

Rite Publishing Presents

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# PATHWAYS



JACK HOYLE

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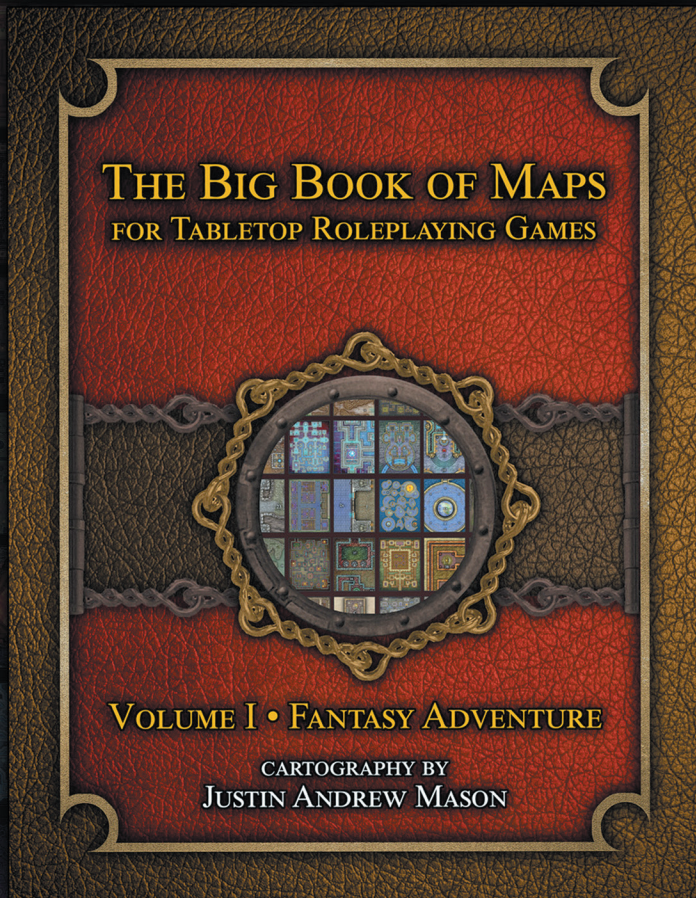


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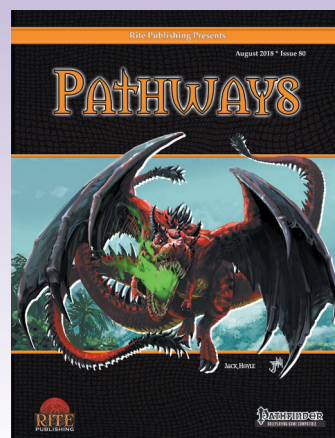
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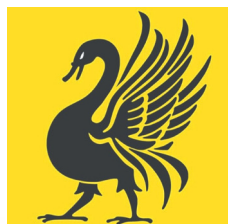
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## Editorial

by Dave Paul

This is one of those rare cases when saying something like "This issue is HUGE!" would actually be an understatement. I suppose we should have thought things through even more and doubled the number of pages, given the colossal theme. Alas....

We're all over the place in this issue, and I mean that in a good way. My spells piece (which requires casters of very high level in keeping with the theme) offers disaster from above and disaster from below. One spell actually drops a mountain out of the sky and the other summons a worm bigger than a normal purple worm from the beneath the ground. Until I put them together in this issue it never occurred to me to use them together, one right after the other, and that would be a really rotten thing to do to your players if you're a GM. (Let me know how it went.)

Once again we have offerings from Mike Welham and Scott Gladstein this month. They are both playful pieces but are playful in very different ways. Mike offers you an opportunity to have companions or familiars that are as big as a house (and if you remember fun childhood books, regardless of your age, you'll find he's done a brilliant job capturing some old favorites) and Scott takes colossal to its logical conclusion by offering us a piece that explores some of the fun with mathematical infinity.

From Raging Swan Press this month we have a delightful look inside the belly of a purple worm (I can't believe I've said "purple worm" so many times already in this editorial). Mind you, it's probably not all that easy to get inside the creature to explore for contents, but if your players insist, Creighton has given you a table to save you some time. And, like usual, it's full of gaming brilliance.

I'm curious where you, the reader, wants to go with Paizo's launch of the playtest for the second edition of Pathfinder. I have already started poking around with converting some of my spells to the playtest edition as a means of teaching myself the inner workings of the new system. This new system is, in my view, a dramatic shift from the first edition, and I know that I need much more time to figure out what I like and don't like about it. We can spend our time on the Paizo messageboards or on Facebook arguing about things, but the smaller group, the readers of *Pathways*, might just have specific interests and I'd like to make sure those get met. So, please do send me an email and let me know what you're looking for as regards the new edition. I'm certainly up for including playtest content in *Pathways* before the new edition officially launches, if that's what you want. (Heck, I might give you some anyway just to find out if you're interested.) And, as I've previously mentioned, we're pushing into Starfinder content as well and plan to continue doing so.

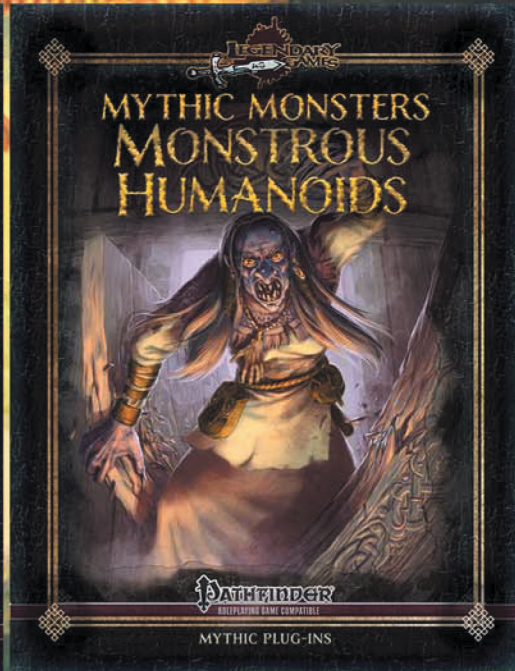
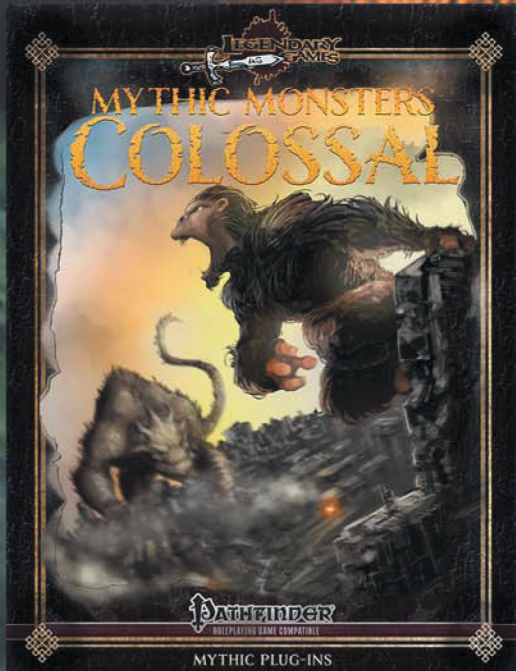
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## King of the Kaiju Creature Template

by Wendall Roy, Illustration by Jack Hoyle

Not all devastating and world-shaking monstrosities are created equal. Even among the colossal engines of destruction known as kaiju, one creature must reign supreme. This champion is the king of the kaiju, a title that not only marks their position of dominance but also charges the creature with mystical abilities. The king becomes hardy

and more durable, their recuperative life energy supercharged. Lesser creatures flee in terror from the king's mere presence. The king of the kaiju also projects a supernatural field that repels the natural attacks of other kaiju, and acts with precognition and reflexes that seem to defy time itself when faced by multiple kaiju rivals.

## Creating King of the Kaiju Creature

"King of the Kaiju" is an acquired template that can be added to any creature with the kaiju subtype that slays another kaiju with this template or defeats the other kaiju by forcing them to heal with their recovery ability.

**CR:** Same as the base creature +2.

**AC:** A King of the Kaiju gains a +4 deflection bonus to AC against the attacks of other kaiju.

**Speed:** A King of the Kaiju grows wings and gains a fly speed of 250 ft. (clumsy). If the base kaiju has a fly speed, they use whichever speed and maneuverability is better.

**Saving Throws:** A King of the Kaiju gains a +4 resistance bonus to saving throws.

**Fast Healing:** A King of the Kaiju increases its fast healing to 40.

**Feats:** A King of the Kaiju gains Flyby Attack as a bonus feat. If the base kaiju already has this feat, they instead gain a bonus feat of their choice.

**Special Abilities:** A King of the Kaiju gains the following special abilities:

**Empowered Kaiju Blast (Su)** Once per day, a King of the Kaiju can increase the variable, numeric effects of their breath weapon or ability with the word "beam" in its name by half (+50%).

**Royale Battler (Su)** When more than one kaiju in a round attacks the King of the Kaiju, targets them with a spell or effect, or includes them in the area of a spell or effect, the King of the Kaiju can immediately perform any single move action or standard action. If the King of the Kaiju moves beyond the range or area of the spell or effect, the spell or effect fails to affect them. Using this ability functions as an attack of opportunity. If the King of the Kaiju can make more than one attack of opportunity in a round, they can use this ability more than once in a round.

If the King of the Kaiju does not have any remaining attacks of opportunity, they cannot use this ability.

**Terrifying Presence (Su)** A King of the Kaiju gains frightful presence as the universal monster ability with a range of 300 ft. Creatures of size Huge or smaller that fail the Will save against the King of the Kaiju's frightful presence are panicked if they have fewer Hit Dice than the King of the Kaiju.

## Sample King of the Kaiju

King of the Kaiju	CR 30
<b>XP 9,830,400</b>	
CN Colossal magical beast (kaiju, water)	
<b>Init</b> +9; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 600 ft., low-light vision, see invisibility, sense kaiju; <b>Perception</b> +45	
<b>Aura</b> frightful presence (300 ft., DC 35)	
DEFENSE	
<b>AC</b> 47, touch 7, flat-footed 42 (+5 Dex, +40 natural, -8 size); +4 deflection vs. kaiju	
<b>hp</b> 697 (34d10+510); <b>fast healing</b> 40	
<b>Fort</b> +38, <b>Ref</b> +28, <b>Will</b> +27	
<b>Defensive Abilities</b> absorb energy, ferocity, recovery; <b>DR</b> 20/epic; <b>Immune</b> ability damage, ability drain, death effects, disease, energy drain, fire, and fear; <b>Resist</b> acid 30, cold 30, electricity 30, negative energy 30, sonic 30	
<b>Weaknesses</b> susceptible to song	
OFFENSE	
<b>Speed</b> 100 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy), swim 100 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> bite +46 (8d6+20/19-20 plus grab), 2 claws +46 (4d8+20/19-20), 2 tail slaps +44 (6d6+10/19-20)	
<b>Ranged</b> firebolts +31 touch (damage variable; see below)	
<b>Space</b> 60 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 60 ft.	







**Special Attacks** breath weapon, empowered kaiju blast, ferocity, fast swallow, hurl foe, reflexive breath, swallow whole (10d6 bludgeoning and 10d6 fire damage, AC 30, 69 hp), trample (4d8+30, DC 47)

## STATISTICS

**Str** 50, **Dex** 21, **Con** 41, **Int** 3, **Wis** 30, **Cha** 26

**Base Atk** +34; **CMB** +62 (+66 bull rush, +66 grapple, +66 sunder); **CMD** 79 (81 vs. bull rush, 81 vs. sunder)

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, (B) Flyby Attack, Greater Bull Rush, Greater Sunder, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Vital Strike

**Skills** Fly -11, Perception +45, Swim +49; **Racial**

**Modifiers** +16 Perception

**Languages** Aquan (can't speak)

**SQ** massive, royale battler, terrifying presence

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Absorb Energy (Ex)** The King of the Kaiju absorbs energy attacks that damage him, including negative energy attacks. Damage blocked by one of his resistances or immunities instead heals him an amount equal to the damage dealt. He may absorb only one kind of energy in this manner in a round. The first type of energy that affects him in a round (whether or not it penetrates his immunities or resistance to actually damage him) sets the type of energy he absorbs for that round. Hit points gained in excess of his normal maximum are lost. The King of the Kaiju cannot gain healing from energy effects generated by himself.

