Monster The Inevitable Chronicles



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Th Inevitabl

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OPEN DESIGN

ava, the Gear Goddess, embodies the positive aspects of clockwork—innovation, industry, and creative genius—all the things that have made the Free City of Zobeck great. Through her patronage, man and dwarf have achieved unimaginable wonders. However, there is a second side to the Divine Lady. In her role as the deity of fate, Rava oversees the world's weaving of circumstance itself.

Aonster Chronicles

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Zurvan, the Iron Angel

Our destiny exercises its influence over us even when, as yet, we have not learned its nature: it is our future that lays down the law of our today.

-Friedrich Nietzsche

DC

Decula

Just as an autoscribe cannot contradict the motions of its gears and wheels, the iron laws of the universe constrain sentient beings. For the citizens of Zobeck, these dictates suggest that they live out their lives as artisans of

INEVITABLE KNOWLEDGE

Creatures with ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (planes) can learn the following lore about inevitables with a successful check, including information from lower DCs. Knowledge of Zurvan specifically is gained through Knowledge (religion):

DC	Result
5	An inevitable is a construct from the lawful plane of the Universal Clock.
10	The inevitable is charged with enforcing the tenets of law, and it pursues those who break contracts, escape rightful punishment, or violate the inescapable necessity of death.
15	Inevitables do not bargain with their quarry. Only its destruction or the correction of the wrong the inevitable seeks to right halts its pursuit.
20	An inevitable sometimes alters its quest if it learns of greater wrongdoing.

machinery. With their lives already predicted for them, they are free to concentrate on the invention of brilliant devices such as climbers, scullions, and watchmen, as well as other useful oddities.

However, a growing cult in Zobeck takes this aspect of Rava to the extreme. They believe the universe is a machine with a programmed beginning, middle, and end. The fledgling cult believes that it must prevent individuals from upsetting the universe's ultimate goal, even if it requires kidnapping and murder. Alone, they

> would simply be annoying. However, through their efforts, they have attracted the patronage of a powerful being: Zurvan, the Iron Angel, creator of the inevitables.

History of Zurvan

The cosmos was not always so evenly divided among the gods and their domains as it is now. When the universe was still young, deities battled for control of the primordial firmament. During one such struggle, Cronos, the first Machine Lord, was blasted into its constituents-gears, fulcrums, and armatures strewn throughout the celestial wastes. Most of the god's essence dissipated, but a part of its body caught on a concentrated bloom of energy from the Astral Plane. Imbued with the lifeblood of creation and the Machine Lord's self-organizing clockwork nature, this shard took root and erupted into the plane known as the Universal Clock.

The machine mind of the Universal Clock—marked by the incessant, automated progression of industry—churned out many original creations. Zurvan was the first.

Alone and without purpose, Zurvan spent several eons simply observing the universe, studying the rhythm of the intricate machine that was all space. It examined the finely tuned ballet of stars and planets, watched as great empires and races clashed, studied the frivolous play of gods and mortals, and realized all were part of a great, complex mechanism.

Zurvan didn't see in terms of opposites. It saw good and evil, virtue and sin, law and chaos, all as parts of the same equation. Instead of dying and being dismissed into oblivion, it seemed, Cronos had infused the cosmos with its own essence, transforming it into the greatest of mechanisms.

Like all machines, the universe too had an inevitable outcome: deletion. However, some creatures oppose this outcome, so Zurvan decided to ensure that all things aligned with the one and true predetermined path. It became the enforcer of cause and effect, the arbiter of destiny. Wherever sentient creatures attempted to circumvent the natural progress of events, Zurvan arrived to ensure things were set right.

Zurvan's first targets were the luck and trickster gods. These deities, by their very nature, denied fate and altered destiny. But Zurvan realized it needed time to build its

strength before attempting any such assault and turned its attention, instead, to the mortal world, where it would both defeat less formidable adversaries and build a core of adherents, whose reverence would increase its power.

The first recorded tale of Zurvan on the Material Plane tells of its destruction of an Allain wizard, who was nearing the discovery of magic that would have manipulated reality on a level deeper than any other arcane power.

In times since, Zurvan has thwarted other powerful wizards, dispelled djinn too careless with their *wish* spells, slain those returned to life with *raise dead* or *true resurrection*, and forbidden creatures from altering themselves with the simplest of transmutation magic.

With Zobeck's rise to prominence, and

Rava's blossoming faith. Zurvan da⊭ has di d_b h_{fP} df p = s + e

discovered a rich source of followers. The city's machine culture breeds those whose personality finds comfort in the strict dictates of Zurvan's mission.

