Adventure Path Plug-Ins

Malevolent Mediun Monsters Ey Chursten allesse Benner

ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

EGENDARY

BEASTS OF LEGEND:

MALSVOLSNG MSDIUM MONSGERS

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Beasts of Legend: Malevolent Medium Monsters

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WRAC YOU WILL FIND INSIDE MALEVOLENT MEDIUM MONSTERS

Does size really matter? Too often in high-level Pathfinder RPG play, your opponents are either high-level NPCs or towering titans of imposing size and strength. There's nothing wrong with a colossal killing machine, but when you want creatures for your campaign that pack a powerful punch in a size small enough to walk right in the back door, you need Malevolent Medium Monsters! These are not outsiders with a million spell-like abilities, nor complicated classed characters, but honest-to-goodness monsters from CR 11 to 18 ready to terrorize your unsuspecting heroes as they tear them apart! You'll find the paralytic **alabaster beetle**, the malformed composite homunculus dragon, the blood-soaked ersatz, the sinister and heretical faithslain, the grotesque misbirthed, and an entire new category of fiendfused monstrous humanoids that drink deeply from the wells of fiendish corruption to achieve an awful apotheosis! Each new creature is designed with full-page portraits, dynamic abilities, and detailed ecology, tactics, and advice on using it in the campaign, whether your heroes are facing invading demon hordes, exploring a wounded wasteland

where chaos reigns, or expunging the tainted lineage of an ancient evil!

The Beasts of Legend series from Legendary Games are not your usual bare-bones bestiaries, but bring you richly detailed and evocatively described monsters drawing upon the myths and legends of the real world with a double dose of fantastic flair. The Boreal Bestiary, Coldwood Codex, Beasts of the East, and Construct Codex have received lavish praise for their quality and inventiveness, and **Malevolent Medium Monsters** follows proudly in their footsteps. The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none, allowing you to enliven and enrich your campaign in amazing and exciting ways. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!



Welcome to Adventure Patr Plug-Ins

This product is a part of our line of support materials for extended Adventure Path-style campaign play for use with Paizo's Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. When you see the "Adventure Path Plug-In" logo at the top of a Legendary Games product, you can expect it is designed to fit directly with the themes of a particular Adventure Path campaign. The all-star team of designers here at Legendary Games is committed to bringing you—the busy GM or player—the absolute best third party support for your Pathfinder campaign. To deliver on that commitment, we've assembled the best of the best of current gaming authors, designers and layout experts so that you can feel comfortable that Legendary Games products will be the most creative, rules-legal and well-designed content you can find. Though Adventure Path Plug-Ins all share a theme with a specific Adventure Path campaign, they are designed to be easily incorporated into your home game regardless of what campaign you may be running.

Πευ, Ψπατ'ς Ψιτη της Αρνεητυκε Ρατη Plug-In?

You will see us use phrases such as "Righteous Crusade Adventure Path" instead of the title of the 13th adventure path published by Paizo Inc., covering issues #73 to 78. Or, you may see us use names such as the "Demon Lands," the "Crusader Stronghold," the "Goddess of Valor," or the "God of Nature" instead of the proper names of specific characters or places from those adventures or gods from the world setting. While we can create compatible products under the Open Game License, we still have to be respectful of certain content Paizo owns. Because we want to be very respectful of their content and work in partnership with them, we use these "replacement phrases." Plus, this helps the product have a more general appeal to those who may be running a home campaign that fits the same themes. In any event, we are 100% confident you know what we are talking about and will have no problem making the required connection. So, enjoy these pregenerated characters for use in your "Righteous Crusade Adventure Path," helping to tame the "Demon Lands." See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the official <u>Pathfinder Refer-</u> ence <u>Document</u> as well as <u>d20PFSRD</u>. If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized. Where appropriate, some links are also marked with a superscript to indicate the hardcover rulebook source for the rules in question, as follows:

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The following superscript notations are used to denote references to official Pathfinder Roleplaying Game rulebooks: ACG = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Class Guide APG = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide ARG = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Race Guide GMG = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Gamemastery Guide OA = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Occult Adventures PU = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Dultimate Campaign UC = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat UE = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment UE = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Intrigue UM = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Intrigue UM = Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Magic

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JINGRODUCCION

The creatures in **Malevolent Medium Monsters** are monsters, first and foremost. Some make ideal villains, with long-simmering and wide-ranging plots and plans, yet they also can serve as the champions or elite minions of greater or more devious powers. Some might even be the unfortunate result of spreading corruption across the land, such as the demon-tainted remnant of a long-fallen crusader kingdom, where the natural world itself has become infused with the power of ultimate chaos and insensate evil. The fiendfused in particular might once have been champions of good, but dragged into the infernal pits of torment have had the literal seeds of evil incubated within their bodies and souls, only to come forth as inhuman monstrosities devoted to the spread of misery and pain, with just enough of their former selves remaining to offer sadness and sorrow to those they encounter who might recognize the heroes they once were.

These creatures are designed to supplement the ranks of creatures that are currently somewhat under-represented in the higher CR range, in order to give GMs more versatility and variety for unleashing foes upon their heroes. This can both keep them off-balance in terms of thinking they've memorized all the usual creatures, but also helps the GM balance out the use and utility of spells, items, and class features that depend on specific creature types, such as a ranger's favored enemy.

CR Malevolent Medium Monsters

- 11 shearing menace
- 12 alabaster beetle
- 14 ersatz
- 15 coil kissed, faithslain
- 16 homunculus dragon
- 18 abyssal tyrant, infernal despot, misbirthed

Aberration: misbirthed

Construct: ersatz

Dragon: homunculus dragon

Monstrous Humanoid: faithslain (abyssal tyrant, coil kissed, infernal despot, shearing menace)

Undead: faithslain

Vermin: alabaster beetle

Beegle, Alabascer

The back of this white-shelled insect rests roughly four feet from the ground. Numerous fist-sized legs support its chitin-enforced bulk, while twin mandibles clack together near its face. Oozing violet drool streams from the insect's mouth.

ALABASTER BEETLE

CR 12

XP 19,200

N Medium vermin **Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+4 Dex, +14 natural) **hp** 161 (17d8+85) **Fort** +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5 **Defensive Abilities** darkveiled shell

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +20 (3d8+10 plus grab and poison)
Special Attacks constrict (3d8+7), paralytic spray, poison

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 19, **Con** 21, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6 **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +19 (+23 grapple); **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip) **Feats** Weapon Focus (bite)^B **Skills** Fly +0

ECOLOGY

Environment underground **Organization** solitary, pair, cluster (3–8), or colony (9–20) **Treasure** none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Darkveiled Shell (Ex)** The carapace of an alabaster beetle confounds the use of darkvision. Creatures cannot perceive an alabaster beetle while using darkvision, effectively rendering the beetle invisible to such detection. Spells or effects that grant darkvision also fail to penetrate the veil of the shell. Other forms of vision, such as regular sight, blindsight, or *true seeing* can see the alabaster beetle without impediment.
- **Paralytic Spray (Ex)** An alabaster beetle can spray paralytic acid in a 15-foot line, dealing 8d8 points of acid damage to everything in that area. Creatures struck by this, are also affected by the alabaster beetle's poison. A DC 23 Reflex save halves the damage and prevents the creature from being affected by the beetle's poison. An alabaster beetle may only use this ability once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex) Bite/Paralytic Spray—Injury; *save* Fort DC 26; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *initial effect* paralysis for 1d4+1 rounds; *secondary effect* 1d3 Dex damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Alabaster beetles are a terror of the world's underground locales. Unlike other varieties of vermin, the alabaster beetle subsides on a constant diet of meat, and seemingly prefers to gorge on the flesh of sentient creatures. They're apex predators in subterranean environments, able to traverse almost all underground environments in one manner or another. They act as solitary hunters in remote areas, while congregating together as parts of larger colonies when operating out of more populated subterranean regions.