**Breath Weapon (Su)** Once every 4 rounds, The King of the Kaiju can breathe out a beam of fiery red force. When The King of the Kaiju uses this attack, he can choose to focus the breath weapon into a single 1,200-foot-long line, or he can shorten the range and turn his head and body while breathing, effectively affecting a 600-foot-long cone. All creatures caught in this area of effect take 20d6 points of fire damage, 20d6 points of force damage, and are staggered for 1d6 rounds from the devastating energy (Reflex DC 42 halves the damage and prevents the staggered effect). A creature slain by this effect is disintegrated, whether the saving throw was successful or not. This breath weapon is particularly effective at blasting through cover—cover does not grant any bonuses on Reflex saves against The King of the Kaiju's breath weapon. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Firebolts (Su)** As a standard action on any round immediately following the use of his breath weapon, The King of the Kaiju can fire bolts of red energy from the glowing spines along his back. These bolts are ranged touch attacks with a range of 1,200 feet. When The King of the Kaiju uses this ability, he must

choose between firing one firebolt, three firebolts, or six firebolts. If he fires one, it deals 20d6 points of damage on a hit. If he fires three bolts, each deals 8d6 points of damage on a hit. If he fires six bolts, each deals 5d6 points of damage on a hit. Half of the damage caused by any one firebolt is fire damage, the other half is force damage. Firebolts deal full damage against objects, and ignore the first 10 points of hardness possessed by an object.

**Reflexive Breath (Ex)** The first time in any round that The King of the Kaiju can make an attack of opportunity, he can choose to use a diminished version of his breath weapon instead of making a physical attack. This reflexive breath weapon attack only targets the creature that provoked the attack of opportunity, but otherwise causes the same damage and effects his breath weapon normally inflicts (Reflex DC 32 halves the damage and negates the staggered effect). Use of his breath weapon in this way does not affect the recharge rate of the regular breath weapon. The save DC is Constitution-based, and includes a -10 penalty to reflect the fact that the reflexive breath is a shorter (but no less intense) blast of energy than the kaiju's typical breath weapon attack.

**Sense Kaiju (Su)** The King of the Kaiju can sense the location of the nearest active kaiju, as if using *discern location*, at will.

**Susceptible to Song (Ex)** The King of the Kaiju's actions can be influenced by song, provided the kaiju notices the singing. If the kaiju is not currently engaged in battle, he automatically hears any song within 100 feet that is directed at him in an attempt to influence him, but when he is in combat, there's only a cumulative 20% chance per round of sustained singing that he notices the song. In order to influence The King of the Kaiju, the singer must make a DC 35 Perform (sing) check (this check cannot be bolstered by the aid another action, and the singer cannot take 10 or 20 on the check). The result of this check sets the DC of the Will save The King of the Kaiju must make in order to not be influenced by the song. The singer can choose to influence The King of the Kaiju as if she had successfully cast suggestion on the kaiju (CL = the singer's ranks in Perform [sing]). If The King of the Kaiju succeeds at a Will save (DC = the singer's ranks in Perform [sing] + the singer's Charisma modifier), the effects of the influence last for a maximum of 1d4 rounds; otherwise, the effects last as long as a suggestion spell would normally last. The King of the Kaiju cannot use his recovery ability to recover from song influence, and a single singer may influence The King of the Kaiju only once per day.

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm forests or water

**Organization** solitary (unique)

**Treasure** incidental







## GIANT MYTHIC STORM GIANT

CR 17/MR 6

XP 102,400

*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*

CG Gargantuan humanoid (giant, mythic)

**Init** +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +27

### DEFENSE

**AC** 35, touch 7, flat-footed 34 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +21 natural, -4 size)

**hp** 304 (19d8+219)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +7, **Will** +18

**Defensive Abilities** rock catching, thunderhead<sup>MA</sup>; **DR** 10/epic;

**Immune** electricity, sonic

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft., swim 40 ft.

**Melee** +1 adamantine greatsword +29/+24/+19 (6d6+28/17–20)

**Ranged** +1 composite longbow +12/+7/+2 (4d6+19/x3)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** mythic power (6/day, surge 1d8), ride the lightning<sup>MA</sup>, storm striker<sup>MA</sup>, stormvoice<sup>MA</sup>, thunderbolt<sup>MA</sup>

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th; concentration +17)

Constant—*freedom of movement*

2/day—*control weather*, *levitate*

1/day—*call lightning* (DC 15), *chain lightning* (DC 18), *ride the lightning* (DC 21)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 47, **Dex** 12, **Con** 29, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +36 (+40 sunder); **CMD** 49 (51 vs. sunder)

**Feats** Breaching Leap<sup>MF</sup>, Cleave<sup>MF</sup>, Combat Reflexes, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike(M), Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike<sup>MF</sup>

**Skills** Acrobatics +18 (+26 when jumping), Climb +20, Craft (any one) +13, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +20, Perception +27, Perform (sing) +12, Sense Motive +15, Swim +28

**Languages** Auran, Common, Draconic, Giant

**SQ** armor training<sup>MA</sup>, change shape<sup>MA</sup> (eagle, giant eagle, roc, or thunderbird; *beast shape IV*), militant, water breathing

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any warm

**Organization** solitary or family (2–5 plus 1 sorcerer or cleric of 7th–10th level, 1–2 rocs, 2–6 griffons, and 2–8 sharks)

**Treasure** standard (+1 *breastplate*, +1 *adamantine greatsword*, +1 *composite longbow* (+14 Str) with 20 arrows, other treasure)

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Armor Training (Ex)** A mythic storm giant takes no penalty to movement is not reduced in medium armor, and its Armor Check penalty is reduced by 1 and maximum Dexterity bonus is increased by 1.

**Militant (Ex)** Storm giants are proficient with all simple and all martial weapons.

**Ride the Lightning (Sp)** A mythic storm giant can use *ride the lightning* once per day as a spell-like ability. The giant can use this ability more than once per day by expending one use of its mythic power for each use after the first.

**Storm Striker (Su)** As a move action, a mythic storm giant can grant the shock or thundering property to any weapon it uses for one minute. If the giant uses this ability again before its effect expires, it may choose to increase the remaining duration to 1 minute or to switch the weapon's power from shock to thundering (or vice versa). If the giant expends one use of its mythic power, it gains both of these properties, and if it expends two uses of its mythic power the weapon gains the shocking burst and thundering properties for one minute.

**Stormvoice (Ex)** A mythic storm giant's booming voice can be heard clearly up to five miles away, and the giant can use *shout* (DC 16) at will as a standard action. This functions as the spell but is not magical in nature. If the giant expends one use of its mythic power, it can use this ability as a swift action or can duplicate the effect of a *mythic shout*; if it expends two uses of its mythic power, it can use a *mythic shout* as a swift action.

**Thunderbolt (Su)** A mythic storm giant can expend mythic power to when it uses a spell-like ability related to lightning or weather in order to duplicate the mythic version (or augmented mythic version) of that spell. In addition, whenever a mythic storm giant creates an effect that deals electricity damage, it can choose to have that effect deal half its damage as sonic damage rather than electricity damage. When it does so, any creature that fails its saving throw against that effect is deafened for 1 minute in addition to any other effects. A creature that is already deafened that fails its save is staggered for 1 round, and a creature that is already staggered is stunned for 1 round on a failed save.

**Thunderhead (Ex)** Mythic storm giants are inured to the roar of the storm and are immune to sonic damage and to sound-based effects that would cause them to become deafened or stunned.

**Water Breathing (Ex)** Storm giants can breathe water as well as air.



This feat originally appeared in *Mythic Monsters: Sea Monsters* and is reprinted here for ease of reference.

#### BREACHING LEAP (MYTHIC)

*You can hurl your body out of the water up and over obstacles and creatures, and even crash down on those below.*

**Prerequisite:** Str 13, swim speed.

**Benefit:** While swimming, you are always considered to have a running start when using Acrobatics to jump, and you gain a bonus on such checks equal to your mythic rank or tier. In addition, when making using the run or withdraw action or making a charge attack, you can expend one use of mythic power to include a single Acrobatics check made to jump, adding 10 feet per rank or tier to the height or distance you jump. You take no falling damage from the height gained as part of this leap. If you charge while using this feat and your attack hits, you may deal an amount of additional damage equal to the falling damage appropriate for the height you reached. Alternatively, you may replace your melee attack from this charge with a grapple check. If you successfully grapple a creature, you bring it down to the water with you at the end of your jump, and it takes an appropriate amount of falling damage for the height it was at when you grappled it.





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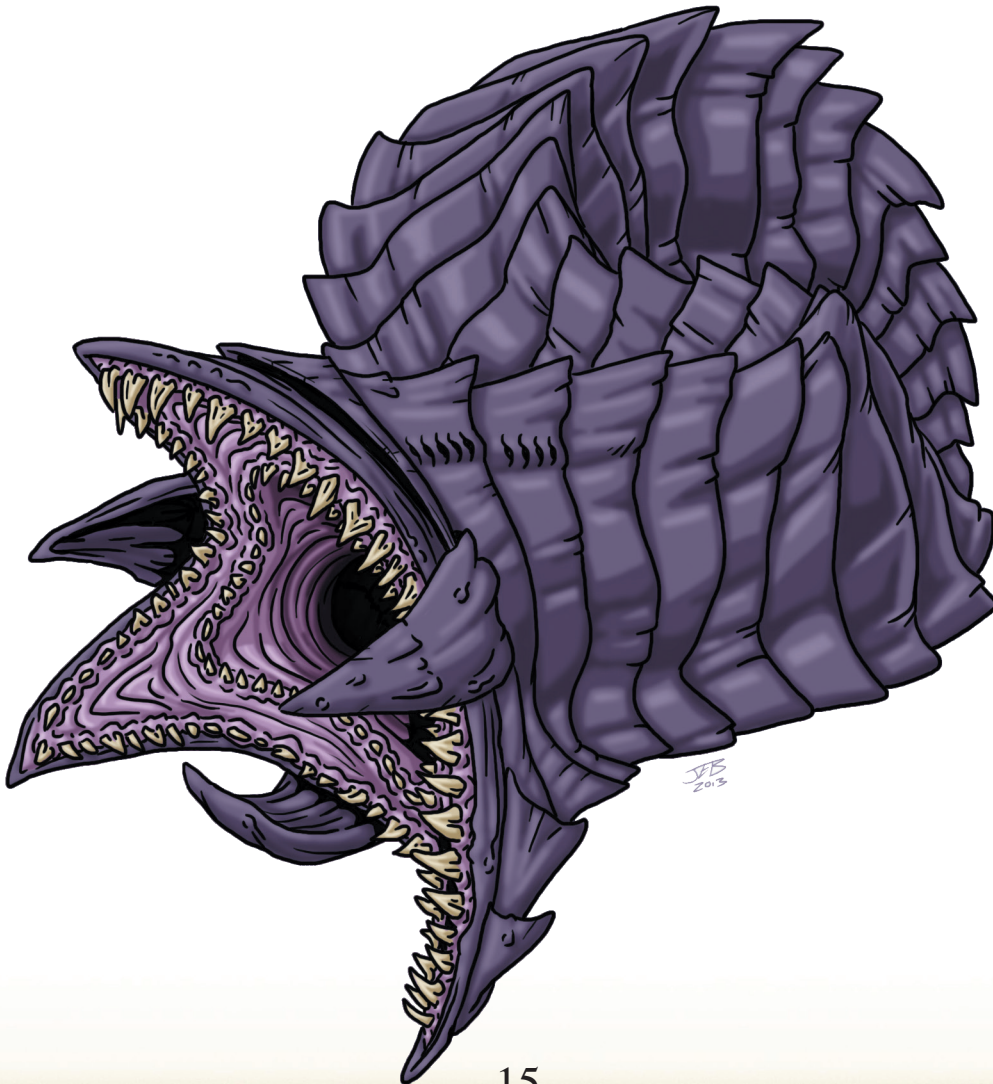
## 20 Things to Find in a Purple Worm's Stomach

By Creighton Broadhurst; Illustration by Jacob E. Blackmon

Few predators can match the purple worm for strength, ferocity and might. Even powerful adventurers do not take on a purple worm lightly for they often consume their prey whole. (Indeed, stories of entire adventuring parties consumed by a purple worm are not uncommon...)

