fails his check, he always errs on the expensive side (20% more expensive if he fails by less than 5, double or triple its value if he fails by 5 or more). Cloud giants use this material to appear wealthier to their subjects; using it around other cloud giants is considered in poor taste.

LIGHTNING ATTRACTOR PASTE

Price 1,000 gp; **Weight** —; Craft DC 25

This bright blue unguent smells of ozone. Storm giants commissioned this material so they could safely call down lightning without harming their allies. A full jar of paste can cover 1 piece of Huge armor, 2 Huge weapons, 2 pieces of Large armor, 4 Large weapons, or 4 pieces of Medium armor. The paste does not provide any benefit for smaller items. Coated items retain the paste for 1 hour. For the duration, any natural lightning that strikes within 30 feet of coated Huge armor (the range decreases to 20 feet for Huge weapons and Large armor, and 10 feet for Large weapons and Medium armor; no extra range applies for multiple coated items) instead strikes the wearer. Any saving throws allowed to resist or avoid the lightning increase by 4. The paste can also divert magical lightning, but the wearer/wielder must make a caster level check (DC 15 + spell level) using her caster level or 4, whichever is higher. Used as a thrown weapon, the jar of paste coats a creature no larger than Large, but it only affects one lightning strike before wearing off.

MISTWEAVE

Price 100 gp; **Weight** 40 lbs. (for a Huge wearer)

Cloud giants use this relatively light cloth when they wish to move through fog surreptitiously. This garb grants the wearer a +8 equipment bonus on Stealth checks when he moves through fog. Additionally, the miss chance from concealment provided by fog increases to 30%.

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT MAGIC

Unlike their views on item creation, cloud and storm giants like to innovate with magic, using it to enhance their mastery of weather and awe their subjects. Storm giants have developed magic to enhance their garden yields and improve their livestock, a secret they have shared with interested druids.

ABUNDANCE

School transmutation; **Level** druid 5, ranger 4

Casting Time 1 day

Components V, S, DF

Range 1 sq. mi./level

Target each herbivorous animal with fewer than 4 HD and normal vegetation within range

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

After spending a full day invoking a nature deity (or nature itself, depending on your beliefs), you improve the health and hardiness of all herbivores, vegetables, and fruiting plants living within the spell's range. Each affected animal or plant gains a +4 bonus on saves against disease or blight. Additionally, the yield produced by animals and plants in the area increases by 50%. No area can benefit from more than one casting of this spell in a year's time.

BALEFUL GASEOUS FORM

School transmutation; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components S, M (jar filled with fog)

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

Target one creature

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

You force a creature to assume gaseous form, as per the spell.

BILLOWING FOG

School conjuration (creation); **Level** druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Effects fog spreads in a 20-ft. radius, which increases by 10 ft./round

Duration concentration + 1 round/level

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

Ground-borne mist churns out from the point you designate and continues to spread as you concentrate on it and for several rounds beyond. The fog obscures sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures within 5 feet have concealment (20% miss chance), while creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance).

Moderate wind (11+ mph) reduces the cloud's radius by 5 feet per round, while a strong wind (21+ mph) reduces the cloud's radius by 20 feet per round.

CRASHING WAVES

School evocation [sonic]; **Level** druid 5, sorcerer/wizard 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (sea foam)

Range 90 ft.

Area 90 ft. line

Duration instantaneous

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

You call forth a massive wave of sound that resembles storm-churned waves crashing on the beach. Every creature in the area of effect takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level (split evenly between sonic and bludgeoning damage). Creatures that fail their saves are staggered for 1d6 rounds.

ENSHROUDING FOG

School conjuration (creation); **Level** alchemist 3, bard 3, druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range 20 ft.

Effects cloud spreads in 20-ft. radius from you

Duration 1 min/level

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You surround yourself with misty fog, which you can move with you as a free action. Once you exit the fog, you can no longer move it with you. The mist obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures within 5 feet have concealment (20% miss chance), while creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance).

Moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the fog in 4 rounds, while a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in 1 round. A spell that deals fire damage that includes the fog in its area of effect burns away the fog.

This spell does not function underwater.

EYE OF THE STORM

School abjuration; **Level** cleric 4, druid 4, ranger 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M/DF (bark from a tree struck by lightning)

Range touch

Area 10-ft.-radius emanation from touched creature

Duration 10 min./level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** no

This spell creates an artificial eye that negates any weather effects in its area. Creatures within the eye suffer no harm from being in a hot or cold environment (as per endure elements). They also take no damage from storms that deal damage (such as a duststorm) or generate effects that deal damage (for example, lightning). Wind speed dies down to light (0 mph) within the area, and any rain and snow ceases.