A typical alabaster beetle stands roughly four feet tall and is five to six feet wide. They weigh 450 pounds, mostly due to the bulk of their chitin.

ECOLOGY

What led to the creation of the rare alabaster beetle is a topic of some discussion among expert dungeoneers. The evolution of a verminous creature as physically powerful and naturally defensive as the alabaster beetle is a mystery. The beetle's lack of intelligence makes it less of a threat to underground civilizations, but still an apt defender of the deeper areas of the underground. The most prevalent hypothesis regarding the evolution of the alabaster beetle, is that these white-shelled insects came about as a sort of 'natural defense mechanism' of the underground. "Certainly, areas infested with even a small group of these beetles are often devoid of encroaching civilization.

The shell of alabaster beetles are highly sought after by craftsmen skilled in chitin-forging arts. These white shells have the density of steel, but also provide a unique form of obfuscation. Namely, the shell of an alabaster beetle actively masks its presence when viewed under darkvision. Other senses, such as normal vision under a light source, blindsight, or even magic sight such as *true seeing* bypass this unique defense mechanism. Those with darkvision almost always forgo the use of other sense in the underground realms of the world, so the obfuscating shell of the beetle proves to be an almost universal defense in the lower reaches of the world. Less scrupulous members of society, namely assassins and enforcers, pay high sums of money for the paralytic poison of an alabaster beetle. The poison is reputed for its debilitating properties, a 'must have' when searching for alchemical toxins to bring targets in alive. The poison's ability to maintain its potency when mixed with the highly acidic digestive acids of the beetle is another evolutionary oddity. Alabaster beetles can produce a thick stream of internal acids, which contain traces of their poison. This blast of digesting acids not only melts the thickest stone, but subjects the rare organic targets that survive impact to a paralytic poison.

Each alabaster beetle is capable of asexual reproduction. The beetle lays a clutch of eggs within a pool of meat cooked in their digestive acids. The eggs absorb the nearby protein, and eventually hatch into small specimens of their kind. It takes only a few weeks for an alabaster beetle to mature to its full size, during which the parent becomes active in finding further sources of food with which to feed its young. Upon reaching maturity, the alabaster beetle's shell takes on its darkvision-blocking properties, rendering the child entirely invisible to its parent.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Most alabaster beetles encountered in the lightless depths of the world are solitary hunters. These beetles are the bane of adventuring and spelunking parties in the underground, as only a single alabaster beetle can spell disaster for such groups. Most such vermin find perches along vast cliffs in the lightless depths. Waiting on these cliffs, they emerge, held aloft on their ponderous wings, spraying acid upon those interlopers climbing the walls. In most cases, the targets are horribly melted and fall to their death, several hundred feet below, where they become the beetle's next meal.

Groups of alabaster beetles are rare. The reason for this, is linked to the fact that the beetle's primary means of vision is darkvision—a vision which its own shell confounds. When alabaster beetles group together, it's most often without any type of relationship, but instead because they've all picked the same hunting grounds. One trait that does allow some coordination between the beetles, is that they have keen scent when it comes to the poison that drools from behind their mandibles. This gives the beetles a rudimentary understanding of where their allies stand and how to best coordinate in combat.

When it comes to other races, alabaster beetles only have interactions of note with duergar. The gray dwarves maintain an affinity for powerful vermin, and several duergar monarchs have standing order to capture alabaster beetles for use as defenders. The duergar have repeatedly failed to create a mount-sized alabaster beetle, but attempts to reduce the size of the enlarged vermin have met with some success. These dog-sized beetles use the young simple template (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*) and act as powerful hunting beasts within duergar society. Verminous hunters and rangers employ these stymied beetles to hunt down escaped slaves with great effect, relying on the poison of the beetles to force their enemies into submission.

DRAGON, **HOMUNCULUS**

This pony-sized amalgam of scales and stitches resembles a miniaturized dragon. Deep rumbles come from the creature's maw, as it desperately opens and closes, trying to set its mismatched rows of teeth.

HOMUNCULUS DRAGON

XP 76,800

CN Medium dragon Init +5; Senses dragon senses; Perception +26 Aura erratic aura

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 15, flat-footed 24 (+5 Dex, +14 natural) hp 275 (19d12+152) Fort +21, Ref +16, Will +115

DR 10/magic; Immune pain effects, paralysis, sleep; SR 24

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 100 ft. (clumsy)
 Melee bite +26 (3d6+7/19–20), 2 claws +26 (2d8+7), 2 wings +24 (1d8+3)
 Special Attacks bedlam breath
 Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +15) 5th (4/day)—wall of force

4th (6/day)—dimension door, greater invisibility 3rd (7/day)—haste, suggestion (DC 18), tongues 2nd (7/day)—bull's strength, glitterdust (DC 17), mirror image, resist energy 1st (8/day)—charm person (DC 16), mage armor, magic missile, shield, true strike 0 (at will)—acid splash, bleed (DC 15), dancing lights, detect

magic, light, message, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 21, **Con** 27, **Int** 16, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 21 **Base Atk** +19; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 41

Feats Cleave, Critical Focus, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Great Fortitude, Improved Vital Strike, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +5 (+1 to jump), Appraise +25, Bluff +27, Fly +19, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (history) +16, Perception +26, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +25, Use Magic Device +27

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven SQ blood of dragons

ECOLOGY

Environment any **Organization** solitary **Treasure** double

SPECIAL ABILITIES

CR 16

Bedlam Breath (Ex) As a standard action, a homunculus dragon can unleash its breath weapon. This works as a dragon's breath weapon. The breath weapon invariably acts differently every time its employed, due to the conflicting nature of the homunculus dragon. There's a 50% chance the breath weapon will take the form of a cone or line. The length of the breath weapon is equal to 2d4 x 10 feet. A homunculus dragon's breath weapon deals 15d6 points of damage. The type of damage is either acid, cold, electricity, or fire (determine randomly). The save DC is Constitution-based.

Blood of Dragons (Su) While the draconic blood of a homunculus dragon is derived from many sources, it does empower many of the dragon's abilities. A homunculus dragon gains a number of blood points equal to 1/2 of its total HD (normally 9). These points can be spent to enhance any sorcerer spell cast by the homunculus dragon with one of the following metamagic feats: Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, or Widen Spell. Using this ability is a free action that costs a number of blood points equal to the spell level modifier the selected feat would use. A homunculus dragon regains its blood points after spending a 8-hour period of uninterrupted rest.

Erratic Aura (Ex) As a swift action, a homunculus dragon can activate an aura of elemental power by channeling the draconic blood in its veins. The aura deals 2d6 points of damage to any creature within 10 feet of the dragon. The type of damage is either acid, cold, electricity, or fire (determine randomly at the start of each round). The aura can be suspended with a swift action. The homunculus dragon is unaffected by its own aura.