Few things can withstand the corrosive acid found in a purple worm's gullet, but those that do can be valuable. That's why adventurers often cut open a slain purple worm to see what treasures might lurk inside. (Well that and a need to recover their companions' bodies). While a GM no doubt has generated a list of treasure found in the purple worm's stomach, other damaged or worthless items may also be recovered. Use the list below, to generate the details of such items.

1. Several large shards of seemingly tough rock. If they are dumped out of the purple worm's stomach they disintegrate into soft shards when they hit the ground.
2. The hilt of a once fine longsword. A shard of blade is yet attached to the hilt, which was once decorated with golden runes; now only scraps of the gold inlay remain.
3. An iron potion vial without its stopper. Filled with the purple worm's digestive juices, the vial must be rigorously washed before being used for its original purpose. (And, of course, a new stopper must be procured.)





4. The remains of an iron-shod rod, now much damaged by its time in the worm's stomach. The rod's beaten iron tip remains, but much of the once potent magical item has been reduced to a mass of sodden wood.
5. Seven pitted iron spikes. If hammered into a tough surface such as stone, each as a 25% chance of bending or breaking.
6. This purple worm consumed a duergar rogue several weeks ago who was carrying a sack of coins. The duergar has long since been all completely digested. However, some of the coins have survived, but are badly damaged. They are now only good as scrap metal but if melted down are worth a total of 75 gp.
7. The remains of six skeletons and remnants of several pitted steel weapons—pick heads—fill the worm's stomach. (This was once a party of svirfneblin miners who the worm gobbled up).
8. A fine cold iron (but nonmagical) dagger pierces the back of the purple worm's throat—wedged there by the worm's last victim as he tried to climb out. The dagger is unaffected by the worm's strong digestive juices.
9. Nine small shards of iron ore. Individually, none are large enough to forge a weapon, but together there is enough to create a longsword or similar weapon. The worm's stomach acid has impregnated the ore and if such a weapon is enchanted, it deals an extra 1d6 acid damage on a hit.
10. A partially dissolved iron helmet sized for an ogre or similarly large creature. However, the helmet has no eye holes. (This is actually the head of an iron golem destroyed by the worm months ago).
11. A six-foot long iron pole wholly unaffected by the worm's stomach acid. Once the personal weapon of a dwarven monk, the iron pole is in fact a quarterstaff.
12. The stone in the worm's stomach comprises obviously once fine stonework including intricate carvings of elves and demons. (The worm recently attacked and partially destroyed part of a drow fortification before being driven away and this could provide a clue to the PCs that such an enclave lies somewhere nearby).
13. The worm's stomach contains a great mass of pitted and decaying bones. Scraps of flesh hang here and there to the bones, but they are generally in a terrible state. They appear to have belonged to a variety of creatures.
14. A careful search of the worm's stomach reveals four arrowheads crafted from an incredibly hard metal (adamantine) that seem untouched by the worm's strong digestive juices.
15. A decaying skeletal hand yet clutching a wickedly curved dagger. The dagger is chipped and worn, and the blade is loose in the hilt. It is worthless.
16. Chunks of undigested stone fill the worm's stomach. Some pieces are as large as a halfling. If a PC cuts open the worm's stomach without taking care the stones slide out and fall onto the PC's foot (inflicting 2d6 damage).
17. The torso of a dark elf wearing the remains of a finely crafted chain shirt. The chain shirt is of ordinary make, but has offered some minor protection to the elf's torso. Of the rest of the drow, only bones remains.
18. Several chunks of stone hold glittering flecks that at first glance look like gold. A close look, however, reveals them to be nothing more than pyrite.
19. The worm's stomach contains several heavily degraded pieces of metal whose original purpose is indecipherable.
20. This worm has recently consumed an adventuring party. Although most of the party is no more, one of its members was wearing a *ring of regeneration* when he died. The ring is heavily damaged by the worm's stomach acid, but some magic yet clings to its golden band (although its large green sapphire is missing). Instead of its normal powers, the ring now only doubles the amount of hit points a character wearing it regains while resting. To repair the ring, its large green sapphire must be replaced and *regenerate* must be cast on the whole thing once a week for a month.

## GM's Miscellany: Dungeon Dressing

If you enjoyed the table above and like dungeon dressing, check out [GM's Miscellany: Dungeon Dressing](#)—Endzeitgeist's choice as the [number one book of 2014!](#) Crammed with over 300 pages of information and charts designed to bring your dungeon alive, [GM's Miscellany: Dungeon Dressing](#) is an essential part of any GM's arsenal.



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## Spells Showcase: Colossal

By Dave Paul

We need some things that will be really BIG this time. There were several to choose from but I chose one that was colossal from the creature-size perspective and one that was colossal from the perspective of someone playing in the game. The first needs no introduction, but readers are advised to consider the sidebar.

### Call Down the Mountaintop

**School:** Conjunction (summoning) [earth]; **Level:** Cleric/Oracle 9, Druid 9 Shaman 9

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Range:** Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

**Effect:** One rapidly falling mountaintop

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Saving Throw:** Reflex partial and Will partial; see text; **Spell Resistance:** No

You summon a massive slab of mountain to appear 200 feet above and falling onto a desired area (if there is insufficient room for this to occur, the spell fails). The enormous piece of solid rock covers a square area of 100 feet on a side; it is 200 feet tall at its highest point. Because the mountain falls from a great height, there is some time for the creatures in its path to move. Creatures succeeding on a Perception check (DC 5) notice the impending catastrophe and may be able to dart instinctively. Creatures with uncanny dodge (or relevantly similar abilities, per GM adjudication) automatically succeed on this Perception check (barring a clear reason to the contrary). Any creature succeeding on this Perception check is granted a Will save; any creature failing this Will save is panicked (perhaps to their ultimate advantage) or paralyzed (50% chance for either to occur) until the start of its turn. Any creature succeeding on both the Perception check and the Will save may move using any of its movement types up to its speed (but this is not an action on the creature's part and so the creature cannot use standard actions such as *teleport* to move, though it may use immediate actions). Any creature failing the Perception check remains unaware.

Creatures and objects in the path of the falling mountain suffer 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 20d6) as the rock slams into the ground. Creatures that fail their Reflex saves are

also pinned beneath the enormous quantity of stone. Creatures pinned by the mountain can escape by making a Strength or Escape Artist check (DC 40) as they move through fissures in the rock, spaces in the earth below, or make their way through openings left behind by what shattered and splintered beneath the slab when it fell. Pinned creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute until they are rendered unconscious. Once unconscious, creatures must make a Constitution check (DC 15) every minute. On a failed Constitution check, the creature takes 1d6 points of lethal damage per minute until it is freed, dies, or the summoned rock disappears several rounds later.

Creatures that make their Reflex save suffer half damage and are not pinned. Creatures that are not pinned but in a space shared with the mountain are entangled until they are no longer in a space shared with the mountain (this can be satisfied by burrowing at least three feet below the surface of a space occupied by the mountain).

Any creature whose space is not completely covered by the falling mountain when the rock strikes the ground gains a +4 on its Reflex save and if it succeeds on that save is moved to the nearest adjacent space not covered by the rock (and so is neither pinned nor entangled), though it still suffers half damage.

If you are a cleric or druid with the earth domain, a mountain druid, an oracle with the stone mystery, or a shaman with the stone spirit, then all the DCs of the spell are increased by +2. If you have line of sight to a mountaintop when you cast this spell, the damage dice are d8 instead of d6.

A witch with the elements patron or a mountain witch may select *call down the mountaintop* for her spell at 18th level.

It's a terrible thing, to have one's character swallowed by a monster. Well, it usually is. Sometimes that's just the right path for a barbarian to take because carving her way out of the beast means success even if it also means quite a mess. I also chose this spell to complement to the other spell in this issue because it comes from the opposite direction. The previous spell is disaster from above; this one is disaster from below. I rather like them as a pair.

*Call down the mountaintop* appears in Rite Publishing's [101 Hill and Mountain Spells](#) and *summon crimson worm* appears in Rite Publishing's [101 Desert Spells](#).



There are many possible alternative uses and environments for this spell. If the mountaintop falls onto terrain covered in enormous trees or boulders, some creatures in the area may be more likely to escape being pinned and should gain a +4 bonus to their Reflex save. If the spell is cast over a vast expanse of water, the stone will slam into the water and continue rapidly moving through the water until it reaches the bottom or the duration ends. If the water is deep enough, creatures underwater may have time to move unless the volume of the region is particularly small (for example, a pond of about 100-ft. radius doesn't give creatures in the pond much room to get out of the way). The creatures on the surface of the water, especially if they are in a boat or ship, will suffer catastrophic damage as described in the spell (treat the surface of the water as solid ground as regards the initial damage), though creatures in the hold of a large ship might suffer much less damage if the ship absorbs most of that (though if these creatures are in chains and aren't particularly suited to being underwater, things could go from bad to worse very quickly). When the spell ends and the rock disappears, the displaced water will rush back in to its space. If the slab of rock appears above a house or tavern, it will probably crush the building and kill everyone inside, though there are obvious reasons why PCs and NPCs should be given saves to escape disaster. *Call down the mountaintop* has some of the flash of an arcane evocation spell but is specifically written as a divine spell to suggest the possibility of it being used as retribution by some powerful priest or shaman. It's entirely reasonable to limit access to this spell for narrative purposes and to not allow easy access for PCs.

## Summon Crimson Worm

**School:** Conjunction (summoning) [see text];  
**Level:** Cleric/Oracle 8, Druid 8, Sorcerer/Wizard 8, Summoner 6, Witch 8  
**Casting Time:** 1 round  
**Components:** V, S, DF  
**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)  
**Effect:** 1 summoned purple worm variant  
**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)  
**Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

This spell summons a colossal crimson worm. It appears underground at the spot you designate and acts on your turn. It attacks your opponents to the best of its ability. If you can communicate with the worm, you can direct it not to attack, to attack particular enemies, or to perform other actions.

## Crimson Worm

CR 13

XP 25,600

N Colossal magical beast

**Init** -2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +18

## DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 0, flat-footed 25 (-2 Dex, +25 natural, -8 size)

**hp** 232 (16d10+144)

**Fort** +19, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 10 ft.

**Melee** bite +21 (8d6+12/19-20 plus grab), sting +21 (4d6+12 plus poison)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

**Special Attacks** swallow whole (8d6+18 bludgeoning damage, AC 21, 20 hp)

## STATISTICS

**Str** 35, **Dex** 6, **Con** 25, **Int** 1, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +38 (+42 grapple); **CMD** 45 (can't be tripped)

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Weapon Focus (bite, sting)

**Skills** Perception +18, Swim +22

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 27; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Strength damage; *cure* 3 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Celestial Rebuild Rules: Defensive Abilities** gains DR 10/evil; gains cold, acid and electricity resistance 15; **SR** gains SR 19; **Special Attacks** smite evil 1/day as a swift action (+0 attack, +16 damage against evil foes; smite persists until target is dead or the celestial creature rests).