Though Zurvan still lacks the strength to confront Rava or any other deity, its patience is limitless. It plans and formulates. For the time being, followers in Zobeck carry out its will, subverting Rava's church and battling kobolds who revere the despised trickster lords and the corrupting diabolical archdevils.

Inevitables: Psychology and Society

As the first inevitable, Zurvan used its power to alter the automated foundries and factories of the Universal Clock to produce the first three types of inevitables: kolyarut, marut, and zelekhut. Each was charged with enforcing a rule or law necessary for the proper operation of the universe but not severe or encompassing enough to warrant Zurvan's attention. The kolyarut enforce contracts, the marut ensure the natural process of death is never cheated, and the zelekhut guarantee a creature suffers a deserving punishment for its crimes.

Over the eons, the three types have come to represent absolute justice and unwavering dedication, but this has not endeared inevitables to humanity or the planar races. The application of law sometimes seems cruel and without compassion and often places inevitables on the side of evil. For instance, an inevitable does not care

if an evil being tricked a creature into signing a contract, only that the creature honors the contract.

As constructs, inevitables are perfect hunters. They require no food or rest and focus on a goal with the drive only possible in the inorganic. Their parts and pieces are interchangeable and can be replaced to adapt to a specific mission or a quarry's abilities. An inevitable might appear with four arms once, then show up next time with wheels instead of legs.

Many assume inevitables are mindless automatons, but this is not completely true. Each inevitable possesses a unique name and the potential for a rudimentary personality, developed over time. While the three different types of inevitable all have similar strategies and tactics, they use those tactics differently. Even the punishments can differ. Death is the most common, but some inevitables employ more inventive sentencing to serve as a warning to other law-breakers. If an inevitable punishes a slaver who kept people in chains, it might hobble him by severing his hands and feet. If someone raises a necromancer from the dead over and over, the priest performing the raise dead spell could wind up permanently trapped in the body of a zombie or skeletondeepest desire perversely granted.

Some ancient texts, such as *The Testament of Rava*, claim that inevitables have souls. More and more contemporary scholars that study the firmament, however, believe inevitables are simply machines so complex that their behavior only appears sentient. As

CHAOTIC INEVITABLES

Even the precision processes of the Universal Clock are not flawless. Over time, errors creep into complex systems, no matter how regulated or repetitive. Occasionally, an inevitable emerges from the works with a mistake in its programming. Instead of a lawful nature, it has a chaotic alignment. Such an inevitable gains the chaotic subtype and is not vulnerable to chaotic weapons.

In addition, chaotic inevitables have their own goals and aims. They might desire a life of adventure, or embark on the conquest of a minor nation. Some of these inevitables set themselves at cross purposes to their lawful brethren, aiding traitors, fomenting rebellion and perpetrating great crimes for which no one is punished.

established in the *Steam Artificer's Guide to Machine Autopsy*, souls come into being whenever a creature achieves free will and self-awareness. (Of course, whether or not inevitables even possess free will, or want to, is also a point of conflict.)

In rare cases, inevitables take petitions for action, if you can find one who will listen, but the inevitable will make a demand of the petitioner to undertake some action before it consents to the request. These tasks always further the ends of law, and good-aligned petitioners often find the tasks unpleasant.

Inevitables are not always beholden to their summoners, even in the case of those wealthy or powerful enough to afford a calling spell (such as *call marut*). The inevitable judges whether the task it is given furthers the ends of order. It may refuse service with a successful Will save (DC = 10 + spell level + caster's primary characteristic). If forced into an action contrary to its ultimate goals, that inevitable, or a more powerful one of its kind, makes sure the caster never attempts such a thing again.

A destroyed inevitable (or severed part) is often dismantled and sold in Zobeck's markets or in a private sale at the Collegium. Scholars, mechanists, and tinkerers value the bits. Some use the pieces in their own creations, while others hope to understand and replicate the constructs. Clockwork mages claim spells are more powerful when cast with a component that was once part of an inevitable. Members of Rava's cult debate whether such trade is sacred or sacrilegious. Those who believe the former wear bits of inevitable on necklaces as relics.

Known Inevitables

Inevitables of advanced age tend to express strong and varying personalities. They take names, refine their mission goals, and exhibit great skill at adapting to situations. For instance, the kolyarut known as Semenok allows a deal breaker to make reparations to avoid final judgment. The Iron Lord, a marut often seen looming on the borders of Morgau, taunts foes with a haughty, echoing voice while it smashes them in combat.