FOGSIGHT

School transmutation; **Level** alchemist 1, druid 1, ranger 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

The targeted creature's vision can pierce through fog in a 60-ft. radius. This allows the subject to ignore the miss chance from foggy conditions.

FOGSIGHT, COMMUNAL

School transmutation; **Level** alchemist 2, druid 2, ranger 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Target creatures touched

This spell functions like *fogsight*, but you may divide the duration in 1-minute intervals among the creatures touched.

FOGSTUFF WEAPON

School transmutation; **Level** druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target fog or cloud touched

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You fashion fog into any weapon with which you have proficiency. This creates a 5-ft.-radius hole in the fog. Due to the nature of the fogstuff weapon, it deals damage as if it were one size smaller than its actual size. The weapon also deals bludgeoning damage regardless of its form. The weapon persists as long as someone wields it, but a moderate wind (11+ mph) destroys it in 2 rounds, while a strong wind (21+ mph) immediately destroys it.

FULMINATE WEAPON

School transmutation [electricity]; **Level** cleric 4, druid 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M/DF (metal piece that has conducted electricity)

Range touch

Target non-magical thrown weapon touched

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (object); see below; **Spell Resistance** yes (object)

When you touch the target weapon, it becomes a throwable lightning bolt, which the wielder can throw within one round. If the wielder throws the weapon, it deals 1d6 points of electricity damage per caster level (maximum 15d6) to all creatures in a 150-ft. line (Reflex half). If the wielder does not throw the lightning bolt, it discharges in a 150-ft. line with the wielder as the origin. The bolt deals damage to the wielder and travels in a random direction.

SPARK SHOWER

School evocation [electricity]; **Level** druid 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

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

Area 10-ft.-radius spread

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Reflex half; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell generates a spray of electrical discharges in the area you designate. It deals 1d4 points of electricity damage per caster level (maximum 5d4) to all creatures in the area. Creatures that fail the Reflex save catch on fire, as do any unattended flammable objects.

STRANGLING FOG

School transmutation; **Level** druid 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

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

Target one fog bank

Area 20-ft.-radius spread

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You turn an area of fog into grasping tentacles with this spell. The tentacles can make a combat maneuver check to grapple creatures at the beginning of your turn, including the round that you cast the spell. Creatures that enter the affected fog are also attacked. For purposes of determining CMB, the tentacles use your caster level as their base attack bonus and receive a +2 Strength bonus and a +1 size bonus. Roll once for the combat maneuver check each round and apply that result to all creatures in the area.

Foggy tentacles that successfully grapple a foe deal 1d4+2 points of damage, and the opponent gains the grappled condition. The tentacles' CMD equals its CMB + 10.

Dispersing the fog eliminates the tentacles created by this spell. The area of effect is considered difficult terrain while the spell persists.

WALK ON FOG

School transmutation; **Level** druid 3, ranger 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 min./level

Saving Throw yes (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

The spell's subject can walk on fog as if it were solid ground. Moving upward is similar to walking up a hill. The maximum upward or downward angle possible is 45 degrees, at a rate equal to half the subject's normal speed.

If the spell's duration expires or the fog is dispersed while the subject is still aloft, the subject floats downward 60 feet per round for 1d4 rounds. If the subject reaches the ground in that amount of time, it lands safely. Otherwise, it takes falling damage for the rest of the distance.

STORMRAGE SWORD

Aura strong evocation and transmutation; **CL** 13th

Slot none; **Price** 125,500 gp; **Weight** 16 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This gleaming, Huge +2 *shock greatsword* crackles with electricity. When wielded by most creatures, the sword is otherwise unremarkable. A wielder with levels in barbarian or other class that grants the rage ability can channel her rage into the sword to generate weather effects. By expending 5 rounds of rage, the wielder can cast *control weather* (with a casting time of 1 full round, but it still takes 10 minutes for the effects to manifest). As a standard action, and by spending 1 round of rage, she can call down a stroke of lightning that deals 5d6 electricity damage to a creature within line of sight. This damage increases to 5d10, if the wielder is in a stormy area.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *call lightning storm*, *control weather*; **Cost** 63,000 gp