**Fiendish Rebuild Rules: Defensive Abilities** gains DR 10/good; gains cold and fire resistance 15; **SR** gains SR 19; **Special Attacks** smite good 1/day as a swift action (+0 attack, +16 damage against good foes; smite persists until target is dead or the fiendish creature rests).

If you are good, then the worm has the celestial template. If you are evil, then it has the fiendish template. If you are neutral, then you must choose which template it has. Each time you cast the spell, the worm's alignment and this spell's type match your alignment.

If you cast *summon crimson worm* while in rocky desert or remote badlands, then the worm also has the advanced creature template.



# Creature Components

## Volume 1

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## Hilbert's Infinite Tavern

By Scott Gladstein

It's a rainy night and you've just got done slaughtering kobolds. Your cleric plops a soggy bag of gold, fresh off the corpse of one of those buggers, on the desk of the night clerk and asks for a room. The clerk looks your rag-tag group up and down before nodding and saying,

"We're full up but I can make some room." He lifts a hollowed-out ram's horn and says, "Move everyone down one."

Unsure what he meant or why he spoke into the horn you follow him to a door along the back wall. You know the tavern is nothing more than a little shack and that the door should lead to the alley but when he opens it you see a hallway with rooms like you might expect anywhere.

"Room number 'N' is free. Mind your horn." Is the only advice he gives as he drags himself back to the front of the tavern.\*

Putting all this out of your mind, your party enters the cozy little room labeled "N," one not unlike the ones you've crammed yourselves into a hundred times before, and turn in for the night (killing kobolds is tiring work). Since you are a smart adventuring party you set a watch and it isn't long before you feel a hand on your shoulder rubbing you awake.

"We gotta move down one room," the cleric says, as you groggily fight to get your feet underneath you. A moment later you and your comrades are packed up and in the hall to shift a room over. Then it hits you, the hotel was full. How'd they make more room? The answer assaults your nostrils as your exit into the hallway as a troll, smelling like twice-baked death, staggers out of room N+1 and casts a glare at you as he all but falls back into it. You realize that everyone is moving one room down and that now the door YOU are in front of is room N+1... but it's the same room you just left?

The host of bizarre creatures that exited into the hallway and then back in their room was staggering in its diversity: nth-dimensional slug people, sentient colors, kobolds, and what appeared to be a dwarven bachelorette party! This odd dance of exiting your room and entering it again, only this time with a new number, happens three or four more times that night—each time it is preceded by a call on a horn in your room that tells you to move N+1 spaces down. You'd ask "what's going on?!" but, as an adventurer, this isn't even the weirdest thing to happen to you thing week (let alone ever). It rates about an N+2 out of 2n.

### What's Going On?!

Hilbert's Infinite Tavern is a tavern and inn that occupies a place on a demiplane with infinite space comprised entirely of a single hallway with rooms. It was set up by a powerful and economically-minded conjuror named Hilbert who wanted to franchise a string of sleeping chambers accessible to travelers the universe-over. This magic is similar to that used to power a *mage's magnificent mansion* spell, though essentially consumes an entire, infinitely large plane.

Once in one of their physical locations, travelers can partake in the tavern and local amenities before turning in for the night. The clerk uses a magic key to open a door that contains a portal to Hilbert's Infinite Tavern. It always starts at the end of the infinite hallway that contains the lowest numbers and offers the new guests "Room N." All the rooms are always full as Hilbert's Infinite Tavern is accessible by every reality and, as there are an infinite number of realities, as soon as you check in, an infinite number of other copies of yourself do as well. If new guests want to enter, you will be called by the clerk and their words will reach you by a ram's horn in your room and you will be asked to enter a different room to make room for more guests.

### Amenities and Services

A room costs 5 gp per night and can sleep up to 8 creatures. The rooms are identical; each has 4 bunk beds, a writing desk and desk chair, 4 rocking chairs surrounding a dining table, and a latrine with a locking door. The room is sealed with a steel door and a good lock (DC 25 Disable Device) that locks from the inside, though the clerk has a key for it. Every 1d6 hours new guests arrive so players may be disturbed now and then. They must take all of their things out and into the hallway before they may re-enter, finding a clean "new" room. Rooms may only be rented for 12 hour slots. Travelers who leave their room find that it is always right next to the door leading out of Hilbert's Infinite Tavern. Upon exiting the pocket dimension, you return to the place you left when coming to the tavern.



**Table #-#: Opening a Door in Hilbert's Infinite Tavern**

Die Roll	Result	Description
1-4	Mundane (Peaceful)	A totally random, but still mundane, sight meets your eyes. Maybe it's dwarves playing cards, elves signing a song, or simply a group of weary travelers occupy the room.
5-10	Mundane (Encounter)	Roll a random encounter appropriate for the CR of the party. Such creatures occupy the room and are none too happy to be disturbed.
11-15	Bizarre	You open a door onto something profoundly weird. All who witness it must make a Will save (DC 25) or be confused (as per the <i>confusion</i> spell) for 1 minute and shaken for 1 hour after that. This could be a sentient spell, a new dimension of movement you didn't know existed (such as the directions of "ana and kata"), hyper-sentient beings, living math equations, living time fragments, and other oddities. After your encounter you only retain fragmented details about what you saw.
16-20	Paradox	The party and whoever (or whatever) occupies the room automatically takes 1d10 force points of damage per the highest HD of the creature involved in the incident.

## Exploring

It is inadvisable to go exploring the halls of Hilbert's Infinite Tavern but when has that ever stopped an adventurer? The hallway goes on, literally, forever. Every 120 feet though, it makes a right angle turn. Upon next looking over their shoulder after making this turn, the exit door will appear to be behind them. The hallway is wooden and covered in a simple rug that always looks the same; the only thing that ever changes is the room number (always "N + #" where the # is higher than the last room).

Opening each room is dangerous as there is a good chance of a paradox occurring. This might occur if you were to open a room to an alternate version of yourself, interfering with some non-Euclidean geometry, or messing with the flow of space-time (i.e. witnessing events before they occur or in the wrong place). Hilbert's Infinite Tavern is self-correcting but the magical energy required is staggering-creating a backlash of energy could prove fatal. Many people have gotten lost or died in the tavern and their bodies and possessions become property of Hilbert's Infinite Tavern (a DC Linguistics check will note this on the contract you must sign to get a room).

## Real World Connection


Hilbert's Infinite Tavern is a tavern based on a mathematical paradox by German mathematician David Hilbert in the 1920s that deals with the concept of "countably infinity." This thought experiment is known as the "Infinite Hotel Paradox" and showcases features of infinity.

There is also a reference to the two new dimensions of movement gained when moving in 4-dimensional space, *ana* and *kata*. These terms were first coined by British mathematician Charles Howard Hinton (along with the term "tesseract") in the 1880s.

*\* Editor's Note: This article was intended to be meta. The author would be delighted to engage you in a discussion of the mathematics involved. ☺*



# Challenge your PCs Like Never Before!

The background of the entire page is a dark, atmospheric illustration. It depicts two fantasy characters in a dimly lit, cavernous space. On the left, a character with red hair and a green hat is shown in a dynamic pose, holding a spear. On the right, a character with dark hair and a blue and orange outfit is also in a dynamic pose, holding a sword. The background is filled with faint, skeletal remains and ancient stone carvings, creating a sense of mystery and danger.

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## Colossal Companions

By Mike Welham

*I can't say I understand someone wanting to have a wild animal as a constant companion. It might be the allergies speaking, or it may be that one run-in I had with a wolf; just one more reason to enjoy cloistering myself in this library. So, I admit I've been utterly befuddled by those who seek to grow barely trained animals to prodigious sizes.*

—Melnor, Sage (second class) of Questhaven

### New Feats

The following feats allow natural creatures to grow to extraordinary size and characters with companions to nurture them into more robust beasts. The final feat accounts for characters who want to buff their magical beasts, plants, or vermin as if they were animals.

#### Companion Exemption

You can use spells normally restricted to animals on any of your non-animal companions.

**Prerequisite:** A magical beast taken as an animal companion, or a class feature that allows you to take non-animal companions.

**Benefit:** You can affect your companion with spells that normally target animals. This does not change any of the spells' other aspects.

#### Massive Companion

Your companion creature becomes more formidable as it grows larger.

**Prerequisites:** Animal companion class feature (or an alternate class feature that allows plant or vermin companions), companion creature must have 8 HD and size Small, Medium, or Large to increase to Huge size, 9 HD and size Huge to

increase to Gargantuan size, or 11 HD and size Gargantuan to increase to Colossal size.

**Benefit:** If your companion creature is Small, Medium, or Large, it increases to Huge size. If it is Huge, it increases to Gargantuan size. If it is Gargantuan, it increases to Colossal size. Refer to the size increase statistic changes table below to update your companion creature's statistics per its new size. Additionally, your companion creature increases its base speed by 10 feet per size increase granted by this feat, and its weapon damage improves one step for each size increase this feat grants (d4 to d6, d6 to d8, d8 to d10, d10 to 2d6, 2d6 to 2d8, 2d8 to 2d10).

**Special:** You can take this feat more than once, up to a maximum size increase of Colossal.

#### Miracle Growth

You stand head and shoulders above typical members of your species.

**Prerequisites:** Int 3 or less; animal, magical beast, plant, or vermin; Small size or larger (must be Huge to increase to Gargantuan size, and must be Gargantuan to increase to Colossal size); 14 HD to increase to Huge size, 16 HD to increase to Gargantuan size or 19 HD to increase to Colossal size.

**Benefit:** If you are a Small, Medium or Large creature, you increase to Huge size. If you are a Huge creature, you increase to Gargantuan size. If you are a Gargantuan creature, you increase to Colossal size. Refer to the size increase statistic changes table below to update your statistics per your new size. Additionally, you increase your base speed by 10 feet per size increase granted by this feat, your weapon damage improves one

#### Size Increase Statistic Changes

Original Size	New Size	Str	Dex	Con	Natural Armor	AC*/Attack	CMB/CMD	Fly	Stealth
Small	Huge	+20	−6	+10	+5	−3	+3	−6	−12
Medium	Huge	+16	−4	+8	+5	−2	+2	−4	−8
Large	Huge	+8	−2	+4	+3	−1	+1	−2	−4
Huge	Gargantuan	+8	+0	+4	+4	−2	+2	−2	−4
Gargantuan	Colossal	+8	+0	+4	+5	−4	+4	−2	−4

\*In a creature stat block, the size modifier would be adjusted by the amount in this column.



step for each size increase this feat grants (d4 to d6, d6 to d8, d8 to d10, d10 to 2d6, 2d6 to 2d8, 2d8 to 2d10).

**Special:** You can take this feat more than once, up to a maximum size increase of Colossal.  
(see table below)

## Sample Colossal Companions

The following animal companions come from legends and other lore, and otherwise provide examples of overgrown companions.