Other inevitables are well-known, but inactive. In the desert waste, a day's travel south of Siwal, stands a massive zelekhut, shiny as the day it was created. It has not moved for two centuries despite the men and women who brave the desert to present a case to it. So far, its only response has been a slow shake of the head in denial of a petition.

Inevitable Feats

Since inevitables are machines, they are often built to satisfy special mission requirements. Most inevitables are modified after construction, then returned to a standard specification after they complete their mission:

Battle Targeting

The inevitable was built to process combat at a much more efficient rate.

Prerequisite Inevitable

Benefit As a full-round action, the inevitable selects one creature. The inevitable gains a +2 insight bonus to attack and damage rolls against that creature while concentrating.

Reinforced Chassis

The inevitable's plate bolting is stronger than normal, including a more durable frame with reinforced joints.

Prerequisite Must be taken at the time of construction



Benefit The inevitable gains bonus hp as if it were a construct one size larger. For example, a Medium inevitable would gain 30 hp instead of 20 hp.

Self-Moving

The inevitable contains a life spark similar to a soul.

Prerequisite Must be taken at the time of construction

Benefit If reduced to 0 or fewer hp, the inevitable is considered unconscious and disabled. Its fast healing continues to function.

ZURVAN IN THE REAL WORLD

Belief in Zurvan (or Zervan) arose in Persia among the Zoroastrians and was later adopted into the Manichean religion. Zurvan was the father of Ahura Mazda, god of light and, Ahriman, god of darkness. He was revered as the lord of destiny and temporal time, and was the ultimate arbiter of a person's fate.

It is destroyed only when reduced to -10 hp. If slain it can be raised or resurrected.

(It is likely that followers of Zurvan would not allow themselves to be brought back to life.)

> **Normal** A construct is destroyed when reduced to 0 hp and cannot be risen from the dead.

Variant Inevitables

As constructs, inevitables do not inherit traits. Each can be built with different abilities so that no two are ever alike. Also, an inevitable can modify itself to better accomplish tasks. In some cases, an inevitable will return to the Universal Clock for more extensive adjustments or improvements. These variant abilities do not need to replace other abilities. If used as add-ons, they increase an inevitable's CR as noted:

Antimagic Frame (Su) The inevitable's metal body absorbs magical energy. Magic weapons striking the inevitable are subject to an effect that acts like a targeted dispel magic spell. The weapon's magic properties

are suppressed for 1d4 rounds after a successful strike against the inevitable. This ability does not affect items or weapons held by the inevitable.

The antimagic frame of a kolyarut or a marut functions as *greater dispel magic*.

This replaces an inevitable's

spell resistance. Otherwise, an inevitable with this ability adds a +1 to its CR.

- **Camouflage (Ex)** The inevitable can take on the shape and operation of one device or item of its size, granting a +20 bonus to Disguise checks. This shape must be an inanimate object, such as a wagon, chair, boat, or door. Once determined, it cannot be changed. Altering itself is a full-round action. Since this is a mundane disguise, *true seeing* does not penetrate camouflage.
- **Mission Packages (Ex)** An inevitable can outfit itself with modified parts and mechanisms to aid it in circumstances expected during a mission. The inevitable replaces its normal racial bonuses to skills with one of the following:

Acquisition—The inevitable gains a +4 racial bonus to three Knowledge skills.

Enforcement—The inevitable gains a +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Gather Information.

Infiltration—The inevitable gains a +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Disguise, and Gather Information.

Investigation—The inevitable gains a +4 racial bonus to Gather Information, Intimidate, and Sense Motive.

Reaving—The inevitable gains a +4 racial bonus to Balance, Climb, and Jump checks.

Reconnaissance—The inevitable gains a

+4 racial bonus to Gather Information and Perception.

Telescopic Sight (Ex) The inevitable's eyesight is extremely sharp; it takes a -1 penalty to Perception checks every 100 ft.



instead of the normal 10 ft.
Wheels (Ex) As a standard action, the inevitable can change its legs into wheels, granting an extra 30 ft. to its land speed.
While in this form, the inevitable gains a +4 circumstance bonus to CMB for bull

rush and overrun attempts and a +2 circumstance bonus to CMD against trip attempts. An inevitable with wheels cannot crawl or make standing jumps. Returning to normal form requires a standard action.

An inevitable with this ability adds a +1 to its CR.