TEMPEST ARROW

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 536 gp; **Weight** 1/10 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This +1 *arrow* bends of its own accord and its fletching ruffles as if in a strong breeze. The arrow ignores even the most powerful prevailing wind conditions when fired, allowing an archer to shoot it into a tornado. Alternatively, in light wind conditions, the wielder can apply the Deadly Aim feat to his shot with a tempest arrow, even if he does not possess the feat.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *slice the air*^{DM}; **Cost** 271 gp

THUNDERBOLT JAVELIN

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 9th

Slot none; **Price** 96,004 gp; **Weight** 12 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This Huge +3 *mithral javelin* is shaped like a stylized lightning bolt. Its wielder can throw it as a javelin or can unleash a 9d6 lightning bolt. The bolt has a range of 210 feet, and the wielder can bank the bolt of barriers (including creatures) and have the bolt return to her. If the bolt reaches the wielder, she must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude save to catch the javelin, which reverts to its normal form. The javelin cannot be used to invoke a lightning bolt for 24 hours afterwards. If the bolt does not return to the wielder or he does not

successfully save when catching the javelin, the weapon cannot be used to invoke a lightning bolt for 1 week.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *chain lightning*; **Cost** 51,004 gp

FOGWALKING SANDALS

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 10th
Slot feet; **Price** 3,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

These luminous silvery gray sandals wreath the wearer's feet in fine, cooling mist when he wears them. For a total of 10 minutes per day, in 1-minute increments, he may walk on fog as if it were solid ground. If he ends his turn while he is not on fog, he falls to the ground and subsequently takes falling damage.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *walk on fog*; **Cost** 1,500 gp

MISTSIGHT GOGGLES

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 1st
Slot eyes; **Price** 8,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

A black strap supports these goggles. The opaque lenses constantly perspire as if moisture condenses on them. When worn, they allow the wearer to see through natural and magical fog as if it were not there, negating the normal miss chances from foggy conditions.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fogsight*; **Cost** 4,000 gp

VARIANT CLOUD AND STORM GIANTS

Given the fickle nature of their alignment, cloud giants surprisingly have little variation from one another. However, the occasional giant emerges to search for mythical cloud castles that represent an end to the cloud giant curse. Undertaking this quest initiates a profound change in the giant.

Storm giants have more variability, especially if



they give into overwhelming anger and become living storms. Additionally, some storm giants transcend the mere idea of divine agency and actually become minor deities in their own right.

CLOUDSEEKER (CR 13)

Cloud giants who undertake the quest to find the fabled cloud castles undergo profound changes that enable them to survive the rigors of the arduous journey. Their legends state that a seeker must undergo the search with no other giants, so cloudseekers often hire out a group of adventurers to help them. As of yet, no cloudseeker giant has found one of these castles. These true neutral giants gain the advanced template and an additional +4 Cha. The giants also benefit from a +2 luck bonus to Armor Class, attack and damage

rolls, skill checks, and saving throws. Finally, they can use *find the path* as a spell-like ability once per day.

MAELSTROM GIANT (CR 17)

Storm giants are prone to losing their tempers, but the majority of them regain their senses after a destructive rampage. Rarely, a storm giant gives into its anger and makes a terrifying transformation to a living storm, ravaging the land they used to oversee. Maelstrom giants are always chaotic neutral. They gain the advanced and giant templates, and they can use all their spell-like abilities at will. They also gain DR 15/— and SR 28. Additionally, they can use storm of vengeance as a spell-like ability once per day.

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT NPCs

Cloud and storm giants rarely advance in class levels, since they see themselves as the pinnacle of humanoids. Cloud giants sometimes enjoy dabbling in arcane magic, especially as bards and sorcerers, but they do not have the patience for learning spells. They also see no need to improve their martial skills, so they very rarely take levels in such classes. Those with a predilection for fighting alongside griffons will take levels in ranger or druid.

Storm giants lean towards divine magic and take levels in druid, oracle, and cleric (in decreasing order of popularity). As they often find they must protect their homes, some take levels in ranger, barbarian, and fighter to improve their already impressive martial skills.

EXAMPLE NPCs

MISTDIRGE

The cloud giant known as Mistsong loved music, and often made the trek to a nearby human village to play at a popular tavern rebuilt, with Mistsong's assistance, to accommodate the giant. No one truly knows what caused Mistsong's personality to change, but people point to a duo of drunken hecklers who dared to mock the lyrics from the giant's favorite song. The change was gradual, but Mistsong's performances became more focused on death and nihilism. Eventually, crowded, standing-room only appearances dwindled to a handful of people, and the giant just stopped visiting the village.