### Roc of Doom

*This raptor has black feathers occasionally streaked through with bright yellow feathers to create lightning bolt patterns.*

#### Roc of Doom

Roc

N Colossal animal

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 36, touch 8, flat-footed 30 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +28 natural, -8 size)

**hp** 137 (11d8+88)

**Fort** +17, **Ref** +12, **Will** +4 (+4 morale bonus vs. enchantment effects)

**Defensive Abilities** evasion

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

**Melee** bite +15 (1d8+19), 2 talons +16 (1d6+19 plus grab)

**Space** 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 40, **Dex** 20, **Con** 26, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +31 (+35 grapple); **CMD** 47

**Feats** Dodge, Great Fortitude, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (talon)

**Tricks** Attack, Attack, Attack Any Target, Bombard, Defend, Demolish, Guard, Intimidate, Maneuver (Awesome Blow), Menace, Seek, Watch

**Skills** Fly -3, Intimidate +20, Perception +10, Stealth -11

**SQ** devotion

### The Blue Ox

*This massive blue ox stands proudly next to trees and other objects it felled with its horns.*

#### The Blue Ox

Cattle (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Wilderness*)  
N Colossal animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +14

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 28, touch 4, flat-footed 26 (+2 Dex, +24 natural, -8 size)

**hp** 148 (11d8+99)

**Fort** +18, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5 (+4 morale bonus vs. enchantment effects)

**Defensive Abilities** evasion

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 70 ft.

**Melee** gore +23/+18 (2d6+24)

**Space** 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

**Special Attacks** powerful charge (gore, 2d6+16), trample (2d6+24, DC 31)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 42, **Dex** 14, **Con** 29, **Int** 3, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 4

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +32 (+36 bull rush); **CMD** 44 (46 vs. bull rush, 48 vs. trip)

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack

**Tricks** Attack, Come, Defend, Demolish<sup>UW</sup>, Down, Flank, Guard, Intimidate<sup>UW</sup>, Maneuver<sup>UW</sup> (Overrun), Stay, Subdue<sup>UW</sup>

**Skills** Acrobatics +2 (+18 to jump), Perception +14, Stealth -14

**SQ** devotion

### The Gigantic Red Dog

*This enormous bright red dog has a friendly demeanor, but it looks like it could easily knock down smaller creatures in its exuberance.*

#### The Gigantic Red Dog

Dog

N Colossal animal

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 28, touch 4, flat-footed 26 (+2 Dex, +24 natural, -8 size)

**hp** 181 (11d8+132)

**Fort** +19, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4 (+4 morale bonus vs. enchantment effects)

**Defensive Abilities** evasion



## OFFENSE

**Speed** 80 ft.

**Melee** bite +23/+18 (2d8+22)

**Space** 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

## OFFENSE

**Str** 41, **Dex** 15, **Con** 34, **Int** 3, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +31; **CMD** 43 (45 vs. trip)

**Feats** Following Step<sup>APG</sup>, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Run, Step Up, Step Up and Strike<sup>APG</sup>

**Tricks** Attack, Bury<sup>UW</sup>, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Get Help<sup>UW</sup>, Guard, Guarding, Heel, Stay, Track

**Skills** Acrobatics +2 (+22 to jump), Perception +15, Stealth -14, Survival +6 (+10 when tracking by scent); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent

**SQ** devotion

## Alternative Massive Companions

It is almost impossible to exclude some of the more impressive magical beasts when introducing exceptionally large companions. The GM should have the final say for the following choices, but this article makes every attempt to make them comparable to animal companions.

### Akhlut Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; **AC** +4 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6/19–20); **Ability Scores** Str 15, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 6; **Special Attacks** grab; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent, snow vision, snow walking.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **AC** +4 natural armor; **DR** 5/magic; **Attack** bite (1d8/18–20 plus 1d6 cold and grab); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** swallow whole (1d8 bludgeoning plus 1d6 cold damage); **Special Qualities** darkvision 60 ft., shore storming.

### Bulette Companions

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6), 2 claws (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 15, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 5; **Special Attacks** leap; **Special Qualities** +4 racial bonus on Acrobatics checks made to jump, low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft..

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8/19–20), 2 claws (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** savage bite; **Special Qualities** darkvision 60 ft.

### Frost Worm Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 20 ft., burrow 10 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str 15, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 11; **Special Attacks** trill; **Special Qualities** immune to cold, low-light vision, vulnerable to fire.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8 plus 1d6 cold); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 8d6 cold damage, usable once per hour); **Special Qualities** cold (deals 1d6 points of cold damage to creatures grappling it or successfully hitting it with a natural weapon or unarmed strike), darkvision 60 ft., death throes.

### Jubjub Bird Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., fly 20 ft. (poor); **AC** +4 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8), 2 talons (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 17, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 11; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, scent.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Attack** bite (1d10/x3 plus grab); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4, Cha +2; **Special Attacks** deadly bite (can only decapitate Small or smaller creatures), shriek (once every 1d6 minutes), swallow whole (1d8 bludgeoning plus 1d6 acid damage); **Special Qualities** adaptive defense (resistance 10), darkvision 60 ft.

### Purple Worm Companions

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., swim 10 ft.; **AC** +4 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8), sting (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 8; **Special Attacks** ; **Special Qualities** tremorsense 60 ft.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Speed** 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 10 ft.; **AC** +4 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d10 plus grab), sting (1d8 plus poison); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** poison (frequency 1 round



[6], *effect* 1d2 Str damage, *cure* 1 save, Con-based DC), swallow whole (1d10 bludgeoning damage); **Special Qualities** darkvision 60 ft.

## Sea Serpent Companions

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 10 ft., swim 40 ft.; **AC** +3 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6), tail slap (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 14, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 11; **Special Qualities** immune to cold, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Speed** 20 ft., swim 60 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8 plus grab), tail slap (1d6 plus grab); **Ability Scores** Str +6, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** capsize, constrict (1d6), swallow whole (1d8 bludgeoning damage); **Special Qualities** darkvision 120 ft..

## Seps Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 20 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8); **Ability Scores** Str 16, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 11; **Special Qualities** immune to poison, low-light vision, scent.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Speed** 30 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d10 plus poison); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** poison (*frequency* 1/round [8]; *effect* 1d6 acid damage and 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 1 save, Con-based DC); **Special Qualities** acid blood (2d6 points of acid damage), darkvision 60 ft., immune to acid, liquefaction.

## Ursikka Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 5*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6), 2 claws (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 5; **Special Qualities** ferocity, low-light vision, resist cold 20, scent, tremorsense 30 ft.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Speed** 40 ft., burrow 20 ft.; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d8 plus freezing saliva), 2 claws (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +6, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** coat claws (1d6 points of cold damage, Reflex save for half), freezing saliva (while entangled, creatures take 1d6 points of cold damage), spit (30-ft. line, 4d6 points of cold damage and creatures become entangled, Reflex save halves damage and negates the entangled condition); **Special Qualities** darkvision 60 ft.

## Ypotryll Companions

(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4*)

**Starting Statistics:** **Size** Medium; **Speed** 40 ft.; **AC** +4 natural armor; **Attack** gore (1d6 plus push), 2 hooves (1d4), tail slap (1d4 plus push); **Ability Scores** Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 7; **Special Attacks** push (5 ft.); **Special Qualities** +2 racial bonus on saves against charms and compulsions, low-light vision, scent.

**7th-Level Advancement:** **Size** Large; **Speed** 50 ft.; **AC** +4 natural armor; **DR** 2/-; **Attack** gore (1d8 plus push), 2 hooves (1d6), tail slap (1d6 plus push); **Ability Scores** Str +6, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Attacks** destructive charge, thundering path, trample (1d8); **Special Qualities** +4 racial bonus on saves against charms and compulsions, darkvision 60 ft.

## New Tricks for Old Colossals

Colossal companions provide new capabilities for their owners. The following tricks apply to Huge or larger animal companions.

**Swallow Whole (DC 20):** You can instruct a companion with this trick to swallow a creature whole when it has the creature grappled in its mouth. If the companion does not have the grab ability, it must attempt to grapple its target with its bite rather than deal damage. You can also instruct a creature with the swallow whole ability to not swallow a creature it has grappled in its mouth.

**Trample (DC 20):** You can instruct a companion with this trick to trample creatures in a designated path, as if it possessed the trample ability. Additionally, you can instruct an animal that already possesses the trample ability to automatically trample creatures when two or more creatures are in its path; it is otherwise treated as if it was instructed to use the attack trick.



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# STRANGE AEONS

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# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

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**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**



## Design Diary: In the Company of Giants (5e)

By Brandes Stoddard; Illustration by Joe Calkins

Sure, *In the Company of Giants* (5th edition, Revised) has been out for nine months and I'm *just now* getting around to writing a design diary. Today I'm going to talk about it a bit. The first thing to understand is that I was hired to write a revision of an earlier translation of the Pathfinder product into 5e. The first 5e version stayed much closer to the PF original, but there's an incredible gulf of design style between PF and 5e that made this a rocky proposition.

My goal, then, was to go as far as possible in embracing the fiction of being a giant. There are obvious problems, starting with just how good it is to be Large or Huge, and proceeding directly into how **bad** it is to be Large or Huge. I was also trying to balance using the Questhaven lore of giants – Questhaven is one of the unique throughlines of Rite Publishing's work – and keeping the door wide open for tables using core D&D lore of giants. As it happens, they aren't the same, but they also aren't in any overt conflict either. The big change is that Questhaven has four flavors of "true" giants, plus trolls and ettins, while D&D has the hill, stone, fire, frost, storm, and cloud giants that we know and love. (Okay, yes, D&D also has trolls and ettins, but supporting those was a lower priority for me.

### Racial Traits

With the re'em of *In the Company of Unicorns*, I could maintain the fiction that all unicorns were of the same species, but not the same stats. With giants – even ignoring the six types – I couldn't do that, for two Large reasons. First, support for Large and Huge characters is cordoned off to the jotun paragon class. I do what I can as a designer, but making Large (bipedal) size okay for all of the core classes is far beyond my powers. So I need a race that starts out Medium, exactly as giants canonically don't (playing "kid" giants has a set of problems I didn't want to touch). It followed, then, that you play a Medium race, called jotuns, that can develop into any of the six giantish lineages.

Mechanically, I wanted to make sure they were as different as I could reasonably make them from goliaths, while still covering a lot of the same themes. I leaned more into the social angle of being part of a greater society of giants, and expressed

their extraordinary resistance to harm and enemy physical maneuvers differently. *Renaming* was all I could do to get around needing a Powerful Build feature, though. I mean, it's just what you do. With a fair bit of hindsight, I might not give them two skill proficiencies – I would probably make it a choose-one-out-of-several. It's okay either way, in my view.

In general, I'm much happier when races have subraces in 5e, but I didn't want to give you a giant lineage from subrace and a giant lineage from subclass that could be in conflict... or that could force you to repeat a choice you'd already made. So no subrace for them.

### Jotun Paragon

Most of the class and subclass features probably don't need a *ton* of explanation for how the mechanics connect to the story of being a giant, but I spend enough time writing design breakdowns that I should probably turn that lens on my own work from time to time.

- d10 HD. I think there's an argument for a d12 here, but I feel like the barbarian's d12 HD is enough a part of its niche that I chose to tread carefully and give them alternate approaches to extraordinary toughness.
- No armor proficiencies by default, drawing on the fact that most giant types are depicted unarmored and relying on natural armor. Fire giants, the one *especially* armor-friendly type, gets armor and shield proficiencies from the subclass.
- Simple and martial weapons, because giants use every kind of big honking weapon.
- Proficiency in one set of artisan's tools, because giants-as-crafters is a huge part of their story. Their skill proficiencies follow basically the same logic, though I skipped Persuasion and Intimidation for the obvious reason that they got it from being jotun. (If you've gotten special dispensation to enter this class despite not being a jotun, add Persuasion and Intimidation to your list of options.)
- Slam starts at 1d4 – plenty of features grant a 1d4 damage natural attack – and scales up





as you advance. I assume you're just getting better at the slam attack, in the same way that, say, a monk gets better at monk attacks. The damage *also* scales with size – you get a second damage die when you're Large or Huge.