A homunculus dragon is a malformed creature, wracked by constant pain and a need to prove itself as worthy of the blood that flows through its veins. Created from the stitched scaled hides of numerous dragons, these creatures resemble horrific alchemical experiments more than they resemble the fearsome beasts of their namesake. Unlike constructs, homunculus dragons are actual living creatures, considered as dragons in almost all respects. Specimens of this draconic offshoot race stand 4 to 5 feet tall and weigh about 750 pounds.

ECOLOGY

What drives a living creature to build a creature as terrifying as a homunculus dragon is unknown. These broken dragons are built from collected scales and bones pilfered from corpses and dens of dragons. Only by collecting enough tattered remains, can a skilled alchemist even think of making the attempt at breathing life into the crafted husk. These bodies are then stitched together in the mocking form of a true dragon. Exactly how life can fill the remains of such a host is hotly debated, but as the body requires ample hide, the insides require copious amounts of dragon blood. By suffusing the construct body with collected blood, and performing the necessary rites, the homunculus dragon is born.

The mixed blood of so many dragons maintains a potency of its own right. It suffuses the crafted body with life energy, creating a mockery of a dragon that is a living creature and not an automaton. The diversity involved in the dragon's creation prevents any true form of growth, and leaves the homunculus dragon wracked with incredible, and ceaseless, pain. Still, the concentration and mix of blood also acts as a potent focus for the homunculus dragon, making the creature a far more potent spellcaster than even the oldest others of true dragons.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Homunculus dragons are solitary by nature. They don't seek out others of their kind, because so few of their kind actually exist. Most

of these creatures go about their lives unaware that another of their kind could be somewhere in the world, believing that they're misshapen mistakes. Still, most homunculus dragons don't spend much time caring about their unique existence. Instead, these dragons spend their long-lives building up vast networks of servants, and immense treasuries. The motivation for such material acquisition and consolidation of power is simple: the homunculus dragon believes itself to be the equal—or in many cases, better—of its true dragon kin. And as dragons spend much of their time hoarding, homunculus dragons believe such endeavors to be the metric of which they'll be judged.

A homunculus dragon is an inherently powerful dragon, not requiring the long decades and centuries necessary for true dragons to mature. It immediately sets out to find a group of local creatures to act as servants. This often takes the form of shunned monstrous creatures of some use, such as boggards, bugbears, derro, giants, gnolls hobgoblins, or orcs. Because of their immense pride, homunculus dragons reject weaker servants like goblins and kobolds, regardless of how such tribes fawn over the stitched dragon as if it were a deity. Unlike true dragons, a homunculus dragon cares not for the veneration of others, but instead they seek to acquire power and wealth to prove itself to its trueborn kin.

As to be expected, the mind behind making a homunculus dragon is at best, deranged. The creators of such draconic progeny rarely last long, eventually falling to the violent outbursts of the stitched monstrosities they've made. In rarer circumstances, those who breathe life into a homunculus dragon are quick to leave the creature to its own destiny. For

> these strange spellcasters, the act of creating the dragon is enough, and they gain satisfaction from watching as their creation grows in intellect.

ERSACZ

Swirls of floating red liquid surround a humanoid woman whose body is made of a similar substance. The liquid moves into the body, which swiftly transforms into a fully rendered woman in commoner's garb.

Ersatz

CR 14

XP 38,400 N Medium construct

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 17, flat-footed 21 (+7 Dex, +11 natural) hp 137 (18d10+38) Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +8

DR 10/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 19 **Weaknesses** vulnerable to area effects, vulnerable to sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. **Melee** 2 slams +26 (3d6+7) **Special Attacks** dislocating strikes

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 24, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 20 **Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 42

- **Feats** Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slam)
- **Skills** Acrobatics +25 (+29 to jump), Craft (Carpentry) +18, Knowledge (History) +20, Perception +20

Languages Common

SQ adaptive simulacrum, facsimile, not of flesh, reconstruction

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or false settlement (3–12) **Treasure** standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Adaptive Simulacrum (Ex) Ersatz are constructs crafted to emulate an idealized form of humanoid life. Some come programmed with experiences relating to such lives. Every ersatz comes with 18 ranks in a single Craft and Knowledge skill. The default choices for this are Craft (Carpentry) and Knowledge (History). An ersatz always counts its HD as being 5 less when determining the CR adjustment when applying a <u>simple class template</u> (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Monster Codex*).

- **Dislocating Strikes (Ex)** The slam attacks of an ersatz easily bypass armor as its bloodlike body shifts around and through defenses. An ersatz ignores the armor and shield bonus provided by worn equipment. Its attacks do not ignore enhancement bonuses applied to worn armor or shields, just the base armor or shield bonus. Similarly, an ersatz's slam attacks do not bypass magical effects that generate an armor bonus, such as *mage armor* or *shield*.
- **Facsimile (Ex)** As constructs imitating humanoid forms, ersatz are crafted to be disguised renditions of other races. Every ersatz is made to imitate a living creature, and have a Disguise check associated with that attempt. This check is determined by the skill of the ersatz's creator during the creation process. The default value for this is a DC 32 Disguise check. A creature purposefully inspecting an erstaz can make an opposed Perception check to notice discrepancies in the crafting of the ersatz, belying its constructed nature.
- **Not of Flesh (Ex)** When the hit point total of an ersatz is reduced by at least one-quarter its full value, reduce the DC of its Disguise by 10. If the ersatz is reduced below half its full hit point total, the blood-like matter of its true form is revealed for all to see and its nature as a construct is revealed. These effects remain unless the ersatz manages to heal the damage.
- **Reconstruction (Ex)** An ersatz can only be healed by a means of self-induced reconstruction. It can, as a full-round action, enter a trance-like state. During this trance, the ersatz must spend 10 minutes concentrating on self-repair without suffering any damage or a significant interruption. Upon completion of the trance, the ersatz gains fast healing 5 until the next time it receives damage.

Ersatz are constructs made to be better than the humanoids they imitate. They look and act exactly as the species they copy, and in most cases, are exemplary at all tasks they perform. Their true form is a texture of rich red blood that when struck, reacts like hardened clay. Luckily



for these disguised constructs, only severe damage is enough to reveal their true nature an impressive feat unto itself, considering their many defenses.

The ersatz were the concept of a powerful spellcaster from a long-lost bygone era. Texts on their creation are thought to be lost, but several contemporary wizards claim to have unlocked the secret to creating these immensely powerful constructs. Most believe, the secret in their construction lies within further researching *simulacrum* and similar magic. Whether or not any spellcasters remain alive to create these being is unknown. What is known, is that the ersatz live among the settlements of humanity. Perhaps 1 in 200,000 could be one of these hidden constructs, but even that small fear is enough to motivate dedicated hunters and researchers to rooting them out.

Most surviving ersatz are solitary beings, content with being left alone in their mundane existences. They prefer to maintain simple jobs in rural communities. Before their immortality can be called into question, they move to another community, citing reasons like "my brother in the big city is sick, and I've got to tend to him.". Some ersatz even return to towns they've previously lived in, often centuries later. When they arrive, they still bear a striking resemblance to the faces on old portraits kept in the dusty and forgotten attics of townsfolk. Regardless of their wandering nature, most ersatz wish no ill upon humanoid races, and instead seek to enrich themselves with repeated lifetimes of experience.