Shortly thereafter, survivors of an attack by a cloud giant calling himself Mistdirge reported that they just narrowly escaped harm from a soul-crushing scream. Visiting giants meet inquiries about the bard with placating—some would say patronizing—responses

that the giants have dealt with the situation. That certainly seems to be the case, as no further direct attacks have occurred, but people still spread rumors about seeing a looming dark shape in the fog that hums a painfully sad tune.

Mistdirge

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male cloud giant bard 8

NE Huge humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 27 (+6 armor, +1 deflection, +1 dodge, +12 natural, -2 size)

hp 324 (24d8+216)

Fort +21, **Ref** +12, **Will** +16; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 80 ft.

Melee +1 *heartseeker morningstar*

+31/+31/+26/+21/+16 (4d6+20/19-20) or
3 slams +24 (2d6+6)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks bardic performance 22 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 18], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion [DC 18]), rock throwing (140 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +20)

At will—*levitate* (self plus 2,000 lbs.), *obscuring mist*
1/day—*fog cloud*

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12)

3rd (3/day)—*crushing despair* (DC 17), *haste*, *pain wave*^{DM} (DC 17)

2nd (5/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *mirror image*, *sound burst* (DC 16)

1st (5/day)—*chord of shards*^{UM} (DC 15), *deceitful presence*^{DM}, *ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 15), *not so fast*^{DM} (DC 15), *silent sound*^{DM}

0 (at will)—*float*^{DM}, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *glorious music*^{DM} (DC 14), *marvelous music*^{DM} (DC 14), *quicken*^{DM}, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat If Mistdirge has time, he casts *mirror image* and *haste* before entering combat.

During Combat The giant begins his bardic performance, preferring dirge of doom as his first move action. He then uses his spells from a distance to disable his opponents. He will not forego combat, however, and relishes sprays of blood from his *heartseeker morningstar*. Fallen foes receive immortality of a sort as Mistdirge adds details of their pitiful deaths to his repertoire of lyrics.

Morale Mistdirge has no desire to die in a fight with lesser beings and flees when he reaches 40 hp.

Base Statistics Without *haste*, Mistdirge's statistics are AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 27; **Ref** +11, **Speed** 50 ft.; **Melee** +1 *heartseeker morningstar* +31/+26/+21/+16 (4d6+20/19-20) or 2 slams +24 (2d6+6), CMD 44 (46 vs. bull rush and overrun).

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 11, **Con** 28, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +33 (+35 bull rush and overrun); **CMD** 45 (47 vs. bull rush and overrun)

Feats Awesome Blow, Bull Rush Strike^{APG}, Cleave, Dazzling Display, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (morningstar), Improved Overrun, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Skills Acrobatics -1 (+7 to jump), Bluff +31, Climb +21, Craft (Enter Choice) +9, Diplomacy +31, Intimidate +44, Perception +17, Perform (sing) +26, Perform (string instruments) +31, Use Magic Device +21

Languages Common, Elven, Giant

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, oversized weapon, versatile performances (sing, string)

Combat Gear *brooch of shielding*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of vampiric fog*^{DM}, *wand of charm person*; **Other Gear** +2 *chain shirt*, +1 *heartseeker morningstar*, *ring of protection* +1, *ring of sustenance*, courtier's outfit, jewelry worth 2,000 gp

STORMWING

The younger of two storm children living with her family at the peak of a towering ocean-side mountain, Stormwing possesses a fiercely independent streak. She is relieved that her older sister has violet skin, which means that her parents dote on the older giant and leave her to her own devices. When she was a child, she took readily to the bow and helped her parents repel a merfolk invasion by eliminating a lieutenant from 200 feet away. Now an adult at the age of 77, she spends most of the time hunting the wide swath of land

overseen by her family. She holds impromptu archery contests with local hunters, and she shows surprising humility at the rare occurrence where she loses a contest. Recently, she rescued an adult griffon under attack by a troop of hobgoblins that had managed to sneak into her family's territory. The grateful creature, whom she calls Keegar, bonded to her immediately, and they have become inseparable companions.