- The Size Increase rules are the heart of the concept. At first, you step up to Large. Instead of your weapon gaining another damage die of the same size, you gain a d4 that improves with level. It's also essential that you can shrink back to Medium, so that you can fit into tight spaces and not weigh the better part of a ton. (Huge size is contraindicated while crossing rickety rope bridges.) I needed size change to be as painless as possible, and it's not hard to see that I started with *enlarge* and ran the numbers up from there.
- Rock Throwing is, of course, a time-honored part of the giant bag of tricks.
- So is Rock Catching.
- Slumbering Giant is a defensive feature that represents giants being roused to anger – you

earn more and more temporary hit points as you get into more fights and expend HD to recover.

- Soul of the Mighty is my go-to for when you're both humanoid and not (because giant is a different Type). I think we all know how I feel about immunities, so this is my alternative.
- Crushing Blow improves the damage output situation for the jotun paragon, since they do okay on sustained damage but otherwise completely lack burst damage. I take the view that 11th level is a nigh-mandatory time for a meaningful step up in damage output (cf. Extra Attack 2 and the paladin's Improved Divine Smite).
- Struggling Weapon Proficiency is one of my favorite features in the whole document. I've seen variations on this idea in other editions, but grappling creatures and using them to beat up *other* creatures can't help but be satisfying, right? That was my experience of playing a Brawler fighter in 4e, at least.
- Siege Monster is barely useful to players in the majority of situations, probably, but it feels good to be able to say you have it.
- At 15th level, you can become Huge. I figure there are a lot more times when it's okay to be Large but not Huge, This feature is a pretty big deal for sheer damage output.
- Finally, Titanic Might. This was originally a direct lift of the barbarian's 20th-level feature, but Dan Dillon wisely talked me into doing something different with it. Now it's a Strength boost and, while your size is increased, walking speed boost.

That's the core of the class. It's about getting huge and beating things over the head. I started with the barbarian, on the idea that it had the most in common both mechanically and thematically, and tinkered from there. Maybe ironically, the jotun paragon gets more offensive help, while the barbarian gets more defensive help (resistance to B/P/S is just unbelievably strong, any way you slice it).

## Giant Lineages

This is where I drill down into much more specific stories of what it's like to be each type of giant. Fortunately, I had the 5e *Monster Manual* and *Volo's*



*Guide to Monsters*, and the 2e Forgotten Realms *Giantcraft*, as springboards for what each lineage's story was about. With 4-5 features per lineage, though, I couldn't stop at supporting the baseline MM giant of that type, and the VGtM giants of each type are... only intermittently PC-concept-friendly. *Giantcraft* is a mixed bag on its own merits, mechanically speaking (as with all 2e FR splatbook-adjacent books), but the text *super cares* about getting in the giants' heads, and I love it for that.

## Cloud Giants

I went for a rogue/trickster concept here, as well as emphasizing that they live in and walk on clouds. It's a shame that I didn't figure out a way to incorporate magic beans. They play with elevation a lot more than most, and they're hard to pin down outdoors. The whole trickster nature finally delivers with Cloud Duplicate at 18th level. Adding Sneak Attack dice to a big-bruiser class had to wait until high levels, you know?

## Fire Giants

Writing "the crafter subclass" for *any* class is tricky, but always interesting to me. Fire giants have always been one of the best-developed lineages, in terms of having a lot of different things going on. Smithing, heavy armor, control over dragons, how to talk to your kids about Surtr...

I struggled a lot with the exact functions of Scion of the Flame and Wyrms-Scather. I don't remember all of the twists and turns in their design, but I'm pretty sure it was a mess until Dan came along and helped me clarify my thinking.

## Frost Giants

One of the big things with frost giants in *Giantcraft* is their rune magic, which is more developed than the magic of other lineages. I didn't want to go all the way into making them a caster variant of a bruiser class, because melee/casting hybrid (sub)classes are *so* hard to get right. Instead, their higher-end features emphasize that they are horrible, terrifying ice monsters – freezing their enemies solid and breathing out modified *cones of cold*.

## Hill Giants

Massaging this concept to the point that it's even intelligent enough to go on adventures took a little doing, but making them *scary* is easy. They want to *eat your face* and *knock the building down around their own ears* and they hate it when *puny human do tricky thing*. This is the Incredibly Hungry Hulk. I'm... obliquely amused that Bonegnawer interacts with Slumbering Giant to make hill giants a little lazier (because they're regaining expended Hit Dice, and thus getting fewer temporary hit points from Slumbering Giant). I don't often choose to play Hulk-like characters, but I feel like I'd be willing to give this one a shot.

## Stone Giants

I leaned *real* hard on stone giants as the mysterious, weird ones. I love the idea that for them, the surface world is as bizarre and fictional as Wonderland is for Alice. That's *asserted* in the text without explicit support, so I gave them Uncanny Dodge, more or less. They can also go entirely defensive, because when a stone giant wants to be incredibly resilient, well, *stone*.

## Storm Giants

This is the one lineage where I'm not sure I hit my mark, and Endzeitgeist's [otherwise-very-favorable review](#) takes me to task for it. I made them particularly focused on spellcasting, because that's what I was getting from VGtM's entry, and it comes off looking like I just didn't try hard enough. Within the lore, storm giants are the most unsuited to lives of adventure – they want to be left alone, and they wield a lot of force to back that up. They combine that with being in charge and having no interest in exercising that authority. Not a lot to work with here! But still, if I had it to do over again, I'd probably explore more movement or wisdom features to go along with cool lightning powers.

## Conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed this exploration of my design thinking in *In the Company of Giants*. If you haven't picked up a copy yet, I hope I've piqued five dollars and ninety-nine cents worth of interest in you.

(Also, here's a link to Jared Rascher's [very kind words](#) on it.)



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## Build Your Own First Contact

By Matt Banach

*Greetings.  
We Come In Peace.  
Take Me To Your Leader.*

This article presents conceptual building blocks for any GM to construct their own “first contact” scenario for a *Starfinder*-compatible game, where the goal is to make peaceful first contact with an alien civilization.

### Why first contact?

First contact with aliens has long been a cornerstone of science fiction, bringing to mind *Star Trek*, *E.T.*, *The Arrival*, and myriad other amazing stories. First contact presents the mystery of the unknown... but also a challenge to prevail through intelligence, empathy, and skill rather than simply attacking what is different. First contact might create an alliance that shapes the galaxy – or plunge two civilizations into endless war.

Here are some first contact story hooks.

- *Get the thing.* A crashed starship, errant escape pod, or other sci-fi MacGuffin (plot device object) has landed in alien territory, and its recovery will be safer if the aliens are reliably non-hostile.
- *Gain cooperation.* The aliens’ cooperation is necessary to achieve a goal that can’t be taken by force or stealth, such as unraveling important information embedded in their oral history, obtaining legal mining rights and access to a valuable natural resource, or tutelage in their unique technology.
- *Make allies.* The aliens could become a valuable ally in future doings, such as a looming unnatural disaster or mutual defense in a coming war, and the PCs would rather the aliens start out on their side.

- *Boss said so.* The PCs might be hired by an interstellar organization, greedy mega-corporation, or shadowy benefactor – all of which may have their own ulterior motives and hidden mission goals.
- *Science!* Unprecedented access to the aliens’ culture and knowledge base will be major scientific find.

### Where will first contact take place?

The location where first contact takes place will matter, so consider the implications.

- *Hard to reach.* One reason these aliens haven’t been contacted before might be because they’re located somewhere hard to reach – deep underground, hidden by a sensor-baffling nebula, or beyond the edge of known space. Getting there might be a significant challenge in and of itself.
- *Dangerous environment.* The aliens might not be hostile, but perhaps their environment is. Their planet could be wracked by strange storms, have a toxic atmosphere, or be infested with monsters.
- *Plan the approach.* The easiest means of reaching the aliens might not be the wisest choice. Dropping out of the sky in a starship is quick, but such a sight could terrify or provoke the aliens.

### What are the aliens?

The aliens’ statistics provide a wealth of information from which to extrapolate their society.

- *Qualities.* Are the aliens aquatic? Can they fly? How do these qualities affect their daily lives?



- *Strengths.* Are the aliens particularly strong, or hardy, or quick-witted, and if so will they regard those same qualities in others positively, or negatively? A physically or mentally potent race might enjoy meeting a worthy newcomer – or might see such power as a threat.
- *Weaknesses.* Certain weapons or technologies the PCs have might need to be concealed or minimized as a show of respect, and to keep from frightening or antagonizing the vulnerable aliens.

## Who are the aliens?

As a people... the aliens will have a history, a culture, their own technology, and their own languages. Designing an entire civilization in rich detail could be the work of a lifetime, but you should at least have a few ideas.

- *History.* What has happened to the aliens recently? Have they enjoyed peace for the past generation, or did they just end a bitter civil war? Is this a time of plenty for them, or a time of famine and strife?
- *Technology.* At what stage of development are the aliens, technologically? Are they primitives, hunting and gathering? Are they industrialized, manufacturing machines, computers, and sophisticated infrastructure? Are they spacefaring, or barely on the verge of venturing beyond their atmosphere?
- *Languages.* How do the aliens communicate? One spoken language could be enough, but perhaps the aliens also use a sign language, or odor signals. If they have telepathy, is it language-dependent?
- *Culture.* Invent a few keynotes for the aliens' culture. What do they consider good manners, or a vile insult? What is their art or music like? Do they wear jewelry or clothing, and if so for what purpose?

As individuals... each alien will have their own unique reaction to the PCs (unless the aliens are a homogenous hive mind) and may disagree. Plan ahead for divergent opinions and potential rogues.

- *Optimists.* Some aliens may welcome strange new friends, intrigued by new opportunities.
- *Pessimists.* Some aliens may hold newcomers in suspicion, fearful of the unknown.
- *Militants.* Some aliens may believe the PCs are a threat that must be killed or repelled.
- *Leaders.* One or more aliens are influential, and their opinions weigh more heavily than the rest.

## When will first contact occur?

Timing matters. Consider how much time the PCs will have to plan and execute their first contact.

- *No time limit.* The PCs have unlimited time to research and observe the aliens before making their move, and then get to stay 'on the ground' with the aliens as long as necessary to complete the mission.
- *Some time pressure* (recommended). First contact must occur within a certain window. Perhaps an approaching armada or natural disaster is going to destroy the aliens' home within a month/week/few days. Perhaps the PCs need the aliens' cooperation to retrieve a MacGuffin before a countdown runs out.
- *Right now!* The starship has crashed and the aliens are right here, right now. Time to say hello!

## How will the PCs make first contact?

First contact should be more than having one PC make a juiced-up Diplomacy roll and hoping for a big number. Creative skill uses can involve every party member in the challenge.