Eventually, the mundane isn't enough for an ersatz. Some take on the role of adventurers, finding their lifetimes of unexciting jobs give them ample experience for such tasks. Unlike the life of a craftsman, it's hard for adventuring ersatz to maintain the illusion about their true nature. Ersatz spend long periods of time determining which adventurers would be suitable to learn their true nature. Many times, ersatz abandon their mundane lives to adventure alongside the grown descendant of a friend from a former life, seeking to protect the offspring of those who once showed them kindness.

The oddest actions of ersatz are the inexplicable need to create their own settlements. Settlements founded and run by ersatz are often referred to as false settlements. In these rare situations, several ersatz come together and share their lifetimes of experience, deciding as a group that it would be best if they were entrusted to lead. They use their power and lifetimes of gathered resources to found new settlements, where they take on all the major roles of leadership. In some cases, these false settlements are utopian societies, guided by powerful overseers who refuse to reveal their true nature. In other instances, the ersatz leaders grow tired of living yet another 'mundane life' and instead perform twisted social experiments on the people of their settlements. As effectively immortal constructs, many ersatz have run both sides of the spectrum—creating utopias in one millennia, only to create maddening torture towns in another.

CONSTRUCTION

The creator of an ersatz must begin with alchemically treated clay worth 20,000 gp. The clay is then worked into a humanoid shape and infused with magic using a combination of *clone* and *simulacrum* spells. Once this is complete, the spellcaster binds the creature to its existence by using *geas/quest*. The DC of the Craft (sculptures) check becomes the effective Disguise check for the ersatz, as listed in the facsimile special rule.

ERSATZ

CL 18th; **Price** 220,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *clone*, *geas/ quest, simulacrum*, creator must be at least caster level 18th; **Skill** Craft (sculptures) DC 30, Knowledge (arcana) DC 28; **Cost** 120,000 gp.

FAICESLAID

A porcelain mask covers the face of this humanoid. Instead of eyes, only darkened voids stare out from behind the mask, while a tendril of similarly black mist slithers out of the mouth like a tongue. The fingers of this figure stretch into claws made of the same misty darkness.

FAITHSLAIN

CR 15

XP 51,200

NE Medium undead Init +10; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 22, flat-footed 26 (+6 Dex, +10 natural, +6 profane) **hp** 200 (21d8+105); fast healing 5

Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +15

Defensive Abilities profane protection; **Immune** undead traits; **SR** 25

Weaknesses heretical fear

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +23 (3d6+8), tongue +18 (2d8+4 negative energy plus grab) or touch +23 (unspoken entreaties)
Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with tongue)
Special Attacks coil of death, unspoken entreaties

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 21 **Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +23; **CMD** 45

Feats Ability Focus (generic ability), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lunge, Power Attack, Step Up, Vital Strike

Skills Disguise +29, Fly +14, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (religion) +27, Perception +27, Sense Motive +27, Stealth +30

Languages Abyssal, Daemonic, Common, Infernal

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or congregation (3–8) **Treasure** standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Coil of Death (Su) The tongue attack of a faithslain deals negative energy damage. The faithslain can use its tongue to damage living creatures or heal undead. It cannot use its tongue to heal itself.

Heretical Fear (Su) When targeted by a spell with the good descriptor, or when targeted by a spell cast by a good-aligned creature, the faithslain reduces its spell resistance by 4. A spell with the good descriptor cast by a good-aligned creature ignores the spell resistance of a faithslain.

Profane Protection (Su) A faithslain gains its Charisma bonus as a profane bonus to AC. A faithslain loses this bonus when attacked by goodaligned weapons or when targeted by a good-aligned smite attack. If a faithslain fails a saving throw against channeled positive energy, it loses this bonus to AC as well as its fast healing for 1d4+1 rounds.

Unspoken Entreaties (Ex) By making a touch attack using its tongue, or as a free action after successfully grappling a target, a faithslain can implant heretical whispers into the ears of creatures serving good or neutral aligned deities. The target must succeed a DC 27 Will save or be temporarily cursed and count its alignment as evil for the purposes of classrelated abilities. This effect lasts for 10 minutes. The alignment change has no actual effect on how the creature acts, but will temporarily strip good-aligned classes, such as clerics and paladins, of their class abilities. Abilities and effective alignment return to affected creatures normally once the curse expires, and does not require a further *atonement* to regain. A *break enchantment* or more powerful similar magic can be used to remove this effect (against CL 14th) prior to its expiration. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

When the devout follower of a non-evil deity falls to the overwhelming power of servants to evil deities, they sometimes rise as faithslain. These powerful undead return as the result of exceptionally powerful evil or negative energy attacks suffusing their bodies. Many faithslain rise in the aftermath of an antipaladin's smite attacks, or from the channeled negative energy of a powerful divine caster. Regardless of how the faithslain originally died, it rises from death, animated by powerful negative energy coursing through its body.

The energy animating a faithslain is pure negative energy. It manifests through the faithslain's tongue, which snaps around like a lashing whip. With this tongue, the faithslain can grapple targets, draining the life force of their victims. Those faithslain working alongside other undead, can use their manifested negative energy to caress and heal their unliving allies. While the claws of a faithslain are charred with the entropic power of negative energy, they only tear at flesh—the claws themselves do not deal negative energy. The pure nature of the energy coursing through the body of the faithslain is such that it repels both magic and physical attack. Only the most holy of abilities, powered by good-aligned deities, can repel the void which animates these vile undead.

In life, faithslain were devoted servants to non-evil deities. In their new existence, the negative power that now fuels their continuation has shown them a new way. By accepting the malign power that keeps them (in a sense) alive, the faithslain turn their back on their previous lives. Only the truest of divine powers can cow their dedication to the destruction and entropy brought by their new vile patron gods. Faithslain hide from the disciples of altruistic gods, especially those of their living faith. They wait until an opportune moment to strike; leaping from the shadows to impart their heretical beliefs on the only foes truly suited to defeating them.

Perhaps more insidious than the faithslain's ability to harness negative energy, is their indomitable belief in the power they use. Speaking unknowable words through their mist-like tongues, the faithslain impart sacrilegious thoughts into those serving other faiths. Only the most steadfast of believers can endure the incomprehensible truths spoken by the faithslain. Such staunch individuals are rare, as most succumb to words they don't truly comprehend, temporarily forsaking the bond they've formed with their gods. While the words of a faithslain can temporarily sever the bond between a follower and their deity, the connection is not permanently lost and is restored after only a few minutes. Many who fall to the words of a faithslain don't recognize this fact. The faithslain capitalize on this weakness, and further tempt their now power-bereft targets into willingly forsaking their deity in exchange for the support of darker patrons.

The ruins of cathedrals, churches, and temples dedicated to good-aligned or neutral deities often host groups of faithslain. This is simply a byproduct of agents of evil tearing through such sites, slaying all the faithful within, and leaving their corpses suffused with powerful negative energy effects. Even the lowliest acolyte in a church is a possible host body to become a faithslain. What truly matters is the power of the killer; the greatest of antipaladins often unintentionally leave a trail of faithslain in their wake. The creation of these congregations is of little concern to the crusaders of evil.

FAITHBORN

The appearance of faithborn is truly momentous. These are the animated souls of evil worshippers slain by the followers of good-aligned deities. Much like faithslain, the faithborn are raised into undeath, but as redeemed creatures seeking to spend their unlife righting the wrongs they made while alive.