Stormwing

CR 20

XP 307,200

Female storm giant ranger 7

CG Huge humanoid (giant)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +33

DEFENSE

AC 37, touch 13, flat-footed 34 (+7 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +17 natural, -2 size)

hp 364 (19d8+7d10+241)

Fort +24, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities rock catching; **Immune** electricity; **Resist** cold 10; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee +1 flaming greatsword +37/+32/+27/+22 (4d6+26/17-20 plus 1d6 fire) or 2 slams +31 (2d6+8)

Ranged +1 huntsman composite longbow +23/+18/+13/+8 (3d6+15/x3)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks combat style (two-handed weapon), favored enemies (aquatic humanoids +4, monstrous humanoids +2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +20)

Constant—freedom of movement

3/day—*slice the air*^{DM}

2/day—*control weather*, *levitate*

1/day—*call lightning* (DC 18), *chain lightning* (DC 21)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd—*conjure energy arrows*^{DM}

1st—*razor maw*^{DM}, *veil companion*^{DM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Stormwing casts *veil companion* and *razor maw* on Keegar. She also drinks her *potion of barkskin*.

During Combat The giant uses her spell-like abilities to knock opponents out and directs Keegar to attack spellcasters (he waits while invisible at first until one

casts a spell). If she can attack from a distance, she uses her composite longbow. Otherwise, she tries to flank with the griffon when she must engage in melee combat.

Morale Stormwing fights to the death, especially if Keegar dies. If she feels that she can avoid a credible threat to Keegar by running, she will flee.

Base Statistics Without her *potion of barkskin*, Stormwing's statistics are: AC 32, touch 13, flat-footed 29.

STATISTICS

Str 44, **Dex** 16, **Con** 26, **Int** 16, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +21; **CMB** +40 (+42 bull rush, grapple, and sunder); **CMD** 55 (57 vs. bull rush and sunder)

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Great Cleave, Griffon Companion, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Pushing Assault^{APG}, Slicing Arrows, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +21 (+33 to jump), Climb +23, Craft (Enter Choice) +11, Handle Animal +30, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (nature) +26, Perception +33, Perform (sing) +15, Sense Motive +23, Survival +20, Swim +30

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Giant
SQ favored terrain (mountainous +2), hunter's bond (animal companion), track +3, water breathing, wild empathy +12, woodland stride

Combat Gear *crown of blasting* (minor), *gloves of arrow snaring*, *potion of barkskin* +5, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scarab of protection*; **Other Gear** +1 *brawling mithral agile breastplate*, +1 *flaming greatsword*, +1 *hunter's composite longbow* (+14 Str), *boots of striding and springing*, *ring of cold resistance* (minor), *ring of protection* +2

CLOUD AND STORM GIANT ADVENTURE SEEDS

PCs may seek out a storm giant or good cloud giant to help them with a battle beyond the characters' capabilities. Of course, in order to do so, the characters need to convince the giant that the enemy threatens his domain. Evil cloud giants make excellent adversaries for freedom-loving parties who wish to throw off the shackles of the oppressive giants. Beyond those setups, the following adventure ideas

help integrate cloud and storm giants into a campaign or provide a diversion to an existing campaign.

SCHISM: A local cloud giant tribe suddenly had half its members switch alignment, creating a bloody internecine war. A good cloud giant asks the PCs to find the instigating event and put a stop to it.

DEIFIC DISPLEASURE: A weather deity shows its anger at a storm giant's recent claim to rule by unleashing a devastating hurricane. The deity's clergy charge the characters with converting the giant over to the weather deity's worship.

COUP D'ÉTAT: A community under cloud giant rule has secretly developed weapons in an underground compound. A representative approaches the party to lead their community to overthrow the giants.

THE VISIT: The characters arrive in time for an imminent visit by a storm giant. Will they join in the festivities without unduly enraging the giant and increasing her collateral damage?

ETERNAL FOG: Cloud giants believe themselves impervious to curses thanks to their overarching alignment curse. However, one giant has succumbed to an affliction that causes him to radiate fog, which has spread throughout the giants' territory. Representatives of the giants approach the village that the PCs are visiting and ask (or demand) that characters provide a solution. The fog is not a problem in and of itself, but heretofore unknown nightmarish creatures lurk within it.

MURDER MOST SHOCKING: Something managed to electrocute a storm giant to death. The storm giant's kin believe that this is a result of foul play and plan to take out their revenge on every creature in their purview, unless the party can solve the mystery and find the culprit—who may very well be one of the storm giants.

QUEST FOR CLOUDS: A cloudseeker giant enlists the characters' help in her search for the cloud castles featured in her peoples' legends. Will the characters aid her? If they do, will they write her mission off as insanity after a number of adventures that bring them no closer to these mythical castles?

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