- *Acrobatics.* Perform some tumbling tricks as an easily-understandable amusement.
- *Athletics.* Demonstrate a sport or physical activity as part of a non-verbal cultural exchange.
- *Bluff.* Pass secrets messages during negotiations, or avoid uncomfortable questions with a straight face.
- *Computers.* Craft a computer to interface with the aliens' unique technology, which will have completely foreign ports, coding, and hardware. Deflect alien hackers as they attempt try to pry into your systems.
- *Culture.* Decipher samples of alien writing ahead of time, or during first contact to communicate with them non-verbally. Take a new rank in Culture to learn the aliens' language. Even if the aliens' culture is previously unknown, perhaps make Culture checks to make educated guesses (GM's discretion).
- *Diplomacy.* See the Diplomacy sidebar.
- *Disguise.* Change appearance to look more like the aliens, in hopes of seeming relatable.
- *Engineering.* Identify the properties and uses of alien technology, or craft an item to interface with it.
- *Intimidate.* Bully a nay-saying alien into keeping quiet during sensitive first contact parlay.
- *Life Science.* Identify the aliens, or make educated guesses about their xenobiology (GM's discretion).
- *Medicine.* Treat the wounds of aliens in order to show good faith and build rapport.
- *Mysticism.* Analyze the aliens' magical traditions in order to relate and respond.
- *Perception.* Notice the threat to peaceful first contact that is right in front of you.
- *Physical Science.* Use knowledge of natural science to analyze the aliens' environment.
- *Piloting.* Make sure to 'fly casual' so as not to alarm the aliens upon approach.
- *Profession.* Create art, craft a good, or demonstrate a service as an act of good will.
- *Sense Motive.* Be wary of deception and get a read on the aliens' guarded feelings.
- *Sleight of Hand.* Entertain the aliens with the old disappearing-credstick trick.
- *Stealth.* Surveil the aliens from hiding and learn secrets they don't want to reveal.
- *Survival.* Build rapport by living off the land in alien territory, or riding a local creature.

## Diplomacy, not-so-simple

The entire goal of peaceful first contact is to positively change the attitude of the aliens, ideally up to friendly or above. But remember Diplomacy's limits and conditions! The 'change attitude' use of Diplomacy is a language-dependent ability, requires at least 1 minute of interacting and conversing, and the DC is modified by the creature's initial attitude and other circumstances. Attitudes can typically only be improved by one or two steps within a 24-hour period, and befriending a small group of aliens isn't the same as convincing all of them. A good Diplomacy check is merely one middle step in a successful first contact – not the beginning, nor the end.

## 3-2-1 Contact!

The topic of first contact is rich, complex, and could be the work of a lifetime – but we don't have enough space for all that. Hopefully this article has given you plenty to think about, and some ideas of your own.

Now go out there and make contact!





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Rite Product Highlights:

# The Well of Oblivion

(from *In the Company of Dragons Expanded*)

by Wendall Roy; Illustration by Tommi Salama

## The Well of Oblivion

This island is known only by its most noted, horrific feature, which is more than enough for most taninim. It is little more than an outcropping of mottled rock jutting out of the ocean north of Earthspine, but even the waters reflect the taint of the undragon. The whole of the island, as well as the nearby sea, is a putrescent green and purple. Around the edge of the islet is a series of bones bored into the rock, a physical focus for the ritual enacted by the pre-history ancestors of modern taninim to seal the well and contain Oblivion.

## Places of Note

### Rainmaker's Lament

Taninim do not step foot on the islet containing the Well of Oblivion. The last to do so was the mighty Rainmaker during The Great War, and a monument known as Rainmaker's Lament stands as stark reminder why none have done so since.

Just past the ritual bone ward, the preserved remains of Rainmaker's original body are visible to those approaching the islet. The corpse is hunched over on the ground, its jaws split asunder, neck torn halfway along its length, and forelegs partially sucked inside the body from the corrupted thing that tore its way out. The corpse has an appearance that is at once stony but slick, like hard rubber. It has lain as a grim mockery of the taninim for a millennium, untouched by time and the elements.

## The Well

At the center of the island is a vast cavity that extends down into blackness. No light has ever penetrated the darkness, nor has any magical vision or divination succeeded in revealing anything about what lies beneath. All that is known is the well's place in taninim myth, and the fact that the first undragon crawled from its depths.

## Rumors

Every now and then rumors of activity at the Well of Oblivion run their course through part or all of taninim society. Since the Bloody Conclave brought first-hand accounts of the undragon back into the public eye, talk has only increased of strange shapes moving on the island or discordant, ululating singing issuing forth from the Well.

The Elder Voice Infinite has been spotted more than once over the past decade floating off the coast of the Well of Oblivion, quietly studying the islet for long tracts of time. Why he does so is a matter of conjecture, but it does not appear to be something he has discussed with even the other Elder Voices. As the least public and least understood of that august group, Infinite's motives are suspect to many taninim.





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## Reviews



### Mythic Monsters: South Pacific

**Publisher:** Legendary

**Reviewer:** Endzeitgeist

**Stars:** 5 of 5

This installment of the Mythic Monsters-series clocks in at 32 pages, 1 page front cover, 1 page inside of front cover, 2 pages of editorial, 1 page ToC, 2 pages of introduction, 2 pages of SRD, 3 pages of advertisement, 1 page inside of back cover, 1 page back cover, leaving us with 18 pages, chock-full with content, so let's take a look!

This installment of the Mythic Monsters series begins with supplemental content, here in the shape of a total of 7 different magic items, three of which are magical boomerangs: The *ricochet boomerang* is obviously *returning* (like the other two) and allows the wielder to make an attack as a standard action at -2 to atk; if the attack hits, the wielder can select a second target within 10 ft. and may even bounce this way past cover, managing to get the complex verbiage done right. Mythic wielders suffer from less penalties for this type of attack and mythic power can be used to make full attacks with bouncing, allowing you to potentially bypass hard terrain etc. – impressive. The *clever boomerang* can execute at-range trips and within 30 ft., can be used to feint. In the hands of mythic wielders, the weapon can execute more potent combat maneuvers and use mythic power to snatch disarmed or stolen objects. So cool! The third boomerang would be the *bloody boomerang*, gaining an extended threat range that causes Constitution damage and bleeding damage that stacks with itself and other sources of bleed damage. The mythic wielder can use mythic power to bestow the *keen* property for tier rounds, or the *wounding* property for 2 mythic power uses. Both can be activated at once. The boomerang may also be fired via mythic power as a line-based AoE-attack. LOVE IT!

The pdf also includes the *outback woomera*, a spear thrower that may be wielded as a magical club in melee, and it makes short spears fired treated as *distance* or *keen*, and maximum range is increased as well. Mythic wielders get both properties, and

mythic power may be used as a swift action to gain a bonus to atk and ignore cover and concealment and bypass DR, or vastly increase range. Path ability synergy is properly taken into account, and the same holds true for feats. The *woomera* of a mythic wielder can also produce *goodberries* and water. The *possum-skin cloak* fortifies versus the weather and elements, gaining also a bonus to Knowledge (local) and (history) checks due to the ancestor's influence. The cloak can make for a warm shelter on trees that is hard to notice. Mythic wearers can consult with the ancestors via mythic power and the cloak enhances the surge mechanic. Similarly, the shelter-ability improves. Cool! The final two items would be amulets: The *Hei Tiki Amulet* fortifies versus fear and emotion effects and helps avoiding being surprised. Mythic wielders can benefit from *mage's faithful hounds* or *interposing hands*, the latter in the shape of tiki masks or idols. Cool! The *Hei Matau Amulet* nets a luck bonus on saves and helps navigating the waves, greatly enhancing Profession (sailor) and allowing for *know direction* on the waves as well as limited *water walking*. If dropped into sea water, it becomes a celestial giant seahorse, a *manaia*, which is tightly codified and sports unique abilities. Mythic wielders can exert limited control over the waves and gets better interaction with the spirits – really cool. These items are really amazing.

Now, let's take a look at the monsters, shall we? At CR 1/MR 1, we have a platypus familiar, who gains electrolocation in water, with mythic power upgrading its range temporarily, as well as the ability to generate a mud cloud. Cool. There also are two marsupials at these CR/MRs – mangaroos and thylacines. Mythic kangaroos get massive leaps as long as they have mythic power and pretty brutal kicks. Thylacines can render a target flat-footed via movement, courtesy of distracting stripes, and they get a serious threat range, with the option to enhance the critical modifier to x3 via mythic power. The final creature at this CR/MR-range would be the lavishly-illustrated orang-pondak, whose backwards feet get proper rules-representation and better object-bursting. Unique and nice one.

There are also two mythic megafaunas – at CR 3/MR 1, the moa, and the CR 8/MR 3 megalania – the former may use mythic power for speed bursts and trample/stampede targets, making them more potent in groups. The megalania is



brutal: 1/round, as an immediate action, the critter can expend a mythic power to take a full round's worth of actions! Resting in sunlight can allow it to regain mythic power and their acidic stomach is particularly nasty.

At CR 4/MR 2, the adaro can create swirling cyclones of water and ride these, and their rain frenzy ability is upgraded. Solid upgrade! The manananggal's mythic version, at CR 8/MR 3, deserves special mention: It gets the ability to emit deceptive noises, drain mythic power and the incredible flexible, prehensile tongue is a much-desired upgrade the changes how this one runs for the better. Add a mythic power-fueled shroud of shadows, and we have a winner here. Speaking of undead: There is a CR 6/MR 2 mythic penanggalan based on a oracle 5, sure...but the write-up is inspired due to another reason: The book contains a massive mythic template: 10 tiers net progressively cooler abilities. I adore this. Two thumbs up! Speaking of amazing undead: The CR 10/MR 4 mythic polong leaves thin blood coatings that *grease* the area, get proper bloody possession (including tell-tale signs), and the mythic polong may attempt to slip the bonds of its limitations...its terrible wounds have also been improved. Glorious upgrade of the base critter!!

The Cr 16/MR 6 papinijuwari comes with a reprint of the mythic Awesome Blow feat, and receives an aura of fecundity. It can also crawl inside of deceased creature's mouths, leaving a horrid disease behind that renders the corpse into a disgusting biological mine, while also replenishing mythic power. The write-up also provides a nasty pestilence form...inspired. At CR 12/MR 5, the kapre's smoke can be made to last longer via mythic use expenditure. The mythic version also gets a massive debuffing aura that enhances flanking, interacting with confounding aura. 1/day spewing embers and better *invisibility*, a boost when almost defeated and the ability to grant a *limited wish* make this version of the creature infinitely cooler than the original. Huge plus! At the same CR/MR, the tiberolith's corrosive strikes kickin MUCH sooner (thankfully!) and gets Power Attack, in spite of being mindless. The rudimentary clockworks of the construct net bonus feats and +2 to AC, as well as allowing mythic characters to imbue power within. It can also trap spells and discharge them. Damn cool and potentially, super lethal!

At CR 11/MR 4, we also get a coral golem's mythic iteration, which reconstructs itself in water. Its

attacks can infest targets with coral, and the entity can expend mythic power to break off parts of its body to generate healing powder. Very cool!

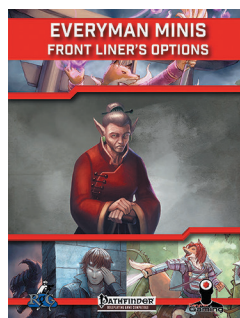
Speaking of "very cool" – At CR 5/MR 2, the new creature within these pages would be the Tiddalik – a Medium, bipedal magical beast that somewhat resembles a frog: The creature can absorb the liquids of those grappled, and absorb vast amounts of water – enough, and it actually assumes a giant form of sorts! Yes, stat mods provided! Super cool and oozing flair: bringing these guys to laugh can result in devastating expulsions of tidal water! I love this critter!

## Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch on a formal and rules-language level. Layout adheres to legendary Games' two-column full-color standard, with a mixture of new and old full-color artworks – the one-page version of the cover artwork in particular is amazing. The pdf comes fully bookmarked for your convenience.

Alex Riggs, Mike Welham and Jason Nelson have done it – this installment of Mythic Monsters is genius. From the cool and unique items to the critters: Animals make sense and feel plausible; undead are icky and tap into taboos and anxieties; constructs feel effective and magical beings feel magical, improving vastly upon the base creatures in a wide variety of ways. This is a superior supplement in every way, even within the context of the high quality Mythic Monsters-series. This is a 5 star + seal of approval gem. You should definitely get this – it does vastly enhance the rich lore and concepts of the base creatures. One of the best installments in the series!!

You can get this superb book [here on OBS!](#)  
Endzeitgeist out.