Whirling Blades (Ex) The

inevitable can extend whirling blades in all directions from its body, protecting itself and harming those who approach too closely. Creatures in an adjacent square to the inevitable take 2d8 damage or half on a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 HD + Charisma modifier). The blades also provide a +2 deflection bonus to the inevitable's AC and Reflex saves. The inevitable can use this ability a number of rounds per day equal to its HD. These rounds do not need to be consecutive. Activating or deactivating whirling blades is a free action. While the blades are active, an inevitable cannot make normal melee attacks.

An inevitable with this ability adds a +1 to its CR.

The Cult of Zurvan

Although Zurvan was first sighted in the Mharoti Empire and the east, his cult did not thrive until it arrived in the Free City of Zobeck. Thuraster Stowbridge (cleric of Zurvan 7), a priest of Rava, recently broke from the church. For him, the faith had become too enamored with the novelty and innovation of clockwork. Stowbridge felt Rava's followers neglected the goddess's other aspect: her embodiment of destiny.

With this insight, Stowbridge claimed the mantle as Zurvan's high priest, and Zurvan revealed itself to Stowbridge and explained its mission. After hearing the Iron Angel's edicts, Stowbridge realized he had found his true god. He quietly formed his own church and slowly went about gaining converts. Not because he feared the church of Rava, but because he plotted to one day overthrow it, wishing to install in its place the worship of the one true god of destiny and machinery.

The cult's goal is to compel others to follow the dictates of fate. They believe that with each new creature forced into the proper action, Zurvan grows in strength and power.

The cult despises the undead. They believe that such abominations, by violating the universe's fundamental law of cause and effect, are acts of sabotage against the Great Machine. In the same way, Zurvan's followers will never cast *raise dead* or *true resurrection* and view such spells as detrimental to the Great Machine's operation, even if used upon the good and righteous. Likewise, a true follower would never consent to being brought back.

Many in the cult revere machinery and automata as embodiments of the Great Machine. The gearforged are viewed with

awe and jealousy. Very few of Zurvan's followers can afford the transformation into gearforged, while most others are considered too unbalanced to be trusted with such a privilege. Rumors occasionally surface about the cult's use of special incantations to displace a gearforged's soul so a cult member can take over the empty shell.

Zurvan has enough followers to grant spells to the most devout. Clerics who revere Zurvan have access to the Compulsion, Gear, and Knowledge domains.

Compulsion Domain

Deities Lords of Law, Rava, Zurvan

Granted Powers You have a commanding presence and are accustomed to getting what you want. You can spontaneously cast *command* or *greater command* as long as you have an available prepared spell of equal or greater level.

Compelling Words (Su) You can cause one living creature to become fascinated as the bard ability fascinate (using cleric levels in place of bard levels). Creatures with more HD than your cleric level are unaffected. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Aura of Amazement (Su) At 8th level, you can cause living creatures within 30 ft. to become dazed as a swift action. The DC is 10 + 1/2 your cleric level + your Wisdom modifier; effected creatures remain dazed until they save and can attempt a save each round. You can effect a number of creatures per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier. You can use this

ability any number of times as long as you can still affect at least one creature. Each attempt to daze a creature counts toward your limit but multiple rounds due to failed saves do not.

Domain Spells 1st—command (or pendulum from the Zobeck Gazetteer, page 38), 2nd—hold person, 3rd—suggestion, 4th—dominate person, 5th—greater command, 6th—repulsion, 7th—geas/quest, 8th dominate monster, 9th—soul bind

Customized Summon Lists

Clerics of Zurvan can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed for those spells:

Summon Monster III

Clockwork watchman (N) (from the *Zobeck Gazetteer*, page 29)

Summon Monster VII

Zelekhut (LN)

Summon Monster VIII

Kolyarut (LN)

Adventure Hooks

The gearforged of Zobeck are disappearing. When they return a few days later, friends and associates claim they are different, as if their personality had changed. Unknown to anyone, members of Zurvan's cult are kidnapping gearforged and using ritual magic to appropriate the constructs' bodies.

- Zurvan's cult believes the clockwork oracle in the temple of Rava is corrupt. The group kidnaps Lena Ravovik to gain access to the device to adjust its machinery.
- Several nobles and adventurers have recently turned up dead. Their only connection is that they have been resurrected. Rumors abound about the causes of death, and one story implicates Zurvan's cult.
- A warrior-priest of Loki from the far north arrives in Zobeck. His shaman mentor was slain under mysterious circumstances. Divination spells have revealed one word: Zurvan. He approaches the PCs for help.