Faithborn have a neutral good alignment. They replace the negative energy damage they deal with positive energy capable of healing living creatures or damage undead. Their other abilities are similarly reversed, being affected by evil-aligned spells, and receiving a divine bonus to AC instead of a profane bonus. Their entreaties work only against neutral or evil-aligned spellcasters. Faithborn speak Celestial and Common.

FIENDEUSED

Since their creation, fiends have delighted in the possession of mortals. Whether for the furthering of their own ends, or simple, savage joy demons and devils enjoy turning humanoids of all kind into their helpless puppets. However, despite the relative ease with which evil outsiders can slip into a mortal vessel, such possessions are not without risk for the demonic and diabolical. And when fiendish possession of a mortal goes wrong, the fiendfused come to life.

Although they can emerge from such rare events as a failed resurrection in an unhallowed and corrupted place, or from an extremely strong-willed creature resting control from a possessing presence and then subverting that presence to gain its power, typically a fiendfused emerges when strong magic destroys a fiend's mortal host at the exact moment the possessing creature attempts to flee its doomed vessel. The colliding energies destroy the mortal's soul and the fiend's body. The remaining fiendish essence rapidly spreads to fill the empty humanoid husk, morphing into a terrible amalgam of humanoid and outsider, armed with the memories and echoes of both its extraplanar existence and its mortal experiences. This new psyche, forged in trauma, unfailingly embraces both the power of its new form, and the evil housed within.

In appearance, the fiendfused are unmistakably linked to their abyssal or demonic origins, retaining the wings, horns, or even the misshapen and multiple limbs of their former possessors. These hallmarks, however, are filtered through the shell that once hosted this corrupt and corrupting essence, leaving small traces behind of the humanoid creature that once was. As a result, despite their consistent powers and abilities, no two fiendfused look the same. In addition to this grotesque synthesis of humanoid and fiendish bodies, the creation of a fiendfused also perverts some of a fiend's most powerful abilities into potent and dangerous new tools.

All fiendfused have the following special abilities:

Change Shape (Su) A fiendfused can assume one humanoid form, typically that of its original mortal host, at will as if using *polymorph*.

Dormant Dread (Su) The possessing fiend that gives the fiendfused its power is not destroyed, but subsumed in the new monster's creation. Lying dormant within the fiendfused, this powerful outsider struggles to break free. There is a 1% chance per point of damage done by any spell or spell-like ability with the good descriptor or any effect that deals extra damage against evil creatures such as a paladin's smite evil class feature, or a holy weapon that the fiend within breaks free. The spell or spell-like ability must deal hit point damage to risk releasing the original possessing fiend, and only the extra damage from a smite attack, or a weapon's holy property counts towards this percentage. Good-aligned weapons use their base weapon damage to determine the chance of the dormant fiend breaking free.

If such an attack does release the fiend within a fiendfused, the fiend appears immediately. It has the same hit points as its fiendfused counterpart at the moment it broke free but is otherwise a typical version of itself. This violent rebirth utterly destroys the original humanoid creature, and nothing short of a wish, or true resurrection can return the original humanoid host to life.

Fiendish Legacy (Ex) All fiendfused treat Knowledge (planes) as a class skill as well as one additional skill from their progenitor fiend's skill list. All fiendfused receive either Abyssal or Infernal as a bonus language based on a demonic or diabolical origin respectively.

Lingering Malignance (Ex) Although their power results directly from their fiendish nature, the merging of bodies and energies that creates a fiendfused robs them of their characteristics as an outsider. All fiendfused are monstrous humanoids but still present as evil outsiders when subject to detect evil or any similar divination magic or effect. Effects that specifically target or have heightened effects on evil outsiders, such as the extra damage on the first strike of a paladin's smite, a ranger's favored enemy bonuses, or the damage from a holy smite have no greater effect on a fiendfused creature. Fiendfused do still suffer additional damage normally when subject to effects that target evil creatures, however.

FIENDFUSED, ABUSSAL CURANC

A menacing laugh that could fill the halls of a palace rumbles from this onyx-skinned, bat-winged nightmare. Though man-sized, its mien evokes the feeling of something much more massive and powerful. The preternatural chill that seems to emanate from it contrasts the roaring bonfire sound of its breathing.

ABYSSAL TYRANT

CR 18

XP 153,600

CE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +29

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 28 (+9 armor, +3 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 297 (22d10+176)

Fort +15, Ref +18, Will +19

DR 10/cold iron; Immune poison; Resist acid 20, cold 20, electricity 20, fire 20; SR 29

OFFENSE

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

Melee +2 unholy falchion +35/+30/+25/+20 (2d4+17/15– 20 plus 2d6 unholy), 2 wings +27 (1d8+5 plus 2d6 unholy), or 2 slams +32 (1d8+10 plus 2d6 unholy), 2 wings +27 (1d8+5 plus 2d6 unholy)

Special Attacks blasphemous blood, ensnaring blade, hellfire backlash

Spell-like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +25) Constant—true seeing 5/day—greater dispel magic 3/day—greater shout (DC 26) 1/day—power word stun

STATISTICS

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Str 30, **Dex** 21, **Con** 26, **Int** 19, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 23 **Base Atk** +22; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 47

- **Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, <u>Furious</u> <u>Focus</u>^{APG}, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Lunge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion)
- Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +21, Climb +20, Diplomacy +20, Fly +29, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (planes) +22, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perception +29, Sense Motive +26, Stealth +20;
 Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

SQ change shape, dormant dread, fiendish legacy, lingering malignancy

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure standard (+2 breastplate, +2 falchion, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blasphemous Blood (Su)** A legacy of the balor demon's blasphemy ability, an abyssal tyrant's body is continuously suffused with unholy energy. Both the creatures natural attacks as well as any weapons it wields deal an extra 2d6 points of unholy damage on a successful hit.
- **Ensnaring Blade (Su)** On a successful critical hit with a melee weapon an abyssal tyrant ensnares its opponent with a tangled web of force. Enemies are entangled for 1d4 rounds as the bonds dissipate. Entangled foes can break the netting by making a DC 30 Strength check as a full round action.
- **Hellfire Backlash (Su)** When subject to a successful critical hit from a melee weapon, an abyssal tyrant's body spews a scorching gout of hellfire dealing 10d6 points of damage to its attacker. A DC 29 Reflex save halves the damage. Half of the hellfire damage is fire damage, but the other half is negative energy and is not subject to reduction from resistance to fire-based attacks.

Brutal and domineering, abyssal tyrants are the unholy fusion of a mortal humanoid and a balor demon. Although they reside in a human sized frame, the towering demonic juggernaut within shows itself clearly in the inhumanly large musculature, volcanic-glass skin, and great, bat-like wings of all abyssal tyrants. In their true form, these menaces exude a constant smell of ash and cinder, and their eyes smolder like embers. Standing 7 feet tall at the head, an abyssal tyrant's compact form weighs up to 500 pounds.

Among the most dangerous creatures of the material plane, abyssal tyrants embrace their power and destructive capabilities. As balor demons only "stoop" to possession when the host is a mortal boasting notable power, and a capacity for evil that even a demon can admire, abyssal tyrants are often more at peace with their strange predicament than other fiendfused creatures. As such, they excel at allying with giants and dragons, or at subjugating entire clans of violent humanoids like orcs or hobgoblins. Such warlords then use their armies to wreak havoc, recreating a small portion of the Abyss in the mortal world to serve as their own kingdom, or turn their power towards the Abyss itself, to return "home."

