

NARRATIVE DECLARATION 

ROTGRIND

A WORLD
IN DECAY



BESTIARY

WORD EATER

PATHFINDER
COMPATIBLE

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Rare

Medium

Human

This individual is clothed in heavy robes, and is holding a bundle of scrolls covered in arcane scriptures. It lazily swings a smoky censer left and right.

Perception +9**Languages** common, iruxi, draconic, elvish, fey, dwarven, goblin, orcish**Skills** Arcana +10, Occultism +13, Society +9, Stealth +7, Thievery +7, Religion +8**Str** +0, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** +4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0**Items** scroll robes, scrollstaff, three scrolls (any spell, maximum rank 2)**AC** 19; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +14**HP** 42**Speed** 25 feet**Melee** ♦ scrollstaff +8 (two-handed d8), Damage 1d4+4 bludgeoning**Arcane Prepared Spells** DC 20, attack +12 ; **2nd** *hidebound, mist*; **1st** *force barrage, interposing earth, sleep*; **cantrips** (2nd) *ignition, phase bolt, detect magic, eat fire, light, shield, message***Spell Eater** ♦ A word eater consumes a scroll or page from a spell book it holds to instantly learn a spell. Upon eating the spell, it can cast as if that spell were an arcane prepared spell it could cast, regardless of the spell's actual tradition or rank.**Spell Flesh** Sacrificing their life essence, word eaters can ignore all cost and loci requirements when casting a spell. A word eater can cast any spell slot from its prepared list or that it cast within the past 24 hours even if it has already cast those spells. Each subsequent spell cast takes more from their soul, and the word eater takes 2d4 spirit damage when casting these extra spells.



LORE

Word eaters embody the phrase “thirst for knowledge.” These solitary nomads travel the world in search of magical secrets and ancient spells, which they consume and imbue into themselves as living tattoos. They are known to offer their services to powerful individuals in exchange for potent spells and knowledge. Word eaters often pair up with adventurers willing to surrender their hard-earned loot. As long as they obtain what they seek, they remain content. However, cross them, and they will unleash every horrid curse and spell to end your existence.

In ages past, word eaters were traveling scholars from the now lost city of Yarnibalhm. They would travel the world, sharing their knowledge and teachings with anyone who would listen. These traveling libraries helped spread knowledge on a variety of topics such as farming, craftsmanship, husbandry, politics, history, and more. With the help of etchers, adventurers who utilized runed weapons to aid them, they could investigate and learn from monsters and areas too dangerous for those not accustomed to combat.

Ever since the disappearance of Yarnibalhm and its archives, the remnants became terrified that history would repeat itself and that their collective knowledge would not be able to survive the passage of time due to the frailty of books and scrolls. The surviving scholars decided to create a ritual that imbued their knowledge onto their very flesh and souls. Then, when a member passed, their skin and bones would become the binding, and their soul the pages of an eternal tome of knowledge. Once an individual undertook this ritual, they became a word warden. A scholar in the pursuit of knowledge and its preservation.

As the ages advanced, however, several wardens sought to use this new method of retaining knowledge to gain power. These wardens, now known as word eaters began to hunt the word wardens for their libraries and magical artifacts. Consuming their old comrades in the pursuit of power.

The transformation from word warden to word eater was not immediate. It began with a few ambitious individuals who saw the potential to wield immense power through the knowledge they carried. They started to experiment with forbidden magics, seeking ways to absorb not just the knowledge, but the very essence of their comrades.

Over time, these individuals became corrupted by their own greed and hunger for power. Their bodies twisted and changed as they consumed more and more word wardens, their tattoos becoming more than just symbols of knowledge—they became living, writhing entities that fed on the magical essence of others.

Now, word eaters are reviled by those who know of their history. For those who know their reputation, they know them to be dangerous spell casters who should be feared. Word eaters that have begun their climb for power are more easily handled than their more veteran counterparts. They are known to stalk ancient libraries, ruins, and places of power, always on the hunt for new sources of knowledge and magic to consume. Their presence is often heralded by the sudden disappearance of magic items and the unexplained destruction of ancient texts.

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