Portraying Zurvan

Unlike other inevitables, Zurvan is a purely neutral creature. It favors neither good nor evil; chaos nor law. Its actions may make it appear to be any of those descriptors, but from its perspective, it is simply ensuring the smooth operation of the Great Machine.

As the embodiment of destiny and fate, Zurvan is a merciless foe. It does not speak unless the act would further some end. It simply appears, destroys its quarry, and departs. There are no warnings, omens, or declarations. It is swift as consequence and impersonal as circumstance.

Because it knows it is not a god, it carefully weighs any action it might take against

another deity's followers. Until it can directly confront a god, Zurvan ensures its actions are inconspicuous enough not to attract their attention, or it works through its devoted followers.

Appearance and Powers

Zurvan resembles a massive winged humanoid composed of iron plates. Its body shimmers with gold light, yet here and there, the first hints of rust show through the burnished metal. Its eyes are empty pits that gaze with an implacable, unblinking stare.

When it chooses, its pistons, chains, and bearings make noise. Zurvan uses this sound to build dread in those targeted. Its coming is as



obvious as cause and effect.

Zurvan's personification of destiny differentiates from other inevitables. While they follow the road of law, Zurvan controls the ways of fate, which makes no distinction between law or chaos, good or evil. Spells and abilities that target lawful creatures have no particular effect on it. Its fast healing is unaffected by chaotic weapons. As well, its weapons cut through the ephemeral distinctions sentient beings place on their existence, bypassing alignment-based DR.

Zurvan, the Iron Angel CR 20

XP 615,000

N Large construct (extraplanar)

Init +10: Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24 Aura clockwork order (200 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 15, flat-footed 32 (+6 Dex, +23 natural, -1 size)

hp 217 (25d10+80); fast healing 10

Fort +10 Ref +14 Will +15; +4 vs. chaos, evil, good, and law

DR 15/adamantine and magic; Immune construct traits; Resist cold 10, fire 10, lightning 10, sonic 10; **SR** 31

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.; fly 50 ft. (average) **Melee** +1 anarchic axiomatic spiked chain +38/+33/+28/+23/+18 (2d6+19 plus grab) or 2 slams +36 (2d8+18) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. Special Attacks constrict (2d6+18), rebuke constructs Spell-Like Abilities (CL 25th, +24 ranged touch) At will-dimension door, greater command (DC 25), locate creature, quickened greater dispel magic, true seeing 5/day-discern location, greater scrying (DC 27), greater teleport, plane shift (DC 27) 3/day-dominate monster (DC 29), forcecage (DC 27), globe of invulnerability 1/day-geas/guest, soul bind (DC 29) TACTICS Before Combat The infinitely patient Zurvan studies foes, learning their strengths and weaknesses well before confronting them. Just prior to combat, it casts globe of invulnerability. During Combat Zurvan blankets an area with

greater dispel magic and then wades into melee, counting on its clockwork aura to protect it. If possible, it grabs an opponent with its chain during a flyby attack, pulling the victim away from allies and safety.

Morale Zurvan fights with the implacable conviction of fate.

STATISTICS

Str 35, Dex 23, Con —, Int 19, Wis 24, Cha 31 Base Atk +25; CMB +38 (+44 disarm, +43 grapple, +42 trip); CMD 54 (56 vs. disarm and trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes,

Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)^B, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Greater Disarm, Greater Trip, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (greater dispel magic), Self-Moving^B, Weapon Focus (spiked chain)

Skills Acrobatics +19, Disable Device +18, Fly +17, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana, engineering, history, planes) +16, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +16, Survival +20; Racial Modifiers +4 Intimidate, +4 Perception, +4 Sense Motive

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal

SQ beyond good and evil, god-forged

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ECOLOGY

Environment any (the Universal Clock) **Organization** solitary or hunting party (Zurvan

and 2-6 other inevitables)

Treasure standard (+1 anarchic axiomatic spiked chain, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Beyond Good and Evil (Su) Zurvan's attacks automatically bypass all alignment-based DR.
Clockwork Order (Su) Zurvan represents the order of the universe. Within its aura, other creatures may not delay their actions, take immediate or swift actions, make attacks of opportunity, or cast spells with metamagic effects not prepared beforehand.
God-Forged (Ex) As the first inevitable

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descended from the Machine Lord, Zurvan is hardier than other constructs and has 50 bonus hp.

Rebuke Constructs (Sp) Zurvan can command constructs. This ability functions identically for constructs as the Command Undead feat works for undead, using Zurvan's HD in place of cleric levels. Zurvan can use this ability 13 times per day. Ω

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