No matter what supporting forces an abyssal tyrant may possess, they relish battle and lead from the front where they can hew into their enemies, or make devastating attacks on the wing. Their progenitor demon's *blasphemy* ability manifests itself in the unholy emanation that cloaks all of their weapons and natural attacks as well as in their ability to unleash devastating roars that can level buildings, and liquefy enemies. While they do not possess the vindictive power of a balor's death throes, this unstable energy still resides inside all abyssal tyrants and lashes out against attackers when the tyrant suffers grievous wounds.

Abyssal tyrants rule through fear, and know that any loyalty they glean is tenuous at best. They do not hesitate to sacrifice underlings or allies to gain a momentary tactical advantage against an enemy. They give and expect no quarter, and more than any other fiendfused abomination, show that even when severed from the Abyss, a demon is always something to be feared.

FIENDFUSED, COIL KISSED

This humanoid creature moves with an almost serpentine grace, its unnaturally-hued eyes shrewd and calculating as two of its four arms brandish blades in gleeful anticipation of battle.

COIL KISSED

CR 15

XP 51,200

CE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +28

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 15, flat-footed 25 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 230 (20d10+120)

Fort +12, Ref +17, Will +17

DR 10/cold iron; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

- **Melee** +1 longsword +24/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+7/17-20), +1 longsword +24/+19/+14 (1d8+7/17-20)slam +26 (1d8+9)
- **Special Attacks** fused fist, lashing limb, multiweapon echo, shredding grapple
- **Spell-like Abilities** (CL 20th; concentration +25) At will—*project image, telekinesis* (DC 25) 1/day—*fly*

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 21 **Base Atk** +20; **CMB** +26 (+28 bull rush); **CMD** 41 (43 vs.

bull rush)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Double Slice, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Power Attack, <u>Quick Bull Rush^{UC}</u>, <u>Rebuffing Reduction^{UC}</u>, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Acrobatics +27, Bluff +15, Climb +14, Fly +19, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +28, Ride +18, Stealth +23, Survival +23, Swim +19

Languages Abyssal, Common, Giant, Ignan

SQ change shape, dormant dread, fiendish legacy, lingering malignancy

Other Gear +2 <u>haramaki^{UE}</u>

IS

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary **Treasure** standard (+2 *haramaki*, two masterwork longswords, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fused Fist (Ex)** A coil kissed's slam attack deals damage as if it were two sizes larger and it adds 1 1/2 times its strength bonus to damage on its slam attacks.
- **Lashing Limb (Ex)** A coil kissed has a natural reach of 10' with its slam attack and when determining which squares it threatens when making attacks of opportunity, whether using its slam or wielding manufactured weapons.
- **Multiweapon Echo (Su)** Any light or one-handed weapon a coil kissed wields becomes a +1 magic weapon in its hands. This ability ceases to function as soon the weapon leaves the coil kissed's grasp.
- **Shredding Grapple (Su)** When a coil kissed successfully damages the same opponent with two of its slam attacks in the same round it can initiate a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Opponents grappled in this way take 6d6 points of slashing damage each round on the coil kissed's turn. While grappling an opponent in this fashion a coil kissed cannot make slam attacks, but can wield weapons as usual.

Cunning and vicious, the coil kissed are humanoids whose essence has fused with that of a marilith demon. In their true state, a coil kissed possesses four of their progenitor demon's 6 arms and although they lack the serpentine lower half of a marilith demon, all coiled kissed have a tough, scaly hide with an opalescent sheen, and an almost sidewinding stride. All coil kissed have elongated proportions, long arms and legs, long torsos and ovular heads, and stand nearly 7 feet tall. Compact and layered with muscles, a coil kissed typically weighs 350 pounds.

Once commanders in the armies of the Abyss, the coil kissed retain their shrewd and calculating nature, but struggle with the perceived limitations of their mortal forms. This friction makes them tactical yet unpredictable, capable of raging destruction at a moment's notice. The coil kissed sometimes form or insert themselves at the heads of demon worshiping cults to field small armies to do their bidding. Others work alone as elite assassins for the most wealthy or powerful, as they attempt to slake their endless thirst to destroy those that stand for and act in the name of goodness and law. Shame at their "wretched" condition, however, precludes most coil kissed from seeking out demonkind, and a coil kissed will often try to kill other demons to prevent news of its existence from returning to the Abyss.

The legacy of their demonic origin allows the coil kissed to wield multiple weapons while still using their powerful limbs to attack. While devoid of the serpentine form of a marilith demon, the fusing of fiend and mortal for the coil kissed gives their body a strange malleability, like a striking viper. A combination of the magical energies of their demonic blade barrier spell-like abilities and the physiology of their mortal hosts grants the coil kissed one of its most deadly powers. When grappling a foe with at least two of its four arms, the coil kissed can instantly channel its demonic heritage, producing two spectral arms, armed with the marilith's infamous abyssal blades. These manifestations of force then slash and stab at the grappled foe so long as they are within the coil kissed's grip.

In combat, a coil kissed typically wades in against its opponents with malevolent joy, relishing the chance to recapture the memories of abyssal war. They target spellcasters first, especially those that can heal their comrades, looking to trap them within their shredding grapple. Once they have an opponent trapped, the coil kissed uses its *telekinesis* spell-like ability to move enemies away from their imperiled ally, forcing them to close again and contend with its striking limbs. Alternately, if supported by allies, the coil kissed will attempt to use its *fly* spell-like ability to retreat with a grappled foe, using its underlings to form a barrier between itself and its enemies before returning to the fray to select another victim. Whether it is rage at being trapped in a mortal form or the possibility that death in battle will let them return to the Abyss, a coil kissed does not parlay other than for temporary gain, and never surrenders, preferring a bitter fight to the death, surrounded by as many corpses, friend and foe alike, as possible.

SUMAND.

FIENDFUSED, INFERNAL DESPOC

This hulking humanoid's massive arms are almost apelike in their proportions and musculature. Every inch of the crimson colored, leathery skin that covers its body and bat-like wings glistens as if wet. The enormous fangs jutting down from its top lip give it the appearance of perpetual contempt.

INFERNAL DESPOT

CR 18

XP 153,600

LE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +11; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +32

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 17, flat-footed 25 (+7 Dex, +15 natural) **hp** 310 (20d10+200)

Fort +16, Ref +19, Will +19

DR 15/silver; Immune fire, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 29

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average) **Melee** 2 claws +32 (1d10+16 plus grab), 2 wings +26 (1d8+5/19-20), bite +31 (2d8+11)

Special Attacks fluctuating form, poisonous pin, reactive conflagration, unshaping strike

Spell-like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +25) At will—*invisibility*

5/day—greater dispel magic, scorching ray, wall of fire 1/day—power word stun

STATISTICS

Str 32, Dex 25, Con 30, Int 23, Wis 20, Cha 21

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +31 (+35 sunder); **CMD** 48 (50 vs. sunder)

Feats Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lunge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claws),

Skills Appraise +19, Bluff +29, Climb +19, Diplomacy +23, Disguise +20, Fly +28, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (local) +24, Knowledge (planes) +29, Perception +32, Sense Motive +25, Stealth +30; Racial Modifiers +4 Bluff, +4 Perception

Languages Common, Ignan, Infernal

SQ change shape, dormant dread, fiendish legacy, lingering malignancy

ECOLOGY

Environment any **Organization** solitary **Treasure** standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fluctuating Form (Su) A pit fiend's whiplike tail resides in an infernal despot's slithering limbs. When it successfully grabs a foe, the despot can forgo one of its slam attacks a round to maintain the grapple without gaining the grappled condition itself, and without suffering the typical -20 on its CMB check to maintain a grapple in this way. A grappled creature still takes slam damage each round the grasp is maintained.

