Rite Publishing Presents

# The Hero's Bastard







By Steven D. Russell



# Rite Publishing Presents: The Hero's Rastard

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**Dedication:** To Miranda Russell: she who took both my name and my heart.

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#### Morekareth **CR12** (19,200 xp)

(The Hero's Bastard) (LE) Large Magical Beast Init +2; Senses Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6 Aura 120' degeneration Languages Common

## DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 25 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural) hp 175 (10d10+120) Fort +19 Ref +9 Will +1 DR 15/silver;

## OFFENSE

Spd 60 ft. (12 squares), Climb Speed 30 ft. **Melee** 2 slams +25 melee (1d6+15) **Space:** 10 ft./10 ft. Special Atk Summon foe, way of triumph

# TACTICS

Before Combat Morekareth always seek to close with their opponents, announcing their intentions and challenging their opponents openly. They never attack with surprise. They often wait until the first blow is landed before they attack, so they know how long they can toy with their opponent.

During Combat Pugilists of the first order, they find the use of weapons offensive and seek always to sunder these items (Greater Sunder+30). Morekareth seek to knock melee opponents down and away from themselves while using their Summon Foe ability to bring those who attack from range within their reach and that of their Degeneration ability.

Morale Fearless, Morekareth will not even flee from an obviously more powerful foe or even when there is no chance for success.

#### STATISTICS

# Str 40, Dex 14, Con 34, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14 BAB +10, CMB +26; CMD 38

Feats Ability Focus (summon foe), Greater Sunder, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skills Acrobatics +10 (jumping +22), Climb +36, SQ -

## **ECOLOGY**

Environment: Any land **Organization:** Solitary **Treasure:** Standard Advancement: 11-15 HD (Large); 16-30 HD (Huge) Level Adjustment: -



You see a large, gorilla-like beast moving alternately on two legs and then four racing toward you. It has large black horns and its massive fists hang well below its knees. Its horns turn down and curve inward toward inhuman eyes. Its vast coat of dark fur is matted into long clumps, which hang down like tendrils of darkness; its arms and fists seem to be covered in some kind of dark, bony protrusions.

# DESCRIPTION

"My father was known as a great hero. One evening he saved a slave girl, who offered him repayment with her flesh; though strong in body, he was weak in spirit and this temptation caused him to forsake his wife and take the woman, my mother to his bed. In the morning my mother was gone and my father, the hero, thought no more of it. Seven suns, later my father was returning home to retire and leave the adventurer's life behind him; we confronted each other upon the last bridge of his journey. I told him I was his son, he called me a "beast of darkness" and I challenged him to ritual unarmed combat. I allowed him the first blow. It did little to harm me and then I bewildered him with my answering blows. Then he forsook honor and drew a weapon; this did not avail him for I shattered it and struck him anew. Then my father tried to flee the battle; but this did not avail him, as I killed him, and ate the flesh of my flesh, and drank the blood of my blood." Excerpt from Age of *Rebirth* by Goddard of Gatesage

You know nothing of the morekareth, only I, Kuoglus, a morekareth out of Eched'Na by Enkedu, can speak truth in this matter. The line of my blood are quadrupeds and, at the same time, bipeds that stand about 6 feet tall and about 4 feet wide. We weigh roughly 4,000 of your pound stones, our bones, which jut out of our skin at the knuckles, course with the power of both Eched'Na and the hero who was our father. Many morekareth have begun carving symbols, sigils, runes and glyphs into these bone plates. I, myself, bear the symbol of "blood" and "power" on my left and right fists respectively.

We morekareth are born of an aggressive line, but we fight with honor; a morekareth will die before he will allow the dishonor of a hollow victory to bring impurity to his blood. We have no tolerance for those who do not accept and tolerate our worldview and will attack at the slightest dishonor or hint of insult. Saving face is of the highest importance to any morekareth and we will spend a year and a day seeking vengeance against any slight.

One day we morekareth will prove our worth against the evil that all other races pose, for it is the flawed nature of creation and the Worldsmith that brought corruption and destruction to the world. All evil is the cause of the other races and one day the morekareth will prove that they are superior, even to the dragon.