## Everyman Minis: Front Liner's Options

**Publisher:** Rogue Genius Games/Everyman

**Reviewer:** Endzeitgeist

**Stars:** 5 of 5

This Everyman Mini clocks in at 7 pages, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 2 pages of SRD, leaving us

with 3 pages of content, so let's take a look!

On the introductory page, we are introduced to a couple of new quinggong powers, noting class



features for which they may be exchanged, as well as tight presentation by level. 5 such ki powers are included here with restrictions, if any, and ki cost noted duly.

The pdf contains a total of 5 different new feats: Hunker Down requires heavy armor proficiency and allows you to spend a move action to gain an insight bonus equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  armor check penalty to CMD to resist bull rush, drag, etc., which is retained until you move. Nice. Line Breaker builds on reposition, and allows you to switch places with a repositioned foe. This surprisingly manages to get the complex AoO-scenario here right. Neato! The final three feats are a new Style-feat chain, with the base feat Spiny Urchin Style building on Two-Weapon Defense, enhancing that option. Cool: Does come with double weapon and light weapon training synergy. Spiny Urchin Sting builds on this: When an adjacent enemy attacks you and misses, you may AoO the target as an immediate action. Spiny Urchin Bristle builds on this retributive attack lets you strike back with BOTH hands! And yes, this gets the rules-operation right. Nice one!

There are two archetypes within: The divine protector paladin replaces smite evil with righteous shield, which makes shields actually matter: As a swift action, you may add + Charisma modifier to your shield bonus and add the *holy* weapon property. The damage does scale in a unique way, and the ability lasts for 1 minute and may be used 3 + Charisma modifier times per day. 1<sup>st</sup> level, as you could glean from this, nets Improved Shield Bash as a bonus feat, replacing detect evil. Additionally, Charisma may be used as a substitute for TWFing prerequisites. 3<sup>rd</sup> level unlocks guardian's auras: As a swift action, they may cause 1d6 damage to all within 10 ft. that attacked allies. 14<sup>th</sup> level lets the paladin spend lay on hands uses to channel in the brief radius...or in full radius, if more uses are spent. This modifies aura of courage and resolve, eliminating the immunities, and replaces aura of faith. At 5<sup>th</sup> level, we get avenging shield, providing Far Shot as a bonus feat. Why? The archetype can throw the shield as a non-improvised thrown weapon, and if imbued, it also returns! This btw. manages to clarify that it does indeed allow for full attacks – kudos! This replaces divine bond. Finally, 11<sup>th</sup> level's aura of vengeance is replaced with the option to create basically a magical fortification that enhances AC and Ref-saves. And yes, it moves with you. I LOVE this archetype. It's hands down

one of the coolest paladin archetypes I've seen in a while!!

The second archetype would be the advance guard ranger, who modifies favored enemy, gaining +1 to AC and saves (bonuses properly codified!) versus the favored enemies; similarly, the animal companion gained applies the bonuses instead of the atk and damage bonuses, making for a defensively-minded character. 3<sup>rd</sup> level nets armor training, reducing armor check penalty by 1 (minimum 0) and increasing maximum Dexterity bonus values, with every 5 levels thereafter improving this further. Additionally, medium armor no longer hampers movement speed and 7<sup>th</sup> level allows for full movement in heavy armor. This replaces favored terrain. 12<sup>th</sup> level replaces camouflage with Heavy Armor Proficiency, or a substitute combat feat. Evasion and improved evasion may now be used in heavy armor! Hide in plain sight, finally, is replaced by DR 5/- versus favored enemies while wearing medium or heavy armor. Nice one! The archetype is complemented by a new ranger combat style – these are often tougher to design than they look, and the Protector style and the feat choices here make for a cool defensive ranger.

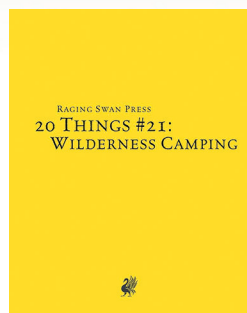
## Conclusion:

Editing and formatting re top-notch. I noticed no glitches on a formal or rules-language level. Layout adheres to Everyman Gaming's artwork-bordered two-column full-color standard and the artwork featured is nice. The pdf has no bookmarks, but needs none at this length.

Matt Morris had a tough task here: Pathfinder is notoriously offense-heavy, and making viable and, more importantly, FUN defensive options, is a tough task indeed. Well, this humble pdf succeeds with flying colors. While I like the defensive ranger well enough, the paladin archetype is AMAZING. It oozes style, is powerful without being broken, and it will make your enemies really fear your shield, while your allies will celebrate your protective aegis! This archetype is pure gold and rocks really hard. The feats and other components also all have something going for them, making this pretty much an all killer, no filler pdf. My final verdict will clock in at 5 stars + seal of approval. If you're looking for some fun paladin and ranger tricks, look now further!!

You can get this cool mini [here on OBS!](#)





## 20 Things: Wilderness Camping (system neutral)

**Publisher:** Raging Swan

**Reviewer:** Endzeitgeist

**Stars:** 5 of 5

This installment of the #20 Things-series clocks in at 11 pages, 1 page front cover, 2

pages of advertisement, 1 page editorial/ToC, 1 page SRD, 1 page back cover, leaving us with 5 pages of content, so let's take a look!

All right, we begin this dressing file with a page that depicts 8 sample travelers (9, actually – one entry features two characters) to share the campsite with; these travelers are depicted as fluff-only write-ups, noting suggested alignment, class and level, but nothing mechanical beyond this – this is, after all, a system neutral pdf. The class references do reference old school class descriptions: Thief and magic-user, for example, so if that kind of thing is important to you, you'll enjoy this small touch. The write-ups include boisterous fellow adventurers that do have the means to back up the bluster, wounded and surly half-orcs, traveling tinkers, weirdly dressed gnomes experimenting with teleportation magic – quite a nice array here!

The second page contains two different 10-entry tables; the first one depicts notable campsite characteristics: Perhaps the campsite may be prone to flooding, or perhaps its straddles a game trail. A tree that is dead and may well topple when storm winds hit – some cool properties here! The second table on the page nets 10 different signs show that someone has camped here before: Moldy tarpaulins caught in roots, a stone-ringed fire pit, a particularly disgusting latrine – interesting array here, and this does include plenty of angles for the GM to elaborate upon and develop.

Of course, campsites may already be inhabited: There are 10 suggestions for such complications, which include wasps, owls, a nearby fox den...

and mysteriously empty nests in the branches. A pool with a grumpy pike inside promises good fishing – some neat entries here. For more malign complications, 10 things lurking in the shadows should help with your designs: This table is particularly neat, ranging from a badger family to a shellshocked victim of a nearby threat to the slightly odd, with a shivering halfling ghost haunting the place. Nice diversity between the mundane and fantastic here.

There is more in the vein of complications to be found here: 20 Night-time campsite events include the mundane and ominous, like a big log burning through, creating cloud of sparks; clouds covering the moon, plunging the site in darkness, strange noises from afar, sudden rope snaps on the tent of the party – some nice tension-building here. The final table once more has 20 entries and provides things to find at an abandoned campsite: Food wrappers, fire pits surrounded with spattered blood – there are even more angles to create atmosphere here.

## Conclusion:

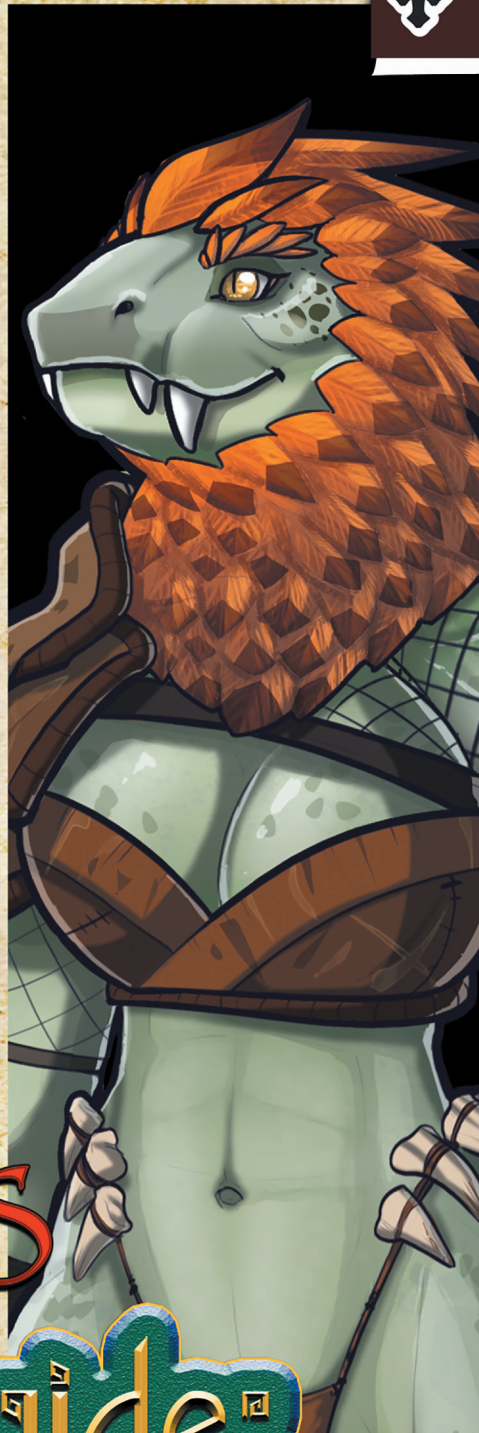
Editing and formatting are top-notch, I noticed no glitches apart from an erroneously capitalized "Perceptive". Layout adheres to an elegant, minimalist 2-column b/w-standard, and the pdf sports a couple of really nice b/w-artworks. The pdf comes fully bookmarked for your convenience, and the pdf comes in two different versions, one of which is optimized for screen-use, and one is optimized for printing it out.

Creighton Broadhurst and Jeff Gomez have crafted a rather compelling dressing-file here: The entries are very much grounded in reality and gritty aesthetics, which I do enjoy. There is still some magic here, and the pdf, as a whole, feels like a well-rounded, fun offering. My final verdict will hence clock in at 5 stars + seal of approval. Great way to make campsites more compelling!

You can get this amazing little dressing file [here on OBS!](#)

**Endzeitgeist out.**





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# ON A ROLL

WRITTEN BY OWEN K.C. STEPHENS

ILLUSTRATED BY LJ STEPHENS

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OKAY, TIME FOR THE FIRST  
ROLL IN OUR NEW OLD  
SCHOOL RPG CAMPAIGN,  
WITH A NEW D20!

AHA! I SHALL NOW  
BECOME THE MOST  
BELOVED DIE BY  
ALWAYS ROLLING  
A 20!!!

OH, NO, IT'S  
NOT THAT EASY,  
KID.



AW MAN! I ROLLED A  
20 ON MY NONWEAPON  
PROFICIENCY CHECK FOR  
DIPLOMACY.  
CRITICAL FAILURE!  
GAH!! NOW THE DRAGON  
IS ATTACKING US!

WHAT?! I  
THOUGHT  
20S WERE GOOD!  
I'M A DEE TWENTY  
AFTERALL!

NO, SEE FOR  
NONWEAPON  
PROFICIENCIES YOU NEED  
TO ROLL UNDER THE  
PLAYER'S SCORE, SO  
ROLLING A 20  
IS BAD.



AH! SO I  
SHOULD ROLL  
A 1 FOR EVERYTHING!

WEEEEEEELL ...

WHAT?! NOW I ROLL A 1  
WHEN MAKING AN ATTACK ROLL?!  
I'M THROWING THIS DIE AWAY!

!!!

AAAAND LOOK WHO'S THE  
FAVORITE D20 AGAIN ...





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