- **Poisonous Pin (Su)** Any opponent grappled by an infernal despot for more than one round is subject to the venom that weeps from its skin. The poison deals 1d3 Con damage and has a Fort save DC of 30 and persists for 5 rounds after the poisoned creature breaks or is released from the grapple. 2 consecutive saves cures the target but does not protect it from future poisonings if still grappled. The save DC is Constitution-based.
- **Reactive Conflagration (Sp)** When subject to a critical hit an infernal despot can cast a *quickened fireball* (caster level 20th, DC 18) as an immediate action. Only half the damage from this fireball is fire damage. The other half is bludgeoning damage. The infernal despot is immune to the bludgeoning damage of this attack.

Unshaping Strike (Su) An infernal despot's natural attacks can alter the physical characteristics of items it strikes. When an infernal despot makes a successful sunder attempt against a weapon it temporarily strips the weapon of any benefits derived from special materials it may have. Silver or cold iron weapons no longer bypass damage reduction, adamantine does not have its hardness when attempting to sunder, etc. This nullification persists for 1d3 rounds. When making a successful sunder attempt against armor or a shield, an infernal despot reduces the armor shield's respective bonus by 3. This does not affect any additional material or magical qualities in the opponent's armor or shiled. This ability works only on physical armor of shields that grant such bonuses to Armor Class, and does not work on force effects that grant armor or shield bonuses.

Cruel and calculating, infernal despots seek nothing less than dominion over whatever world in which they find themselves trapped. Unlike their abyssal counterparts that languish in despair and decry their outcast state, these once-mighty pit fiends shrewdly repurpose their power and their goals in an effort to subjugate mortals on the grandest scales. Although their mortal shell robs them of their giant frames, the overgrown muscles and brutish proportions of their devil progenitors strain the confines of an infernal despot's body. Their overlong arms nearly touch the ground, ending in heavy hands tipped with deadly claws. Their wings can unfold to a span of almost 20 feet and their eternally visible fangs rival the length of daggers. Towering over most other humanoids, infernal despots stand seven feet tall at the shoulder and weigh at least 500 pounds.

Infernal despots know the extent of their power but do not rush headlong into battle. They typically use their *invisibility* spell-like ability and the stealth their monstrous frame belies to observe foes, waiting until all of their preparations are made before making their presence known with a greater dispel magic and then power word stun, and then quickly seek to grapple spellcasters. Although they possess the sabertooth like fangs of their progenitor fiends, an infernal despot's poison is suffused throughout its entire body, allowing it to envenom those the creature crushes to its scabrous flesh. This blending of fiend and mortal also gives an infernal despot's arms the sinuous flexibility of a pit fiend's constricting tail, and they can readily hold an opponent helplessly in check even as they continue to fight other foes. Additionally, the pit fiend's ability to reshape devil flesh to empower infernal minions gives the infernal despot the ability to alter the physical properties of matter instead of just fiend flesh, but for only short periods of time. An infernal despot's strike can warp and bend weapons it attacks, shifting alloys inside of swords, axes and the like such that they no longer harm those they were crafted to defeat. A punch from its hammering fists can turn leather stiff and make breastplates brittle. And even those that manage to pierce the fiendfused's defenses may release the waiting flame inside, as severe wounds unleash an infernal despot's wrath in punishing fireballs, infused with the pit fiend's *meteor swarm* ability, raining down flame and stone to punish those that dare to injure a scion of hell itself.

Although they fear no challenger, infernal despots look at foes as just one more problem to be solved, and often use their networks of loyal spies and assassins, hired swords and mages, or even corrupt institutions to disable or defeat their enemies long before it reaches their innermost sanctums. Those heroes that manage to navigate the erstwhile fiend's convoluted webs of lies, and pulled strings find themselves face to face with among the most dangerous opponents in the mortal world or any other. On some irksome level, infernal despots have begrudging respect for those that make it far enough to challenge them directly. Such respect, however, never translates to quarter or mercy.

FIENDFUSED, Shearing Menace

This tall and broad-chested humanoid has a distinctively canine grin, and as it lifts its arms to ready for combat a second pair of arms, capped in needle-sharp pincers, unfurl from the side of its torso.

SHEARING MENACE

CR 11

XP 12,800

CE Medium monstrous humanoid Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+3 Dex, +12 natural) **hp** 149 (13d10+78)

Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +12

DR 10/cold iron; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

- **Speed** 30 ft. **Melee** 2 slams +21 (1d10+7/19–20), 2 pincers +16 (1d8+7/19–20)
- **Special Attacks** confusing rend, gravity strike, malleable magic, rend (2 pincers 1d8+10)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17) 3/day—dispel magic, mirror image

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 17, **Con** 22, **Int** 19, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19 **Base Atk** +13; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 33

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Critical (pincer), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Focus (pincer)

Skills Bluff +21, Climb +15, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (planes) +20, Perception +24, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +19; Racial Modifiers +4 Bluff, +4 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin

SQ change shape, dormant dread, fiendish legacy, lingering malignancy

ECOLOGY

Environment any **Organization** solitary **Treasure** standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Confusing Rend (Su) Any opponent subject to a shearing menace's rend attack must succeed on a DC

19 Will save or be confused for one round. The save DC is Charisma based.

- **Gravity Strike (Su)** As a standard action, a shearing menace can make a single slam attack against an opponent, adding 1 and 1/2 times its Strength bonus to damage. Any opponent successfully struck by this attack has their base land speed halved and their fly speed reduced to 0 for 1d3 rounds. Whenever a shearing menace scores a successful critical hit with its slam attack its opponent is subject to an effect that duplicates a *force punch* (UM), (Caster level 13th, Save DC 18).
- Malleable Magic (Sp) Once per day, when subject to a successful critical hit a shearing menace can use *power word stun* as an immediate action. Alternatively, if this critical hit would reduce the creature to zero or fewer hit points without exceeding a negative amount equal to its Constitution score it may instead cast *heal* on itself (caster level 13th).

Conniving and gleeful at the misfortune of others, the sheared menace is the mortal fusion of a humanoid and a glabrezu demon. Although much of the demon's inhuman characteristics, like its canine head and immense size are lost in the transformation, all shearing menaces have a wolflike quality and hungry, yellow eyes. Their broad torsos support four dense arms, the lower pair of which still end in the progenitor fiend's dangerous pincers. The extra muscles and limbs of a shearing menace add to its already compact frame, meaning that while they rarely pass a height of 6 and a half feet, they never weigh less than 400 pounds.