My father was the champion that won the Battle of the Risingstar, before the time of the fallen kingdoms. I have been the champion at the Breaking of Forstor Nagar, the City of Grinding Ice; the morekareth have changed the course of the future. Today, because of the morekareth, no ruler follows the old forms, putting forth a champion. A morekareth is a difficult challenge, but finding a champion brave enough to fight us is the true challenge.

### SPECIAL ABILITES

Degeneration (Su): Any living, non-plant creature within 120' of a morekareth must make a successful fortitude save (DC 27) or their regeneration and fast healing special qualities are suppressed for 24 hours; anyone attempting to use healing spells, spell-like abilities or magical items within the area of effect must make a successful caster level check (DC 27) or the healing spell fails. Also any creature that failed its save suffers 1 point of negative energy damage per round within the area of effect; a morekareth regenerates an amount equal to the damage dealt (only silver and electricity deal lethal damage). If at his maximum hit points he gains them as temporary hit points.



Study of the arm bones of a Morekareth

These temporary hit points last 24 hours and a morekareth can only gain a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to twice its normal hit point total. Morekareth can suppress this ability and are also immune to degeneration. The save and caster level check DC are Constitution based.

Flesh of My Flesh (Su): When a morekareth slays a member of its bloodline, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force; this takes one hour. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of raising or resurrection, which requires part of the corpse. A morekareth advances in Hit Dice by consuming a blood relative's corpse in this fashion. It gains 1 Hit Die per devoured corpse. Once it has gained six Hit Dice its Size Increases to Huge (along with all appropriate modifiers, see Auld Morekareth).

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Summon Foe (Su): Once per round, as an immediate action, a morekareth can instantly transport a single foe (within 800 ft., no weight limit, single creature only) to any open square within its threatened area, where the creature's appearance provokes an attack of opportunity. The effect brings along attended objects, as long as their weight does not exceed the creature's maximum load. The target foe receives a Will save (DC 24) to negate. The save DC is Charisma-based with a + 4Racial bonus.

Way of Triumph (Ex): If a morekareth hits with both slam attacks, the target suffers greatly from this devastating combination of blows. The target must make a Fort save (DC 30) and a Ref save (DC 30). A defender who fails the Fort save is stunned for 1d2 rounds. A defender who fails the Ref save is also knocked prone. The Save DC is Strength based.

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A prone attacker has a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls and cannot use a ranged weapon (except for a crossbow). A prone defender gains a +4 bonus to Armor Class against ranged attacks, but takes a -4 penalty to AC against melee attacks.

Standing up is a move-equivalent action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

Skills: Morekareth have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

# LORE:

(Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge Arcana) Common (DC 12): This creature is called a morekareth; it is an extremely aggressive and dangerous monster that believes in its innate superiority.

Uncommon (DC 17): Morekareth translates to "The Hero's Bastard" in the Fallen Tongue; read Excerpt from Age of Rebirth.

Rare (DC 32): Morekareth never fight amongst each other and being near one has a vile effect upon a creature's life-force and vitality. They also deal devastating blows in dangerous combinations. Their physical attacks can destroy both weapon and warrior, but their most surprising power seems to be the ability to summon their enemy to within range of their attacks.

Obscure (DC 37): Morekareth are creatures born of impurity, silver weapons are extremely potent against them. They gain even greater strength consuming the corpses of their blood relatives. Enchanters often use morekareth as charmed servants.

*Epic (DC 42):* Killing a morekareth in an ignoble fashion can bring about the arrival of the creature's matriarch, Eched'Na, "Mother of all Monsters."

# **DESIGNER'S NOTES**

Heroes always win, that is the reward for nobility of spirit. Yet what happens when that nobility is corrupted, when, just for a single moment, he stops being a hero and becomes a mundane mortal. Morekareth, the Hero's



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Study of the flesh and hair covered arm of a Morekareth with a runic engraving.

Bastard: this idea came when I thought about corrupting heroism's ability to overcome all. I coupled this idea with the notion that mortal folly often results in greater evils than we ever expect.