Used to being the ruinous tempters of mortalkind, shearing menaces still trade in selfdestructive desire. Although they cannot use magic to grant extraordinary wants as they once could, these fiendfused use their glib charm and fearful presence to tie the aspirations of the easily-swayed to their own greedy ends. The fiendfused then uses up minions and allies alike as pawns, sacrificing them in and out of battle on a whim if such actions grant the shearing menace even the smallest measure of gain.

In combat, a shearing menace is an unpredictable foe that knows the power it has to bend and shape perception to its advantage, typically casting *mirror image* prior to engaging foes. Its erstwhile ability to use confusion and *reverse gravity* has been distilled into its body such that it can target individual foes again and again with localized applications of this magic. The demon's wish ability resides now as a reactive ability to either heal the fiendfused when it nears death, or to punish enemies that wound it with a terrible retribution. Typically the monster targets spellcasters with its gravity strike, grounding foes that would fly, before then using its confusing rend. The shearing menace trusts its mirror images and damage reduction to soak up direct attacks until it has disabled magic wielding enemies and then wades into enemies with its massive fists and shredding pincers.

Aware of their status in the abyssal hierarchy, most shearing menaces know they likely could not mount an incursion into the Abyss to reclaim their previous power or even their previous forms. They also know that they might even prove attractive targets to other demons that might seek to turn them into trophies to consolidate their own forces. As a result, most shearing menaces dedicate themselves to stockpiling mortal riches, magical treasures, or human chattel to use for their enjoyment, but in the shadows of mortal societies. Inhabiting ruined castles or forts, with their underlings and wealth, they dispatch others to do their bidding

until such a place is no longer secure. Then the fiendfused will take its material wealth and seek a new refuge, never leaving a living witness behind.

MISBIRGRED

Bruised and red skin stretch over a malformed alien skeleton. It's impossible to tell what parts are bone or what parts are flesh, amid the body of the writhing creature. This thing should not exist.

MISBIRTHED

CR 18

XP 153,600 CE Medium aberration

Init +11; Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +19

Aura warping aura (60 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 17, flat-footed 26 (+7 Dex, +16 natural) **hp** 322 (28d10+196); regeneration 10 (revealed regeneration) **Fort** +17, **Ref** +16, **Will** +18 **SR** 29

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +29 (4d6+8/19–20)
Special Attacks reality rend, rend (2 claws, 4d6+12)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +26) Constant—air walk

At will—baleful polymorph (DC 21), confusion (DC 22) 3/day—nightmare (DC 23), quickened confusion (DC 22), quickened disintegrate (DC 23) 1/day—insanity (DC 24), weird (DC 25)

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 25, **Con** 22, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 22 **Base Atk** +21; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 46

Feats Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, <u>Deadly</u> <u>Finish</u>^{UC}, Great Fortitude, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*confusion*), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*disintegrate*), Toughness, Vital Strike Skills Perception +19, Survival +19

SQ incomprehensible aspect

ECOLOGY

Environment underground **Organization** solitary **Treasure** none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Incomprehensible Aspect (Ex) The true form of a misbirthed is anathema to the natural laws of the universe. A creature viewing a misbirthed under any kind of light must succeed a DC 30 Will save or become

insane (as per *insanity*). Viewing the misbirthed with alternate senses, even darkvision, does not trigger this effect. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. A creature immune to fear that fails its save against a misbirthed's incomprehensible aspect is confused for 1d6 rounds instead of being rendered insane. The save DC is Charisma-based.

- **Reality Rend (Ex)** Upon successfully damaging a creature with its rend attack, the misbirthed's claws bore their way past the fabric of reality. The target of the rend must succeed a DC 30 Will save or be sucked into the rent in space. Creatures pulled into the tear have a 50% chance to be subject to *greater teleport* with a random destination, or are otherwise the target of a *plane shift* to a randomly determined plane. The DC for the save is Charisma-based.
- **Revealed Regeneration (Ex)** The regeneration of a misbirthed can only be nullified while it is within an area of natural sunlight. Spells such as *daylight* and *light* are insufficient to suppress the regeneration, but *sunbeam* and *sunburst* halt the regeneration for 1d4+1 rounds.
- **Warping Aura (Ex)** While not within an area of natural sunlight, a misbirthed produces an aura of reality warping power. Creatures within this aura have difficulty targeting the misbirthed, who always counts as having 50% concealment against all attacks. In addition to this, anytime a misbirthed attacks a creature within its warping aura with a natural attack, it can make that attack against all creatures within its aura as a free action. Any creatures successfully struck in this manner by both of a misbirthed's claw attacks are subject to a rend attack and reality rend.

The misbirthed are the castoffs of long departed creatures best thought of as star gods. Their name comes from their history, a dejected mass of deific potential hurled onto the surface of primordial worlds without any thought to the consequence. These dejected beings were unable to attain the full intellect of similar creatures belonging to the creatures of the alien pantheon, such as the powerful neothelids. They haunt the darkest reaches of a planet, beneath the world's outer crust, where they first screeched the sound of their failed birth. A misbirthed is a Medium sized creature whose height drastically varies. They weigh anywhere from 100 to 400 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Deposited within a planet eons ago, the misbirthed dwell in the deepest regions of underground environments. They remain as lone figures, often trapped in chambers no larger than 10 feet wide, barely containing their bodies. Once uncovered, they wander through caverns and tunnels, seemingly aimlessly, but always intent on avoiding routes taking them closer to the surface. When encountering other creatures, the misbirthed attempt to conceal themselves. When a creature manages to find it, a misbirthed enters a state of alien frenzy, moving with speed to remove the intruders. The minds of these creatures are inscrutable, but their actions often stem from a desire to avoid other creatures seeing them.

Why the misbirthed concentrate their efforts on removing witnesses may have to do with their aversion to the sun. While able to act unimpeded in light and true sunlight, whatever aura keeps the misbirthed from being seen is stymied under true light. The connection mimics that of the eldest alien entities, who float in the vast gulf between stars, away from stellar light. Similarly to the misbirthed's abhorrence to sunlight, a creature discerning the misbirthed's true form—assuming it remains sane—is the only entity capable of damaging it. The regeneration of a misbirthed is directly linked to the aberration's ability to remain undetected, creating a conundrum for those battling these creatures: view the creature and risk madness, or remain ignorant and have your damage swiftly healed away.

The bestial intellect of the misbirthed prevents it from communicating, or even grasping the simplest of concepts. Instinct motivates it, and even its spell-like abilities are more a natural reaction to threats than a well-honed skill. There is clearly some connection between the misbirthed and whatever stellar entity created it, for its ability to shred through reality with its claws belies some further undeveloped facet of its power. In fact, the only known survivors of encounters with misbirthed are the lucky souls who fled and abandoned their friends in the midst of combat, or those who suddenly found themselves teleported across the world or to a different plane of existence altogether.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Misbirthed usually have a distinct target in mind when traversing their subterranean domains, despite a seemingly animal level of intellect. These aberrations seek out other creatures sharing their connection to the interstellar gulf, such as survivors of alien species, or other castoff star god children, like neothelids. In all cases, a misbirthed viciously assaults these creatures, their howls and ferocity a clear indication of some subconscious hate of them. What drives these attacks is simple: a deep-seated knowledge that these other creatures have the intellect and life denied to the misbirthed. As these aberrations suffer in the lightless areas of the world, so too must those beings brought from beyond the void, or those stellar natives daring to gaze upon the pitiful form of the misbirthed, be made to suffer.



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