Beyond the philosophical reasons for the morekareth, there is the mechanical side, players will begin to fear being hit by both of the morekareth's slam attacks in the same manner that players fear a troll's rend ability, and with the judicious use of power attack you can create a greater level of tension in the game. It also cuts out the underpinnings of knowing if you get really hurt, you can be healed; now you have a choice, win or flee again adding more tension.

Flee? Wait, the careful tactics players rely on have been upset! The squishy wizard just got summoned and is down! If we run one of us will be summoned back? This is not fight or flight, this is winning or dying!

# Auld Morekareth CR 14 (38,400 xp)

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(Bastard of the Elder Hero) (LE) Huge Magical Beast Init +1; Senses Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9 Aura 120' degeneration (DC 32) Languages Common

# DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 9, flat-footed 26 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +18 natural), hp 312 (16d10+224) Fort +24 Ref +11 Will +5 DR 15/silver;

### **OFFENSE**

Spd 60 ft. (12 squares), Climb Speed 30 ft. **Melee** 2 slams +33 melee (1d8+19) Space: 15 ft./15 ft. Special Atk Summon Foe (DC22), way of triumph (DC 37)

# TACTICS

Before Combat Auld Morekareth always taunt their opponents, then summon foe at the opening of battle, so that he cannot call on allies for immediate aid; though they still never attack with surprise. However, they do not toy with their opponent. They are known to keep captives so that if preparing for battle they will use them to gain the maximum number of temporary hit points possible. During Combat Pugilists of a higher order, they still seek to sunder the crutch of weapons (Greater Sunder+30), yet they often power attack (-10 to attack/+10 damage) seeking to eliminate spellcasters who could charm them. Morale Fearless, morekareth will not even flee from an obviously more powerful foe or even when there is no chance for success.

# **STATISTICS**

Str 48, Dex 12, Con 38, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14 BAB +16, CMB +37; CMD 48 Feats Ability Focus (summon foe), Greater Sunder, Improved Iron Will, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack. Skills Acrobatics +12 (jumping +24), Climb +46, **SO** -

ECOLOGY Environment: Any land **Organization:** Solitary **Treasure:** Standard Advancement: 17-30 HD (Huge) Level Adjustment: -

# VARIANT RULES

Morekareth Dying/Dead: -12/-34 Massive Damage Threshold: Con 34, HD 45, Size 60 Wounds/Vitality: 34/175 Sanity Loss: 0/1d6 Defense Bonus: +0 Armor as DR: 3/- AC 24, flat-footed 22 3.0/UA/Modern DR: 30/+3 Summon Monster: summon monster VII (fiendish) **Honor:** 16 Taint: 7 Typical Allegiances: Eched'Na Mother of Monsters, other Morekareth **Action Points:** 5 3.5 Skills: Climb +23, Jump+28, Spot+6 Grapple: +25

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# Auld Morekareth

Dying/Dead: -14/-38 Massive Damage Threshold: Con 38, HD 57, Size 70 Wounds/Vitality: 120/312 Sanity Loss: 1/1d6 Defense Bonus: +0 Armor as DR: 3/1, AC 24, flat-footed 23 3.0/UA/Modern DR: 30/ +3 Summon Monster: summon monster VII (fiendish) **Honor:** 10 Taint: 7 Typical Allegiances: Eched'Na Mother of Monsters Action Points: 8 3.5 Skills: Climb +27, Jump+32, Spot+18 Grapple: +35

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# When a Hero Falls...

# ... The World Suffers

The mark of a true hero - the shining light for a cause - is that he never strays and is always true. But what happens when a virtuous man becomes a mere mortal?

# The Hero's Bastard

answers that question in stunning style!



From the imaginations of the people behind the hugely successful *Evocative City Sites* and the best-selling *Agate Companion* comes a monster that will serve as living proof that when the best of us fall, the lesser will weep.

*The Hero's Bastard* is designed for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying game. It also includes Knowledge DCs, tactics, and supplemental rules for all available d20 variants, including 3.5, Arcana Evolved, d20 Modern and Call of Cthulhu d20.



